

The Lincoln Letter

Publisher-North American Lincoln Red Association

FALL/WINTER 2015

"LINCOLN REDS BACK AT THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL WINTER FAIR"

Patrick Milner with his Lincoln Red heifer from John Ashby was selected at his local show to go to the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair held in Toronto November 8-9th. At Nova Scotia Provincial 4-H show Patrick and his heifer were awarded first place in intermediate other purebred and then went on to be named Reserve Champion overall, qualifying for a trip to the Royal! Also, Patrick and his heifer were awarded first place at Cumberland County Exhibition for intermediate other purebred and Champion other purebred.



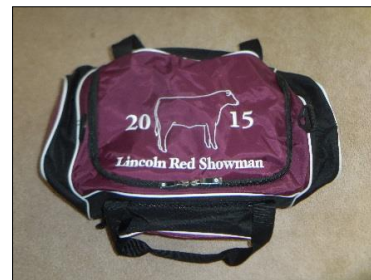
At the Royal, Patrick and his heifer placed 3rd in showmanship and 6th in their confirmation class. A huge thank you to Patrick for promoting Lincoln Reds in the showing! Pictured is our President, Scott McClinchey, visiting with Patrick at the Royal.



Rare Breeds Canada hosted a one day event at the Hants County Exhibition. Patrick took his heifer and also made a display board as shown here.



The North American Lincoln Red Association awarded to Patrick Milner, Tiffany Throop, and Avril Silverman duffle bags in appreciation for their help in promoting Lincoln Reds in the showing. Pictured is Tiffany wearing her windbreaker that was awarded to her last year.



This is Tiffany's 2nd year and Avril's 1st year showing a Lincoln red heifer. The girls had the opportunity to promote Lincoln Reds at 3 shows. Both calves were loaned to them from John Ashby. (Thank you John)



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PRESIDENTS REPORT

With favorable fall weather our Lincoln Red cattle are still on pasture late in October going into the winter in good condition. While our ratio of heifer to bull calves was heavily skewed to heifer calves in the 2015 calving season, our lone bull calf has enjoyed having our son as his buddy.

When old enough, our two kids are looking forward to showing their Lincoln Red calves. Once again the breed was represented in youth shows in several provinces and Patrick Milner has qualified to show his heifer at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto. Congratulations to all of our young showmen for representing the breed so well! It continues to be an exciting time to be in the beef industry with favorable market prices and a lot of optimism in the Lincoln Red breed.

Have a great fall,

Scott



Davis McClinchey with Shaver Case

Help us save money by receiving your newsletter electronically!

Please send an email to sarahpedelty@gmail.com or call Sarah at 507-867-9041.

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR CATTLE REGISTRATIONS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR

Don't Forget: Membership fees are Due on Jan. 1st and are \$80 for the year. Please send your fees to Canadian Livestock Records Corporation 2417 Holly Lane Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1V 0M7.

Your membership helps support the Association's promotional activities such as the website, newsletters, advertising and purchase of youth incentives (jackets).

ANNUAL MEETING TELECONFERENCE ATTENTION MEMBERS

Mark your calendars for the Annual General Meeting by teleconference Set for February 20th.

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WEANING AT 10 MONTHS OF AGE

BRIAN HARPER, CIRCLE H FARMS, BRANDON, MANITOBA

As we enter into the last quarter of 2015 I have confidence that everyone experienced a fulfilling year with adequate pasture and feed availability for the upcoming winter months. However, there are always those times and areas of the country that our fortitude is put to the test. To anyone experiencing a situation such as that I pass on a saying expressed to me once by an old cattleman, "hold on to the cow's tail and she will always pull you through"!

As the air begins to get that cool nip to it each morning and the tree leaves are all but gone, many producers will be considering weaning the calves from mother if they haven't done that task already. Like most producers that was the normal procedure at our place this time of year as well. That is until about 5 years ago, since 2010 our calves remain with mother for their first winter. This practice is not for everyone but it works for us, and we are seeing better, more adapted cattle coming out of this management! Developing genetics for this program took both time and selection and can't be rushed into or failure is imminent. The methods we use, in our eyes, are more natural or nature like procedures for the animals than all the stress methods that come with the man made paradigms. I will attempt to go through the motives for why we do not wean them before 10 months of age, which will land at around the first of March.

Firstly ... our young calves learn so much from their mother's that first winter. As we winter graze the entire winter, the calves that end up being replacements learn what to do and how to go about eating into bales or



Jan 2015, calves nursing

swaths and the means of balancing their winter diet. Calves will be allowed access to areas where they can get away from the main herd, but rarely do! Mother teaches them

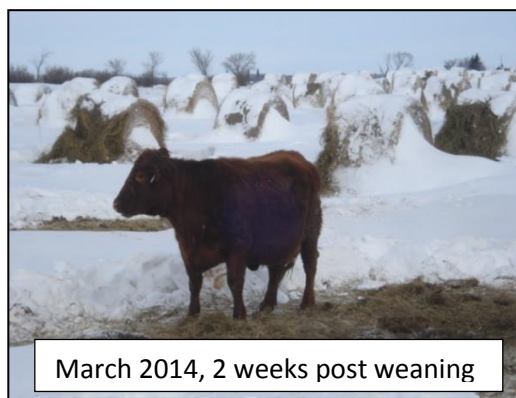
what to do and where to go in case of a winter storm. This makes transitioning into the herd as mothers nursing

calves later on very simple as they have never been separated from the herd for feeding or any kind of what I refer to as "pampering".

Secondly ... I have learned it is at 10 months of age before a calf has enough rumen development to be able to process solely forage. We feel for cattle to be profitable they must be productive on "forage only"! We never feed any grain or supplements to our cattle, therefore the calves get the energy required to process "forage only" from their mother's milk. More precisely the "butterfat" found in mother's milk, a trait we continually genetically select for in order to increase. Most of today's beef cattle are below 3% butterfat and will not work in our program!

Thirdly ... is for the ease of management. We only look after one herd of animals for most of the winter months. We will sort mothers with bull calves away from the ones with heifers sometime in January, however the same winter grazing regime is in place. We enjoy our winter holiday, so for "ease of management" for whomever gets the cow duties while we are away it is very simple. Checking water is just about all that the help is asked to do, as the herd will have an allotment of feed for the entire time (2 weeks) we are away. For clarity, we feed all winter in 2 week allotments.

The resulting calves that are selected from our program for replacements are hardy and feed efficient and due to the forage only development, forage is all they require to be productive for life. We have experienced an increased



March 2014, 2 weeks post weaning

demand for both females and breeding bulls, with over 80% of bull sales being to repeat customers. Our bulls, developed

on forage only until 2 years old, will breed more cows per year for more years than conventionally or grain developed sires. Also it has been our experience that our bulls will continue gaining weight during their first breeding season, this has been confirmed by our customers and has become an expectation of ours.

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Those are just some of the reasons why we, “do what we do”! As well, we experience a lower cost of production for the entire lifetime of the animal after they have been developed in a more natural environment. Working against nature is costly both to the profitability of the manager and the health of the animals. We want cattle that work for us, not ones that require we work for them! The properly selected and “forage only” developed animals will be able to wean a calf every 12 months. They will nurse a calf for 10 months and rebreed in a 45 day breeding season and not ask for anything more than room and board.

As we have a financial investment in our herd we should compare that to having one at a bank or any other investment entity. Who would be happy with a financial institute that informed us that they would only be giving a return on our investment for 6 months? My guess is no one! So why do we allow our cows to only work for approximately 200 days (weaning) and then allow her a free ride for the rest of the year? My suggestion is that if your cattle can't work for 10 months then you have created an artificial environment for your herd with costly inputs rather than creating animals that fit a low cost environment. I challenge everyone to start pulling out the crutches/ inputs we tend to use to prop up our cattle in order to be productive, if they fall apart then they weren't profitable to begin with. I am confident that in time and with strict and proper selection, you will like the impending results.

Until next time, Happy trails!!



USE ALL OF THE TOOLS IN YOUR BOX

BOB NUSBAUM, PROFESSOR EMERITUS, UNIV OF WISC PLATTEVILLE

“Yeah, they grow faster but they also run faster!” That was my neighbor's response several years ago when we had a conversation about keeping crossbred rather than straight bred cows. He knew heterosis positively increased most traits, but he felt it also increased the bad traits and he'd have more of the undesirable, hyper-type dispositions in his cowherd. So he designed a system that was a compromise. His 160 cows were straight bred Angus and the replacement heifers were always bred to registered Angus bulls. EPD's (Expected Progeny Differences) were used to design cows that he felt were optimum in size, growth, carcass quality and disposition. Additionally, he always tried to see the dam of potential bull purchases to evaluate their feet and udders. After their first calf, all of the cows were bred to a high growth Simmental bull which produced a terminal, crossbred calf. This system was efficient because a smaller framed, easy-keeping cow produced a fast growing feedlot calf where disposition was much less of an issue. The “direct” heterosis (hybrid vigor) in the crossbred calf generally increases weaning and yearling weight by 5% or more, but a purebred cow, in this case, does not provide any additional or “maternal” heterosis.

“I can't afford not to use crossbred cows. They add so much to the bottom line”. That was the same neighbor's response last summer when we had the same conversation about keeping crossbred cows. He now feels that the greatest asset a commercial cow/calf producer can have is a crossbred cow because of that “maternal” heterosis she brings to the table. Research clearly documents that crossbred cows reduce breakeven costs by 10% when compared to straight bred cows. They are also 8% more efficient, live 38% longer and produce 25% more pounds of calf in their lifetime due mainly to increased fertility which allows them to reach puberty faster, conceive more easily as heifers, breed back as cows and ultimately stay in the herd longer. Mothering ability, immune response to vaccines and colostrum quality all improve with heterosis. So this spring my neighbor had his first black-white-faced (BWF) calves from the Hereford bull he bought last year.

He plans on retaining the BWF heifers as the foundation for his crossbred cow herd and he can still terminally cross those future cows with his Simmental bull. Now the additional heterosis from the crossbred cow is contributing another 6% to the weaning weight of the

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crossbred calf. The end product of this system is great with the combination of maternal and direct heterosis, but maintaining it is his major concern now. Replacement BWF cows have to be purchased or produced on his farm. He wants to control the input genetics so purchasing is not an option. Therefore, a base Angus herd must be maintained to continue to produce straight Angus cows (one breeding pasture). A second breeding pasture is needed for the Hereford bull and his cows and a third for the BWF cows with the terminal Simmental. This excellent, but complex system requires bulls from 3 breeds and 3 breeding pastures. Therein lays the problem with most crossbreeding schemes. They are not “user friendly”, especially in smaller herds; so many producers prefer single breed operations.

The average beef herd size in the US today is 40 cows, so what is the easiest way to inject some heterosis into these herds? The answer is crossbred bulls. These can come in the form of F1's (first filial generation) which is the first cross between two pure breeds or a “composite” where the individual is made up of two or more breeds. A small producer may have only one pasture and one bull and still accomplish the same goals without having to maintain an elaborate crossbreeding system. Additionally, crossbred bulls will exhibit heterosis in all of the important reproductive traits like semen quality and libido. They tend to be tougher, more athletic and produce longer.

As an example, let's “reconsider” my neighbor's crossbreeding project and, instead, cross his Angus cows with an F1 Hereford-Angus (BWF) bull. We still get a crossbred female but she is $\frac{1}{4}$ Hereford rather than $\frac{1}{2}$. The resulting females could be terminally bred, which would require a second breeding pasture or, a simpler option, is to follow the F1 BWF bull with another F1 bull, that is an Angus-Simmental. This would add $\frac{1}{4}$ Simmental to the offspring and would increase the heterosis in both the replacement females and the market calves. The beauty in this system is that new breeds can be added a quarter at a time (or less) rather than a half at a time. In case a particular bull doesn't impart the traits that are desired, it is not as serious as using a straight bred bull where all the progeny would have half of his undesirable genes. Crossbred bulls reduce this potential problem.

Producers can also experiment with breeds that offer additional “complementary” traits; perhaps an F1 that is $\frac{1}{2}$ dairy to increase milk; an F1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Jersey cross to increase tenderness or an F1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Brahman cross to increase

heat tolerance. The resulting offspring would inherit $\frac{1}{4}$ of the additional breed brought in. Sometimes, that $\frac{1}{4}$ inclusion is just the right amount where $\frac{1}{2}$ may be too much. Another local commercial producer I know was constantly fighting pinkeye and calving problems. He began using a sequence of F1 bulls that were $\frac{1}{2}$ Hereford and $\frac{1}{2}$ Barzona (a composite of Afrikander, Hereford, Angus and Santa Gertrudis). After the first cross his problems were almost completely eliminated. He followed those bulls with other composites that additionally included Angus, Red Angus and Simmental. While the bulls he used were either black or red in color, they were all similar in frame size, so he has been able to maintain a cowherd that is basically quite uniform. The beauty of this system is that a small producer can maintain a “one bull” herd yet allow for a simple crossbreeding system that can achieve extremely high levels of heterosis.

Now consider the potential for the small purebred seedstock producer to sell F1 bulls. Instead of offering only purebred bulls to commercial clients, there can be additional options which might increase customer base and ultimately create more sales. If the clients don't utilize crossbreeding now, they might be convinced of its benefits if they can easily add it to their cowherd through F1 bulls. This might also attract new customers that currently do practice crossbreeding but only exclusively with purebred bulls. This purebred bull seller needs to determine which breeds have desirable traits that complement or enhance the traits already present in the herd. Artificial insemination with sexed semen can produce F1 bulls from any breed or breeds chosen which creates endless possibilities. This can only improve bull sales and bull buyers will appreciate the additional options available to them. Heterosis is the only “free lunch” available in the cattle business, but unfortunately, too many commercial operations fail to utilize it and too many purebred producers fail to provide it. Good luck as you plan your spring breeding program this winter!



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SEEING IS BELIEVING!

Take a look at Lincoln Reds at one of these farms:

- **Roger Angowski**
Pugwash, NS
- **John & Lorraine Ashby**
Stonehedge Farms
Prescott, ON
(613)925-5778
- **Sarah Band**
Mohil Farms
Puslinch, ON
(519) 824-5619
- **Sarah Bowley, SVF Foundation**
Newport, RI
(401) 846-8670
sarah@svffoundation.org
www.svffoundation.org
- **Lee Deutsche**
Crete, IL
farmspecialist@wildblue.net
- **Mead Ferguson**
Woodward, OK
- **Tom Fillmore**
Oxford, NS
- **Ryan Galbreath**
Enderlin, ND
(701) 799-4568
- **Valentina & Richard Harness**
Stover, MO
- **Brian & Sonja Harper**
Brandon, Manitoba R7A 5Y3
204-725-2515
harper4@goinet.ca
www.shaverbeef.com
- **Dennis and Mary Hoffrogge**
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
(507) 227-5745
dhoffrogge@gmail.com
www.dmhoffroggecattle.com
- **Jim & Doris Kotek**
West Salem, WI
- **Robert Latimer**
Nashville, TN
mccllc98@cs.com
- **Scott & Heather McClinchey**
Orton, ON LON 1N0
(519) 928-3106 (h)
(519) 570-7020 (c)
hlm.dvm@sympatico.ca
- **Sandy MacDougald**
Milrae Farms
Montague, PE
(902) 838-4783
- **Wallace & Patrick Milner**
Nappan, NS
patrickmilnercattle@hotmail.ca
- **Dr Lincoln Montgomery**
Buckingham, VA
- **Larry and Sarah Pedelty**
(507) 421-7112
sarahpedelty@yahoo.com
Straws for US Breeders
(Collected and Shipped
from Hawkeye Breeders)
- **Alan Riley**
Strathclair, MB
- **Kevin Rivers**
Ingersoll, ON
- **Rose's Lincoln Reds**
Amherst, NS B4H 3Y1
(902) 667-9834
- **Sheldon Schmaltz**
Worsley, AB
- **Monte VanderVorst**
Pollock, SD
(701) 336-2621



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