

M UPDATE

News from Mershon Cattle LLC



BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE FACTS

32% of consumers surveyed are concerned about animal welfare. That's one reason we are BQA certified - best practices in action.

A Colorado State University study found that BQA producers earn \$16.80 more per head at harvest. Well cared for livestock leads to fewer discounts at harvest.

In Missouri, BQA trainings are coordinated by the MO Beef Industry Council. The schedule is at www.mobeef.org/events

**WANT TO BUY OUR HEIFER PAIRS FOR SALE IN APRIL? CALL US! 816.289.3765
A FLYER AND PHOTOS SOON AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE, mershoncattle.com.**

Spring Calving Season Underway

As February turned to March, spring calving season was well underway at our operation. Thanks to a tight calving window, by March 1 we had approximately 230 calves from our AI'd heifers on the ground.

Our very first calf was a heifer, born February 17. She is a black Angus-cross sired from BJ Surpass. As a point of reference, we split our spring AI breeding between SydGen Enhance and BJ Surpass AAA 19774516. We've had great success with Enhance. Our calves have been healthy, durable and efficient weight gainers. The addition of BJ Surpass boosts our genetic diversity necessary for maintaining a growing herd.

The first calf from a natural sired (NS) heifer was born February 25. The bulk of these NS calves will be born throughout March. Once these heifers calve, they too will be moved as pairs onto grass for the summer. In May, we will give calves the first of two rounds of vaccinations including Pyramid Plus or something similar, Calvary 9 and two types of pinkeye vaccine.

Pairs Available at New Cambria Sale

Mark your calendar: Spring pairs will be selling **April 9** at the SydGen New Cambria Sale in New Cambria, MO. Watch our Facebook and Instagram pages for details and our website for an information flyer.

Careful Monitoring

As you know, first calf heifers are unpredictable and often take time to adjust to motherhood. To improve calf outcomes, especially early on, we've

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Quality Heifer Pairs Offer Opportunity for Improvement

developed an intensive monitoring program using our 400-foot hoop barn. Divided into small pens, we basically turn the barn into a giant maternity unit. With 24-hour oversight, we know exactly who's calving and when as well as troubleshoot any complications. Within hours of birth and oftentimes minutes, we are able to check over the calves, tag with their mother's tag number, and record their basic information. This launches the beginning of the calve's health and performance records.

While still in the barn, the pairs are watched for any issues and treated if necessary. They are moved to grass once the calves are stable.

Whether you buy our AI or natural sired pairs, you can have confidence in our program. From day one, we work to ensure that our pairs are healthy and meet high standards for performance. If you have any questions or want more information, please contact us!



Naptime! Our hoop barn serves as an excellent nursery for newborn calves and their mothers.

BQA Certification Pays Off

This year, Mershon Cattle received recertification in the Beef Quality Assurance program (BQA). While we've always believed BQA is the right thing to do, new research shows that it just may pay off financially as well.

BQA is a national program that provides information and training on animal husbandry combined with scientific research to raise cattle under optimum management and environmental conditions. Launched in the early '90s, BQA is funded by the beef checkoff, and trainings are widely available for producers in Missouri and online.

A 2019 study by Colorado State University documented a premium for calves and feeder cattle sold through video auction markets when BQA was mentioned in the lot description. With all factors remaining constant, producers gained a \$16.80/hd premium.

The financial reward is good news. But BQA offers other benefits as well that are just as important: online training modules, networking and resources serve as valuable continuing education that producers may not receive elsewhere. Most can be found on the BQA website.

Producers can't ignore the fact that BQA also enhances consumer confidence in our operations leading to increased demand for beef. In fact, studies show that positive consumer perception continues to improve even as their concerns over sustainability grow. Since selling our beef directly to consumers, we've experienced firsthand the interest from customers about how we raise our cattle. BQA certification is an example we use to discuss our operation and best practices.



Tuscono's lasagna made with Mershon Cattle ground beef.

Direct Beef Program Expands

Now there's more than one way to enjoy our delicious beef. Tuscono's Wood Fired Pizza & Pasta in Buckner, MO., and Ophelia's on the Independence Square in Independence, MO., are serving our ground beef and short ribs. At Tuscono's, their legendary lasagna and meat sauce are now made with our ground beef, Ophelia's features our ground beef in their Chef's Burger and offers our short ribs on the menu. Please consider a night out at these restaurants, and support locally owned businesses. Also, you can buy our steaks, roasts, and ground beef at mershoncattle.com at the **Buy Beef** page.