

Lakeview Piedmontese Grading Prime & Choice at YG 2 - report by Jerry Hofer at Field Days

Last week I got the kill statistics back on a group of 43 head of Fullblood Piedmontese sired cattle out of black baldy cows slaughtered on May 22 for MRB. They were 2008 spring born calves and we were quite pleased with the gains in the feedlot on these all natural cattle as they maintained a 3.10# per day gain & they were by no means green coming in. They were 14 and a half months of age at time of slaughter and wound up with a respective carcass weight of 847.33

The first thing that jumped out at me {of course} was the \$118+ Premium, but right after that came the fact that these cattle graded just shy of 87% percent choice or higher with an average yield grade of 2.51 and an average ribeye size of 13.59 inches.

The most recent Beef Quality audit tells us that the industry average for choice or higher is only 57% compared to 87% on these piedmontese X cattle. This is exactly what the beef industry is hoping to achieve.

The beef Quality Audit also tells us that too many yield grade 4's and 5's are produced with fewer and fewer Prime and Choice quality grades. Unfortunately we as an Industry have been losing ground in the last 20 years - from 1986 to 2005 the number of cattle grading choice declined from 93% to 57%!!! This 39% reduction in carcass quality has the Industry on high alert along with the reduction of aver all carcass quality...the number of cattle scoring yield grade 4's & 5's have more than quadrupled since 1997. We all know that yield grade 4 and 5 cattle are too fat and do not have the % of marketable red meat yield that the 1, 2, and 3's do.

The cattle industry is really struggling to keep down back fat levels as well...These Piedmontese sired cattle averaged .28 back fat! Again only 12% of the cattle killed in the whole industry have back fat levels that low.

I guess in plainer words, we as an industry should probably think more in terms of raising beef carcasses versus just raising cattle because in the end "Red Meat Yield" is our goal along with the consistent tenderness and flavor that the consumer is demanding from us.

Piedmontese cattle are known as a lean breed but some Piedmontese bulls also carry genetics for good marbling without producing the fat cover. And because the myostatin gene gives us a strong positive effect on meat tenderness it is easy for us to build a niche for ultra lean yet tender beef - however most of the commercial cows in this country are British based higher fat, smaller ribeye cows. By utilizing Piedmontese Bulls we will improve them on yield grade every time but....when using Piedmontese bulls {fullblood or composites} with marbling genetics we can build an ideal beef carcass with low fat but high marbling & positive yield grade's...and we can do it in 14 months without implants!! Hey! These kind of cattle will bring a very healthy premium even in the commodity market....and an added bonus on top of that from MRB.

It is very reassuring to see that what the myostatin gene contributes to a beef carcass goes in harmony with the direction most of us know we should be going as an Industrybut have not been able to figure exactly how to get there!

The industry absolutely needs to breed off the excess fat cover, increase the red meat yield and still keep some marbling for quality. These results are exciting because Piedmontese crossed on the most common commercial female will do it in one breeding season.

By Jerry Hofer, June 2009

Seventy percent USDA Choice or higher, 70% USDA Yield Grade 1 and 2 with no "out" cattle has often been discussed as an important goal for cattle harvested in the US beef system. The last NCBA Beef Quality Audit presented industry averages at 57% Choice or higher, 52% Yield Grades 1 and 2 and a whopping 22% high discount "out" carcasses. With more than 1 in 5 carcasses discounted for excess fat, insufficient marbling, heavy or light weights and other defects, the number of dollars lost to the US beef business is immense.

The Simmental Association has developed a promotional effort in support of the beef industry's search for optimum carcasses (SimmChoice). They advertise their long term goal of producing the magic 70:70:0 that the beef industry is craving.

The Montana Ranch Brand Certified Piedmontese Beef program reports 6700 head of PiedmonteseX averaged Yield Grade 2.46 with av. ribeyes of 13.92 with a 3 year average of 69.23% Choice or higher. Their trend is strongly upward for Quality Grade, with the last (2009) data on 2666 head averaging **74% Choice or higher with Yield Grade av. 2.45.**

Perhaps the Piedmontese needs to raise the bar, and target 80:80:0

... because we are already achieving that in some breeding programs.

86:83:0

70:70:0

57:52:22

Piedmontese set a new standard



83.72% Yield Grade One and Two
and
86.1% Quality Grade Prime & Choice

Which direction are your cattle headed ?

At Lakeview we are very encouraged to see the tremendous gain in Quality Grade over the past 3 years experienced at Montana Ranch Brand, in the Certified Piedmontese Program:

with 2666 head in the first months of 2009 averaging Yield Grade 2.45 with 74 percent Prime and Choice - on cattle sourced from various producers with one thing in common: Piedmontese myostatin genetics.

Those are amazing numbers.

Beef Industry media states that "the industry is *craving* the goal of 70:70:0" - meaning their target is to achieve 70% Prime & Choice with 70% YG 1-2, and no 'outs'.

Lakeview Kill Performance - May 2009
on Fullblood Piedmontese X Black Baldy
slaughtered at 14.5 months of age for MRB

Quality Grade	Yield Grade
86.1 % Prime & Choice	83.7 % - YG 1&2
11.6 % Select	16.3 % YG 3
2.3 % Standard	no YG4-5

load average back fat: 0.28

load average dressing percent: 64.72%

load average HCW: 847.33 lbs

load average ribeye size: 13.59 sq in

load average premium per animal: \$118.63

**With the right genetics, we can raise the bar
and actually reach it & beyond.**

LakeView Piedmontese - South Dakota

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FB & Naturalean Seedstock, Semen and Embryos are always available for sale.