

# Grown on Grass

By Lindsay Haymes, OFN Editor

Jared Wareham proves the idea of bulls grown on grass as a viable and effective way to work

**B**ull production and marketing is Jared Wareham's newfound passion. Working in cooperation with Flying H Genetics, out of Nebraska, Jared recently retired from teaching High School science to work full time as manager and customer service representative for the Missouri-affiliate

breeding stock. Our goal is to create an athletic, sound, functional animal with an emphasis on low-cost production and balanced genetics," Jared said.

Jared's niche is "Grown on Grass" herd bull development. For example, in one situation Jared has a set of aging bulls that are being mob-grazed on a very small area, and are only being supplemented with a lick tub. He is also

unable to replicate the "real world" conditions he will spend most of his life in. The goal is to keep our bulls in ideal condition where they won't "melt" when put out as breeding stock. The animals we are breeding for are able to maintain on grass and in turn, they can avoid the shock factor," Jared explained.

"Bulls from a feed lot situation are being grown out in a manner to replicate the typical feedlot environment so producers can quantify their genetics, which was made affordable with the cheap grain prices of the past few decades. Although less expensive, it was unhealthy and frustrating for cattlemen until now. Fortunately, technologies now exist that allow us to sort top genetics without putting their long-term health and productivity in danger. DNA testing, just one of many new tools, opens the door for bull producers to begin refocusing their development strategies to a more natural pace and environment," Jared said.

Jared did warn that the bulls he feeds are not going to look like what most producers will expect. "We stress well-balanced, physically sound and made right. It's a harder look, an athletic look - what you see is what you get. Our bulls are in their working clothes already," Jared stressed.

For the grazing work, Jared partners with his neighbor, cattleman Bob Salmon, who custom grazes the bulls Jared is growing. Bob has been working with Management Intensive Grazing for 20 years, long before it became a common term and practice in the area.

Originally, the growing out on grass posed a bit of trouble for Jared and Bob. Getting bulls ready for sale or steers ready for a feedlot is a lot different than just running cows continually, and they found fast that Missouri fescue can be a hard forage to gain on in some months. "We worked with the Extension agent and found a ration of forage and feed that produced that pound of gain per day we were looking for, and the animals that couldn't handle that environment tended to stick out fast,"

Jared said.

That rigorous feeding plan allowed Jared to get an idea of which cattle and which genetics would be better in his strict program, and which wouldn't. "We're wanting to balance genetics so that the daughters will be good producers, they'll wean a larger calf; we're wanting these animals to work from the ranch to the rail, or the farm to the feedlot, or however you want to say it," he added.

"We've had 60 years of cheap grain," Bob said, "but producers are having to find alternative ways to get their animals to the size and weights they need to be without feeding at today's prices. Hybrid vigor created by planned crossbreeding is one way producers can increase productivity for free."

Bob said he's found the key to making sure the animals eat enough is to encourage them to walk, almost like exercising them, and he also says he doesn't want a bull to come up to him. "I will drive them in the pasture, I want them to know to move away, not run, and just walk away," Bob said. He said this improves the safety around the bulls for future owners and weeds out any potential disposition problems. With Flying H Genetics, disposition is just one of 17 genetic standards that their bulls are guaranteed to meet.

Flying H is most known for their work with Gelbvieh, but Jared is working with black and red SimAngus, Balancers, Angus, Simmental and Gelbvieh cattle, because he said he needs to be able to meet the needs of the commercial cattlemen in this region.

"Hybrid bulls tend to be more genetically balanced," Jared said, adding, "crossbreeding is synergistic, meaning that the crossbred offspring, if mated in a planned system, are better than either of the parents could ever be."

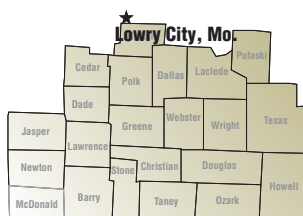
Right now Jared is marketing his grown-on-grass bulls slowly. "I don't want to flood the market, there are a lot of bulls out there, I'd just like to grow our demand," he said.



Photo by Lindsay Haymes

of Flying H Genetics. With more than 30 years experience marketing commercial bulls, Flying H was appealing to Jared, a first generation cattlemen looking to begin marketing a similar brand of family-owned genetics and breeding program in Missouri. "I realized that we both had the same philosophies on how to treat customers and developing their future

running a younger group that is being rotationally grazed and supplemented with a feed ration of about 1.5 percent of their body weight or about 8 to 15 pounds depending on age. "That amount is about one-third of what a feedlot tested bull would get on a daily basis. The feedlot bull is not consuming any grass and thus is



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