



British White Cattle Association of America

e-News

Fall 2014
John Kugler, Editor

Highlights of the BWCAA 2014 Conference and Annual Membership Meeting

Ogema, MN, August 29 and 30, 2014: It rained off and on the day before the scheduled 2014 BWCAA Conference and Annual Meeting and tour of Rolling Hills Traeger Ranch,



Pasture tour of Rolling Hills Traeger Ranch

threatening to keep us indoors. But the clouds held their moisture during the tour of host Christina

Traeger's ranch. Northwestern Minnesota had received ample rain during the last half of August and the pastures were lush. We could see the British White cows and their calves were well fed and happy.

Inside this Edition

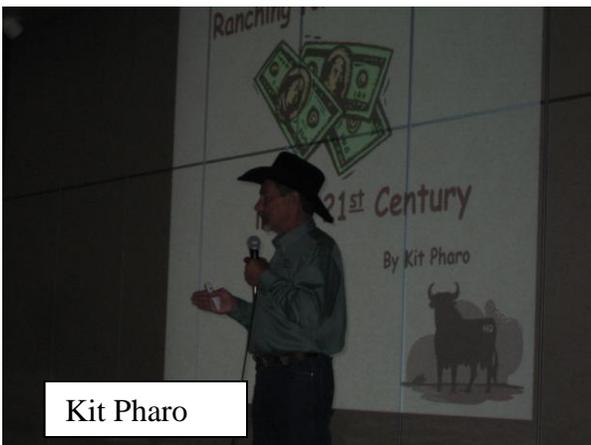
- BQA Certification Adds Value
- Additional Video Sponsors Welcome
- Weaning Strategies

Over 50 cattle breeders and cattlemen attended the full-day conference, which was held in the commons area of Waubun High School. Dr. Will Winter condensed a lifetime of experience and knowledge of holistic livestock management into a ninety minute presentation, particularly detailing the importance of

providing the proper mineral nutrition for rumen function.



Dr. Will Winter (center) answers questions



Kit Pharo

After lunch, keynote speaker Kit Pharo took the floor and presented his principles for success in the cattle business. These include breeding smaller, more efficient cows; selecting cows and bulls that can

thrive in your environment (the land, water, and forage resources you have); selecting for fly resistance; and working toward eliminating inputs such as supplemental feed, machinery and infrastructure. His mantra is that for ranching to be sustainable, it must be both profitable and enjoyable.

Following a Prime Rib dinner, many fine objects were auctioned off at the Fun Auction including some original artwork, hand-made crafts and tools, and some specially made vests with the British White logo embroidered on the back.



Host Christina Traeger organized and executed an enjoyable and informative conference. Thank you Christina! The 2015 Annual BWCAA Meeting will be held in Kansas City in conjunction with the American Royal Livestock Show. This show takes place during the last 10 days or so of October and first of November. More details will be forthcoming in the eNews and online at www.britishwhite.org Upcoming Events section.

Highlighting the Annual Membership Meeting was the re-election of Kevin Reed and Jonathan Wiechmann to the board of directors as well as a new board member Nick Wilson who replaces retiring member Joe Bigbee. Nick Wilson and wife Georgan operate 2W Ranch in Lipan, Texas. They bought their first British White cattle three years ago. With 40 years of farming/ranching experience backed by training in biology, entomology, animal science, range management and agronomy from Hardin-Simmons University (Abilene, TX), Colorado State University (Fort Collins) and Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge), Nick brings a wealth of talent to our organization. As an educator, Nick is well-known in Texas for his contribution to the Texas Christian University's ranch management training program. We look forward to putting him to work.

Becoming Certified BQA Adds Value to Your Cattle

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA)

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is a non-governmental program coordinated nationally and implemented on a state-by-state basis, usually managed by the state Extension Service. BQA provides information and training to beef producers based on science and common sense animal husbandry. This ensures beef customers can have confidence in the animals and meat they buy and in the industry as a whole. Beginning as "Beef Safety Assurance" in the late 1970's, BQA has evolved to include education and training in the proper use of pharmaceuticals, following prescribed withdrawal times, detailed record keeping and low stress cattle handling techniques.

Who should be certified and why?

Cow/calf producers, feedlot operators, animal transporters, livestock auction employees, 4-H and

FFA students and advisors, livestock facility designers, and slaughterhouse workers should all be trained in at least some aspects of BQA. Cow/calf producers have the first contact with newborn calves, their dams and sires. Documentation of detailed health records on each animal begins here. This data may be transferred along with the animal to the next owner as it moves through the marketing chain, whether it is to a backgrounder, feedlot, grassfed beef producer, cattle breeder or on to the packer.

We live in an era of openness and transparency demanded by the customer. We must build and maintain their trust that beef they purchase is free from chemical and pharmaceutical residues. Likewise the carcass must be free of injection site lesions. Every intramuscular injection leaves scar tissue that will be cut out by the packer. That is why proper injection site placement is so critical to carcass quality, which ultimately impacts the final value of the product.

Stress during routine handling such as vaccinations, pregnancy testing, artificial insemination, tattooing or branding, and trucking play a major role in the weight gain, comfort, ultimate meat and hide quality of cattle. BQA guidelines and training provide techniques for cattle producers, truckers, and livestock auction workers and slaughterhouse employees to ensure cattle will be handled and transported with as little stress as possible.

BQA certification is valuable to the cow/calf producer for several reasons. It demonstrates a commitment to meat safety and quality, promotes consumer trust, improves sale value of marketed beef and breeding stock, protects the industry as a whole from burdensome government regulations and improves the bottom line through better management.

How can one become certified?

There are several ways to become certified. One can inquire with their local Extension Service to find out about any scheduled BQA training sessions. Many states, but not all, offer online certification. There is usually a cost of \$20 to \$30 for training manuals, however some states do not charge a fee or may have time-sensitive industry sponsored events. To find BQA contacts in your state, go to <http://www.bqa.org/statebqa.aspx>, click on your state. The site will list one or more contacts.

Weaning Method Impacts Health of Calves

Round `em up, Sort `em, Ship `em out.

This is probably the quickest way to wean your calves. But this method often results in highly stressed, bawling and anxious calves that are more likely to lose weight and get sick. If calves have been pre-conditioned (received booster vaccines for respiratory ailments), taught to eat from a bunk, and are penned post-weaning in a familiar, safe enclosure, this method is more successful. Cows are stressed as well, spending a few days wandering the pasture calling for their calves.

Fenceline weaning.

In fenceline weaning cows and calves are separated by a fence, either woven or multi-stranded high tensile hot wire. Calves are kept in a familiar pasture while the cows are across the fence. Cows and calves can see each other and may even be able touch noses. Stress and anxiety are reduced. Research has shown that fenceline weaning results in reduced bawling calves and greater weight gain during weaning compared with complete separation. After 4-5 days, calves can be totally separated from their moms with much less anxiety.

Nose weaners.



Plastic nose weaners can be easily applied with very little stress to the calves. With a little practice one can learn to slip the weaner right into the calf's nostrils without much trouble. The weaners prevent the calf from nursing. Other than the calf becoming a bit frustrated, there is little to no pain involved. Calves seem to adjust to the weaner in a short time and can be seen grazing within a few minutes after being fitted with the device. After 4-5 days the weaners can be removed and the calves separated from their moms.

Some producers leave the weaners on until the cows dry up. This method is probably the least stressful of the three mentioned here. For more in-depth discussions see

<http://www.cattletoday.com/archive/2004/November/CT368.shtml> and <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/douglas/sites/default/files/documents/lf/WeaningLF0503.pdf>.

~~~~~clip here~~~~~

## **Additional Sponsors Needed to Support Promotional Video Highlighting British White Cattle**

To date we have generously received two Platinum and two Gold sponsorships from our members, but we still need a little more financial help to cover the cost of this first video. As of August 30, 2014 some footage has been captured. Now that the Annual Meeting is behind us, more attention can be devoted to shooting more video and still photos of beautiful British White cattle and developing the narration.

Sponsors will be featured in the credits of the video. One may choose one of several sponsorship levels:

- Platinum Sponsor    \$500.00
- Gold Sponsor        \$250.00
- Silver Sponsor      \$125.00
- Bronze Sponsor     \$50.00
- Cowboy Sponsor    \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (any amount)

Donations are tax deductible and can be sent to: BWCAA, 6656 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW Pequot Lakes, MN 56472. Be sure to specify Video Promotion on your check.