



British White Cattle Association of America

Winter 2017 eNews
John Kugler, Editor

2016 National BWCAA Sale Auction Results

By Sue Seep

The British White Cattle Association National Sale was held on October 1st, 2016 at the McClain Co. Expo Center in Purcell, Oklahoma. In 2015, our Annual Membership Meeting and National Show had also been held in this location. This year we added a sale event.

Our sale was held in an outside arena with the sale ring and viewing pens set up there where all could mingle and get a good look at the great set of cattle offered for sale. The weather was perfect and both the Show and Sale were very well attended. Over 40 lots were offered for sale by our BWCAA members from all over the USA! Buyers also came from many different states and quite a few went home with their very first British White. Here are some of the results.

- Open Heifer - Top \$2,250.00 Average \$1,781.00
- Bred Heifer - Top \$2,450.00 Average \$2,110.00
- Bred Cow - Top \$2,500.00 Average \$2,100.00
- Cow/calf Pair - Top \$4,000.00
- Bull - Top \$5,000.00 Average \$2,586.00

It was a very exciting day for everyone attending. There were lots of smiles and new friendships formed as well. Many thanks to our Consigners, Buyers, Committee Members, Advertisers and Attendees for making our 2016

National BWCAA Sale such a great success! Plans have begun for 2017 to do it even bigger and better this fall in Purcell, Oklahoma. Tentative dates would be October 6 through 8th. Mark your calendars!

Docility and Reproductive Success

Speaking of Calendars – BWCAA has several 2017 BWCAA Calendars available for sale. It's still only January---plenty of the year left to enjoy some pretty cow pics! Buy one and help support the Jr. Association.

British White cattle are known for their docility. Their temperament is one of the most important reasons why most British White cattle owners acquire, raise and breed them. The Beef Improvement

Federation (BIF) defines docility as the “ease in which animals respond to handling, treatment and routine management”.

Cattle with disposition problems are a health risk for handlers, can damage equipment, raise havoc in the pasture and feed yard, increase liability exposure of producers, reduce feed efficiency, reduce meat quality, reduce Beef Quality Assurance principles and ultimately take the fun out of raising cattle.

Recent research by animal scientists K.L. White, et.al. from Kansas State University entitled “Phenotypic relationships between docility and reproduction in Angus heifers” has shown a high correlation between docility and successful reproductive success. In this study when heifers were being processed for artificial insemination (AI), a “Chute score” and a blood test for cortisol levels were taken and then tested for correlations with successful pregnancy.

They reported that a higher chute score (more active/more vocal) significantly reduced the odds of pregnancy. They also reported an increased level of the stress hormone cortisol with higher chute scores. They noted that older animals usually had lower chute scores, lower cortisol blood levels and higher pregnancy rates.

The Docility Score recommended by BIF involves rating the behavior of cattle when being processed through a squeeze chute. Docility is ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the most docile and 5 the least docile. These are shown below.

Score 1: Docile – Mild disposition. Gentle and easily handled. Stands and moves slowly during processing. Undisturbed, settled, somewhat dull. Does not pull on headgate when in chute. Exits chute calmly.

Score 2: Restless – Quieter than average, but may be stubborn during processing. May try to back out of chute or pull back on headgate. Some flicking of tail. Exits chute promptly.

Score 3: Nervous. Typical temperament is manageable, but nervous and impatient. A moderate amount of struggling, movement and tail flicking. Repeated pushing and pulling on headgate. Exits chute briskly.

Score 4: Flighty (wild). Jumpy and out of control, quivers and struggles violently. May bellow and froth at the mouth. Continuous tail flicking. Defecates and urinates during processing. Frantically runs fence line and may jump when penned individually. Exhibits long flight distance and exits chute wildly.

Score 5: Aggressive. May be similar to Score 4, but with added aggressive behavior, fearfulness, extreme agitation, and continuous movement which may include jumping and bellowing while in chute. Exits chute frantically and may exhibit attack behavior when handled alone.

BIF recommends scoring your heifers for docility when they are young, say at weaning or as yearlings. “This will reduce the extent to which current behavior has been influenced by prior handling experiences”.

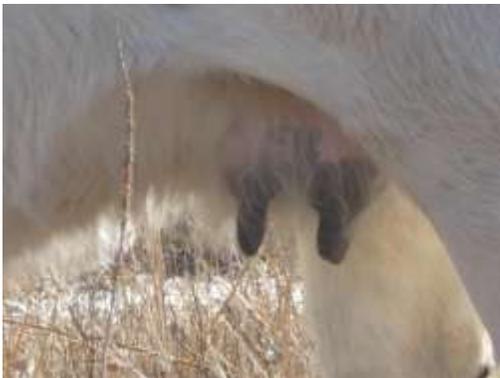
Scoring for docility when heifers are young may be one of the first steps in deciding which heifers to retain as replacements in your herd, or which to add to your “reputation seedstock list” and bring to the BWCAA National Sale in October and which to “ship down the road”. There are plenty of opportunities to do this; during vaccinations, weaning, tattooing, and at breeding. All it takes is writing it down.

Udder Talk

In the Fall 2016 e-News I focused on cow longevity (stayability) and how this trait is so important in maintaining a successful, sustainable cow/calf operation. Often cows fail to remain in the herd because of poor udder conformation and teat size. If you have ever tried to help a weak calf learn to suckle on a cow with oversized, low to the ground teats, you know what a frustration it can be! Not only do low pendulous udders make it difficult for the calf to nurse, they are more likely to be stepped upon by the cow making them more prone to mastitis. Low hanging udders and teats are more likely to become soiled with mud and manure and thus potentially increase the chance of transmitting barnyard diseases to the calf.

Animal scientists have developed an udder and teat scoring system to help in determining which cows to cull when that time comes. This scoring system categorizes udder suspension and teat size on a scale of 1 to 9, with the higher the score, the more desirable. An udder suspension score and teat score of 9 (very tight) and 9 (very small), respectively, is highly desirable. A score of 1 (pendulous udder) and (very large teat), respectively, are undesirable. For an in-depth discussion of the udder confirmation and teat scoring system, go to page 14 of the BIF Guidelines, http://beefimprovement.org/content/uploads/2013/07/BIFGuidelinesFinal_updated0916.pdf.

They say the best time score udders and teats are during the first two days after calving. You can make this more convenient if you include two additional columns in your calving book and record the udder and teats scores when recording calving ease and birth weight.

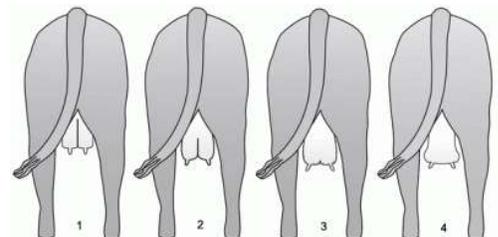


The following diagrams are taken from a University of Nebraska publication by Dr. Rick Rasby entitled “A Guide to Udder and Teat Scoring of Beef Cows” and may be accessed at http://beef.unl.edu/learning/udder_score.shtml. It is well worth the look.

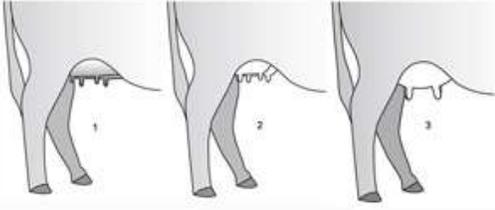
The photo to the left shows a well-formed udder on a four/year old cow. The udder is tight to the body of the cow and level to the ground. The teats are evenly spaced, small and similar in size and point perpendicular to the

ground, not splayed out to the side. This cow has an udder suspension score of 9 and a teat score of 8.

In the diagram to the right showing the rear view of udder conformation, udders in drawings 3 and 4 should be selected against.



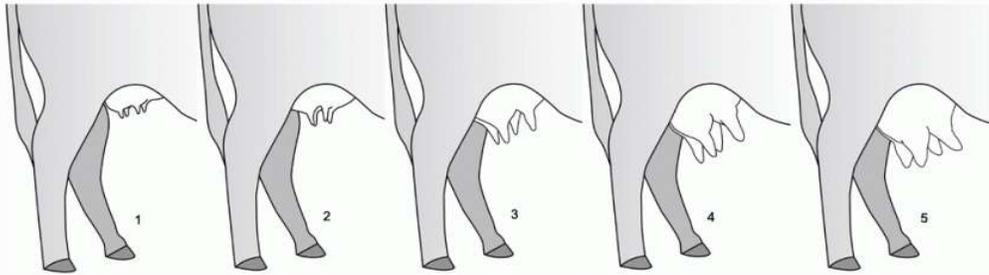
- Drawing 1: Prominent medium suspensory ligament which holds the udder tight to the body cavity. Teats suspend perpendicular to the ground.
- Drawing 2: Intermediate prominent suspensory ligament. Udder suspended further from body cavity. Udders suspended about level with the hock and almost perpendicular to the ground.
- Drawing 3: Very weak median suspensory ligament. Udder and teats suspended below the hock. When the udder and teats are engorged with milk, teats splay outward.
- Drawing 4: Median suspensory ligament absent, udder and teats suspended below hocks. Udder balloons and teats splay outward.



Likewise, in the diagram on the left, udders in drawing 3 should be selected against.

Rasby states that, "Teats should be medium in length and cylindrical in appearance. The diameter should also be consistent from the top of the teat to the bottom with the end of the teat being rounded. The teats should be placed in the middle of each quarter and point perpendicular to the ground".

In the diagram below, teats in drawings 3-5 should be selected against.



Drawing 1: Teat size - very small and symmetrical. Teat size score = 9.
 Drawing 2: Teat size - small and symmetrical. Teat size score = 7.
 Drawing 3: Teat size - Intermediate in length; still have symmetry. Teat size score = 5.
 Drawing 4: Teat size - Large, variable in length and symmetry. Teat size score = 3.
 Drawing 5: Teat size - Very large, variable length and symmetry. Teats appear to be thick. Teat size score = 1.

Remember that the goal in culling decisions is to increase longevity or stayability of cows in the herd. Udder suspension and teat scoring are valuable tools for that purpose and can easily be done. All it takes is about ten seconds to write down a score at calving.

Comments or Suggestions for e-News?

Send them to John Kugler at jkug@cozadtel.net.