

INEXPENSIVE AND EASY SMALL CATTLE

(USE SEMEN FROM OUR SMALL BULLS.)

If you are considering miniature cattle as a livestock alternative, you will find fullblood registered animals can be very expensive.

This can create a risky and uneasy situation for those of you who would like to start, but are uncertain of the best way, the best breeds, and the ultimate fit in their long range plans. Maybe you are just plain uncertain. Be assured, miniature cattle are a rewarding livestock alternative for small acreages. However, all breeds and individual animals are not created equal. The selection of those that fit your profile and goals is critical.

For some, fullbloods are the only good answer because they fit their market, pocketbook, personality, and long range goals. For these time is important. They need to go full bore now and only fullbloods will get them where they need to go. **For many others a more gentle and sure approach is a more practical approach.**

First, by all means do some careful research. Talk with some breeders. They will soon separate themselves out. You will find some you can trust and receive any help you might need. The good ones should consider your plans and profile to determine what is best for you and not the depth of your pocketbook. Realize that there are many start-up alternatives. Determine your goals and limitations, if any. Research the breeds and breeders to find the animals that fit your profile.

Happily, it is possible to freeze genetic material for future use. **Frozen semen** from quality bulls is an inexpensive way to obtain quality genetics at low cost. Quality, registered, semen is \$30 per straw.

If you have any questions about the practicality of small cattle in your life here is an easy way to put your mind at ease. Find a good female of most any breed and use **Artificial Insemination, (A.I.)**. Minicowswest has crossed with most major breeds and our experience is yours for **free**. True, often there are small numbers, but we can offer some experience to help guide your thinking.

Consider this. By using A.I. the first year you have much to gain. Any future live bull you do select can cover both your first cows and their heifer calves if unrelated. Best of all you have a no-fail chance to test the results against your goals. Now you can determine if the animals you produce are what you want to for the future. Do they meet or exceed your expectations? Do they look good and handle easily? Are they right for you and or your family? Test your beef market potential. Test your seedstock market.

With A.I. change is easier. Your investment has been practical and you haven't bet the farm in the wrong direction. Whether you keep everything or sell, your calves should at least return your investment or more.

Consider even more benefits. You don't have to care for or feed an extra animal, the bull. You also have the ability to choose different genetics for your females by using semen from more than one bull. This allows you to choose and keep the best one, if you want, to use on unrelated females.

With this “try it to see if you like it”, approach you can easily add more animals of the type you want. You can always add a live bull later on, but A.I. allows you the flexibility to choose from many that fit your profile.

Ordering semen is as simple as a phone call. After selecting the bull(s) you want determine the location to ship to and the timing, if that matters. While semen will keep for a few days in the light shipper tank, a permanent tank will keep it forever. Besides yourself, your local vet, an A. I. Breeder close by, or even a local dairy are good choices for future storage in a permanent tank.

This has many advantages. While A.I. is not rocket science, timing and technique are important. Success can vary because of this. Generally the take ratio exceeds 65% if healthy recipients are chosen and the semen is properly placed at standing estrus. Estrus can occur on the cows natural cycle, (usually 21 days), or she can be cycled hormonally. In our experience a natural cycle gives slightly better results. Because results may not yield 100% you should order extra straws to be sure. Remember they will keep forever if handled properly.

Thanks to us originally and a whole lot of others since then, there are a lot of Lowline genetics available now to go with several other small breeds. There is a lot to choose from.

We have bulls that can separate you from the herd so to speak and settle you in a couple of special and profitable niches if you choose. Small cattle should be small or they have no purpose that cannot be satisfied by traditional cattle. The hard part is to produce small animals with exceptional qualities. Our personal goals are smaller animals closer to the classic size produced by the original research project that produced Lowlines, and animals that are gentle and easy to handle. Our genetic goal also demands good conformation and outstanding ultrasounds that prove the underlying value.

Our target market is the small acreage owner who is looking for the ideal animal to properly and profitably occupy his pasture. We believe this animal should have many purposes other than ornamental, although small, black and or belted Lowlines serve that purpose well along with great pride of ownership. He can choose them as pets, produce quality seedstock, produce pasture to plate beef, mentor young people, foster 4H, teach independent business skills, and provide tax advantaged income, or a combination of all or some of the above. **Wow!**

More information and bull profiles is available at our web site, minicowswest.com or via e-mail at easy4s@msn.com

We have the experience to answer your questions and research good answers.

We wish you "All the best" from Minicowswest

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