

COBA



Since 1946

STRAIGHT FROM

# THE CHUTE

SEPTEMBER 2023

## OFFERING *MORE* THAN BEFORE

By: Dillon Ponder, Beef Business Manager, COBA/Select Sires Inc.

Hello everyone, my name is Dillon Ponder. I am the new Beef Business Manager in the Southwest. I am extremely honored and excited to be able to work with beef producers throughout western Oklahoma and the Texas panhandle to reach their goals. My experience growing up and working in multiple facets of the beef industry has allowed me to learn about artificial insemination and other reproductive technologies from some of the best in the industry, and now it is my job to use that experience to assist commercial cattlemen in getting the most out of their operation.

My biggest priority as Beef Business Manager is to build strong working relationships with beef producers in my area as we collaborate to achieve their yield and growth goals. Today's beef marketplace is strong, and producers have the opportunity to take serious steps forward in their business. In working towards that success, it is essential to set reproductive management plans that will take full advantage of the genetic resources Select Sires Inc. has to offer. Artificial insemination is a great way to improve

herd genetics and produce calves that will align with the producers' goals. Plans that include A.I. technologies can revolutionize the commercial cattle industry, especially in the southwest United States. Although A.I. is a practice that has been around for a long time, it hasn't been widely utilized by commercial cattlemen. At COBA/Select Sires, we are on a mission to change that by removing barriers for producers to take advantage of our superior combination of sires and service.

Beef and dairy operations worldwide have implemented A.I. technology. In the southwest, though, it has not always been the most easily accessible tool. Producers on large commercial operations may face the challenge of getting the right resources and facilities to be able to breed their cows using A.I. For some,

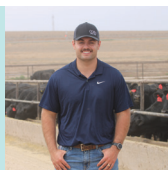
the facilities may not be ideal for breeding beef cows, and can cause stress, which in turn may negatively impact pregnancy rates. However, our newly acquired breeding barn can be used to assist producers with getting more cattle bred successfully and efficiently.

A mobile breeding barn helps to remove several barriers to acquiring the right genetics and service for herd management success. In the barn there is enough space for A.I. technicians to work effectively. The unit is covered, so the technicians can work seamlessly no matter the weather. Stress is reduced for cows during the breeding process by the confined and dark space of the barn. Calmer cows mean higher chance of pregnancies, which ultimately is the goal! By the addition of a breeding barn to our list of outstanding service

offerings, I will be able to provide more commercial producers in the Southwest the ability to use our superior genetics. A.I. technologies will have a big impact on live cattle and beef carcass quality, which is why I am excited to connect more southwest producers to these opportunities.







# THE A.I. ADVANTAGE

Now that I've provided some context of artificial insemination and the growing number of resources for commercial producers, let's jump into some of the many benefits that A.I. can offer. The first thing that most people want to do when discussing A.I. is talk about bulls. As someone with a background in the seed stock industry, believe me, I love to talk bulls as well. The genetic potential of A.I. sires to be true herd and breed changers gets me really excited and is a large part of why I love what I do. Be that as it may, we really ought to think of A.I. as a management tool first and foremost. Do you know the trait which is most correlated with profit in the commercial cattle industry? The answer is reproductive efficiency. We all know that the most expensive asset on a ranch is an open cow. A brood cow's ability to have a calf and breed back in a timely manner is what determines if she is a positive or negative asset to the herd. What is typically the

largest cost or input to a commercial cow/calf operation? As you all know, it is feed. Cattle have to be fed to their requirements relative to their position in the production cycle. Therefore, you must feed an entire herd to the requirements of the cows that are at the most taxing point in their production cycle in order for the whole herd to perform at maximum efficiency.

This is where A.I. can become a huge benefit to producers. A five-year study<sup>1</sup> at the University of Florida analyzed the benefits of implementing timed artificial insemination into a beef cowherd. By the end of the fifth year, they had increased their overall pregnancy rate by 11%, decreased their average calving day by almost 40 days, and shortened their overall breeding season from 120 days to 70 days! Results like this can have real-world economic benefits for producers. First of all, we are increasing

the overall reproductive efficiency of our cowherd. Secondly, by shortening the breeding season and thus subsequent calving season we can create a cowherd that is more homogenous to each other in regard to their position in the production cycle. Therefore, we can feed those cattle who are at the most taxing point in the cycle without wasting resources on those who are not. Also, research has shown that the use of fixed timed A.I. followed by natural service can increase overall pregnancy rates at the end of the breeding season by upwards of 10% when compared to natural service alone<sup>2</sup>! Having 10% more calves born a year has a definite impact on whether or not you have a profitable operation.

This is not where the benefits end. Further research comparing fixed timed A.I. followed by natural service versus natural service alone has shown an increase in the average age

<sup>1</sup> Lamb, Cliff G., 2014, 'The Impact of Using Artificial Insemination versus Natural Service for Florida Beef Cows'.

<sup>2</sup> Filho, M, Penteado, L, Reis, E, Reis, T, Galvao, K, Baruselli, P 2012, 'Timed artificial insemination early in the breeding season improves the reproductive performance of suckled beef cows', *Theriogenology*, vol. 79, no. 4, pp. 625-632.



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\*Offer is not valid for *genderSELECTED*™ product. All bulls subject to availability. Account must be current.  
\*7AN768 RISE ABOVE and 7AN743 CRAFTSMAN are excluded from volume discounts, but units will count towards total unit discount.

of the calf crop by 13 days. This is simply because we can get the majority of cows bred on day one of the breeding season. We can see some of the economic benefits from A.I. by doing some “cowboy math” with these figures. If our calf herd gains on average 2lbs a day x 13 days this equals 26 extra pounds at weaning. At the time that I am writing this, five weight steers at OKC West Livestock Market bring around \$255/CWT. \$2.55/lb x 26 lbs equals a benefit of \$66.30 per head in the first year, and this is just the benefit of having calves earlier in the calving season! Using this logic, we can also determine that heifers conceived from and bred by A.I. during their first breeding season will stay in the cowherd longer and wean more pounds of calf over their productive lifetime.

As you can see, there are endless benefits to using artificial insemination as a management tool. Even so, I feel like I forgot something... oh right THE BULLS! The bulls that Select Sires has available for artificial insemination have the ability to completely change a calf crop and a cow herd. The genetic potential we can inject into your cowherd from using Select Sires bulls can turn into some real dollar signs down the road.

For instance, when you compare a bull like **7AN528 Deer Valley GROWTH FUND** (90 WW EPD) to

**“The HOME TOWN daughters are easily surfacing both in donor pen and as solid cows. Their phenotype and genomic package is right where our breeding program wants to be. The HOME TOWN sons have topped our annual bull sales!”**

**- Jeremy Leister, Manager at Pollard Farms, Enid, OK**



a bull with a breed average weaning weight EPD (59 WW EPD) you would expect to get around 32 extra pounds of weaning weight from the progeny of GROWTH FUND. Just think about the extra growth that his daughters might inject into their progeny in the future. Also, the longer you own your calves the more time you have to see the payout of their genetic merit.

Producers who take their calves to the rail can see great benefits from using high-indexing A.I. sires. We can see expected progeny differences related to beef value (\$B).

When retaining ownership in calves from a bull like **7AN580 GAR HOME TOWN** (212 \$B EPD) compared to a bull with a breed average \$B EPD (132 \$B EPD) you could expect an average increase of \$85 per calf!

#### 7AN580 GAR HOME TOWN

WW	\$B	\$C
58	212	334
BREED AVERAGE		
WW	\$B	\$C
61	134	233

In my opinion, the real value of A.I. lies in the ability to use the best bulls in the industry to make your next crop of replacement females. Many of these sires come from cows with proven track records to “get the job done”. That “job” is rearing heavy calves and getting bred back in a timely manner year after year. Choosing bulls from females with a rock-solid maternal track record turns into daughters who perform very similarly. Having a cowherd full of fault-free females with good udders, feet and superior fleshing ability makes life in the commercial cow-calf industry a little easier and turns into dollars both saved and gained over time.

In closing, I believe that A.I. can be a huge net benefit for the commercial cow-calf producer. It has the proven ability to improve the reproductive efficiency of your cowherd. Management is made easier by shortening the calving season and creating homogeneity in cowherd reproduction cycles. An earlier calving season yields heavier calves that generate more net income, not only because they are older on average but also because of superior genetics! And lastly, A.I. forms females that will “get the job done”. I am excited to bring A.I. practices to the forefront with producers across this storied region of beef production and assist them in getting the most out of their cowherd.

**“The proven select sired animals have sold very well in our bull sales. GROWTH FUND, STEP-UP, and TAHOE look like they will continue that trend while adding value to our replacement heifers.”**

**- Mike Switzer, Quartermaster Creek Angus, Leedey, OK**



#### 7AN523 DEER VALLEY GROWTH FUND

WW	\$B	\$C
90	161	277
BREED AVERAGE		
WW	\$B	\$C
61	134	233



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20 lb pail

Replace or supplement  
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for newborn calves

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1 Box - 6 ct  
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➤ Offer valid September 15 - December 15, 2023.

Minimum purchase of 1 pail or 1 box of First Day Formula and 1 box of either Tri-Start Jr+ Paste or CONVERT Day One Gel. Shipping is additional unless purchased directly from DSM truck.

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# ADD *VALUE* WITH LOW CARBON BEEF

In January 2023, Select Sires Inc. announced the creation of Low Carbon Technologies, LLC, as part of its farmer-owned cooperative. Low Carbon Technologies (LCT) will serve beef and dairy farmers who are looking to document, verify and improve their operation's carbon footprint and overall sustainability.



## LOW CARBON BEEF

As part of its launch, LCT is acquiring Low Carbon Beef, LLC (LCB). This cattle certification company enables beef farmers and ranchers to add value to cattle that are raised with less greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. LCB is an approved USDA Process Verified Program service provider. Their offered certification program is based on net total GHG emissions.

Colin Beal, Ph.D., founder of Low Carbon Beef, has been named CEO of Low Carbon Technologies and Chief Sustainability Officer at Select Sires Inc. "LCB's certification programs enable farmers and ranchers to earn premiums for reducing carbon emissions of their operation," said Beal. "We are excited to develop

Low Carbon Technologies with Select Sires given Select Sires' long history of helping beef and dairy producers enhance productivity and profitability."

Feed, fertilizer, fuel, and function are the four categories for which producers who enter the LCB program are evaluated. Each category is reviewed for its level of contribution to GHG emissions. Producers can learn how their operation compares to others and identify where they can make improvements. The formation of a premium marketplace may emerge from the sustainability efforts developed through this partnership.

"Every day, farmers are taking action to be more sustainable," said Beal. "Farmers and ranchers who produce cattle efficiently and with reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and the packers or processors who participate, deserve a premium for their efforts to improve the carbon footprint of beef products. Low Carbon Technologies provides third-party certifications that retailers, restaurant operators, and consumers need to make informed choices about their beef."

Mark Johnson joined the team at Low Carbon Technologies in May as the director of beef and dairy supply chains. He shared some ambitions of the partnership with Select Sires. "We hope this will bring an additional way to align with new feedlot and

packing partners for an added value relationship by partnering more with end-users that value the sustainability aspect of our program," said Johnson. "As we choose paths to pursue, turning scientific methodology into profitable commercial business will continue to be our goal."

As the science expands, the scope of impact may grow to cover other agricultural commodities. Sustainability in all facets of food and agriculture is increasingly important, particularly in the eyes of consumers. In the rapidly developing sustainability space, Select Sires is in preeminent position to enter into new markets and influence legislation. Future initiatives and partnerships will be directly impacted by the steps being taken now with Select Sires and LCT.

Select Sires Inc. is dedicated to helping customers meet their yield and profitability goals. The creation of Low Carbon Technologies is a step forward in sustainability and holds great potential for commercial producers looking to add value to their product. Beef farmers and ranchers will find that many of their practices already meet the program criteria, and if not, new goals can be established. Herd management solutions that are offered by Select Sires can enhance on-farm sustainability measures and develop beef products with added value.

*Select Sires Inc. 2023  
Fall Beef Sire Directory*



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# A.I. *SUCCESS* STORIES

**MCKENZIE LAND & LIVESTOCK**  
Fort Stockton, TX and Milagro, NM  
Angus Commercial & Seedstock



**CARTRITE ANGUS RANCH**  
Sunray, TX and Bueyeros, NM  
Angus Commercial & Seedstock



## How long have you been using A.I.?

18 Years with COBA and using A.I.

11 years with COBA and using A.I.

## Why did you decide to use A.I.?

As a seedstock producer in the southwest, it is essential that we constantly look for genetics that fit our challenging environment. The angus breed is very diverse and we are able to incorporate desired traits into our herd. We also use AI in our commercial herd to improve our carcass traits and tighten our calving period to make a more marketable calf and to produce an efficient herd with better genetics.

Our deciding factor was to improve genetics. One thing that sets COBA apart from anyone else is the genomic profiles available on the website. They have the bulls that best fit my genetic goals.

## What do you look for when selecting bulls? Why?

Providing proven genetics to our customers is our top priority. Raising cattle in marginal rangeland means some EPDs are more important than others. We typically look for the most balanced animal we can find. Keeping mature weight and size in mind, we prefer a more moderate animal that doesn't sacrifice weaning and yearling weights. Most of our customers sell their calves at weaning, so weaning based EPDs are also important. For those that retain ownership, we recognize that carcass and growth traits are important, so we select AI sires within the top 20% of those traits if possible.

I look for the most complete bull using every EPD. The bull must excel in carcass merit (particularly marbling) and performance (gain and DMI) with a good yearling and carcass weight. I use both genomic (that is the one thing that stands COBA apart) and proven with more emphasis on genomics. My long term goal is to have a moderate cow with the genetics I'm looking for in the bulls I use.

## What makes a calf/cow stand out in your herd?

We take pride in our cow herd and look for the traits that will make them profitable and productive for our customers. We want our cows to have great feet, recover from calving quickly, and produce a solid calf year after year. In hard years, like we are currently experiencing, the strong genetics show themselves through the condition of the cows and calves. If a cow can be slicked off, raise a good calf, and breed up quickly after calving, then we know our breeding program is working well.

The cows that stand out in my herd are moderate size that calve early in the calving season and wean a calf that grades prime, being in the top 15% of the breed for a combination of gain and DMI.

*“With A.I., I'm able to use the best bull in the world.”*

- Tommy Cartrite, Cartrite Angus Ranch



# BULL TALK

## WITH BEEF SPECIALISTS



**Dan Curtin**  
Beef Specialist  
dcurtain@cobaselect.com  
928-368-3634  
Elida, NM

**7AN607 Hoffman STAGECOACH 1908** is an excellent sire coming from some of the best proven genetics available today. This sire has phenotype paired with outstanding maternal capabilities and growth. He is a moderate-farmed sire that ranks in the top 1% for \$M, \$W, WW and Hair Shedding (HS). Creating moderate sized cows that can 'slick out' quickly is especially important for Southwestern producers. Cattle that shed their coats can handle heat stress better and breed back more efficiently than other animals who keep a thick, coarse hair coat longer into the summer months. Extreme drought and heat are facts of life when you ranch in Southwestern United States. 7AN607 STAGECOACH is the right kind of sire to create the right kind of replacements for the future of your herd.

**7AN607 STAGECOACH**



**Brad Unrau**  
Beef Specialist  
brad@cobaselect.com  
918-798-9184  
Pryor, OK

**7AN684 Connealy GUARD RAIL 923E** is a 14AN502 TAHOE son that I plugged into several herds this last spring. GUARD RAIL is a very attractive bull to me for commercial producers, he has tremendous birth to yearling spread and has the phenotype to sire the kind of heifers you want to keep for cows. GUARD RAIL ranks in the top 1% for Heifer Pregnancy which is going to be one of the top traits producers look for in making replacement heifers and is also available in sexed female for those wanting to incorporate sexed semen into their breeding projects.

**7AN684 GUARD RAIL**



**Dillon Ponder**  
Beef Business Manager  
dponder@cobaselect.com  
918-508-8922  
Leedey, OK

A sire that many people including myself like a lot is **7AN735 Balldridge GIBSON G859**. Balance, that's the word that comes to mind when I think of GIBSON. He is truly a bull that will not lead you astray. A Confidence Plus out of the famed Y69 cow's best daughter B061. GIBSON is a stud on the hoof and on paper! He is deep sided, good footed, correct in his angles and thick made. Also, he ranks in the top 1% for Claw, RE, \$M, and \$W, and ranks in the top 15% for 14 traits overall! His daughters are moderate, deep and attractive with beautiful udders. GIBSON'S combination of phenotype, pedigree, and performance will create male progeny that will sell high and females that will produce in the pasture for years to come!

**7AN735 GIBSON**



# COBA

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1224 Alton Darby Creek Rd.  
Columbus, Ohio 43228

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Columbus, Ohio 43228

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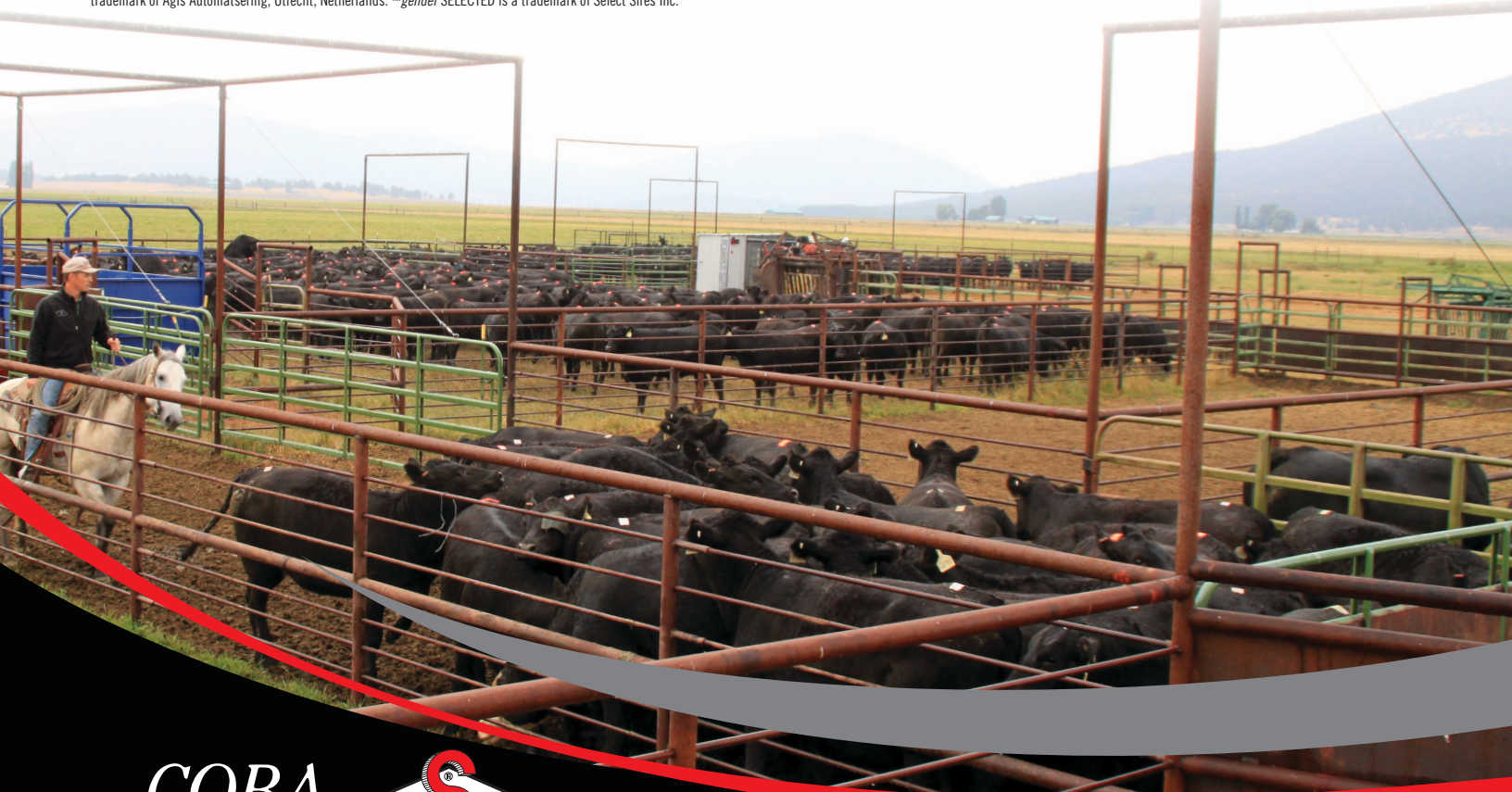
Cover photo taken at the Jackson Ohio Agricultural Research Development Center in the Fall of 2019. Back cover photo taken by Kate Roberts.



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