

## A Surprise Calf whose Parents worked in the Rodeo Business. 2024 mid-April.

We buy culled beef cows to fatten on grass, or grass-hay in the winter.

When they are sufficiently “grass-fat,” after lounging in our pastures three to six months, we convert them to whole animal ground beef.

Last winter Janelle bought several loads of cattle for that purpose.

One of the cows was red with obvious long-horn breeding. The cow’s horns were cut and broken.

Animals used in rodeo events have horns that are blunted, (sharp tips cut) to reduce injuries to other cattle and to cowboys.

Long horns also tend to break in feed bunks, trailers, and gates.

That red longhorn cow surprised us with a big red calf about ten days ago.

Probably her first.

This happens on average five or six times each year.

A cow or heifer that was not known to be pregnant produces a calf.

Let’s just say that nature finds a way.

The cow was a good and attentive mom, but the calf could not stand on its own.

That happens occasionally and is often resolved naturally within 24 hours.

Not being able to stand, the calf could not nurse.

Gail walked to the pasture to help, but the cow was too spooky.

Often the best strategy is to let the mother and newborn work it out.

So, we did that.

By sunup, the next morning I could see from the house that the calf was starving and frosty.

The cow had walked to rejoin the herd.

That was Sunday morning, Ella’s day to do chores.

Ella checked the calf.

It was still alive and even stood to run a few steps.

Later Janelle and Juan brought the calf home and put it in a shed with straw and a heat lamp.

Gail, Samantha, and Hazel spent many hours warming, feeding, and trying to save the calf.

Hazel stayed home from school Monday and spent all day getting warm milk into the calf.

Gail, Samantha, and Hazel continued nursing the calf throughout the week assisted by Sarah and Jordan.

By Friday it was running around, kicking its hooves for joy.

Because it never nursed, it never bonded with its mother.

Janelle has the first choice of “surprise” beef calves that are born here.



But because this calf was bonded to Hazel, and Hazel to it, Janelle generously gave it to Hazel.

It is at Hazel's farm now.

Hazel named her calf Journey.

I do not know why, it just appealed to Hazel.

**About the parentage of this unplanned calf.**

The calf's physical traits reveal much about her sire.

Journey's father was a Brahman Bull.

Brahman cattle have big ears that are low and floppy.

They also have loose skin that tends to hang.

Brahman cattle are descended from the Indicus cattle of India and Southeast Asia.

They have four times more sweat glands than European cattle.

All these differences make Indicus cattle much more tolerant of hot weather.

Which is also why you will see cattle with these features in the pastures of Texas and Florida.

The Europeans breeds that we are used to are descended from the Aurochs species of wild that lived that lived in prehistoric Europe and western Asia.

Those include Angus, Herefords, Charolais, Holsteins, Jerseys and dozens of other breeds that originated in Europe.

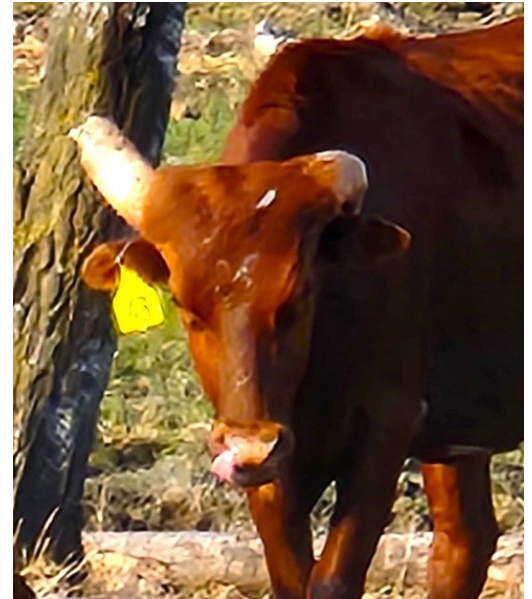
All Indicus cattle including the Brahman have a large hump over the top of the shoulder and neck. It will be interesting to see if Hazel's Journey develops a hump.

The bison hump is fundamentally different than the hump of Brahman cattle or camels.

But that is a different story.

This one is long enough.

Best regards, Tom



The calf's Brahman ears are obvious.

