

Red Heifer and Calf

I bought two pregnant heifers in December.

I thought it would be nice to have some spring calves, mostly for the fun of it.

This Red cow with the five-day old calf is one.



The other is a strikingly pretty British White heifer.

Cattle of the British White breed are white with black points.

“Black points” means it has black hairs or skin at the extremities of its ears, nose, and feet.

If it calves successfully, which it should do within the month, I will post photos.

The Red cattle are pretty too, but red is just red.

This calf was born healthy and exceptionally fat.

The calf is very active, playful, and friendly.

The heifers, both the Red and the White were apparently poorly handled.

They are nervous and very flighty.

I have worked to calm them over the winter but with less than the usual success.

Some strains of cattle have been selectively bred for production characteristics like rapid growth and high fertility to the detriment of good temperament.

For example, there is a strain of Black Angus cattle that are exceptionally aggressive.

Animals of that strain behave as if they want to cross the fence to attach.

They are high strung and hyperactive when people are around.

Poor breeding.

I was beginning to think this Red Angus heifer was the result of poor breeding, but I now know that is not the case.



The calf is exceptionally calm and friendly.

In the cow-calf photo, is clear to see that the cow is on high alert.

That is shown by the way she holds her head and ears. Her senses are tightly focused.

She is on the edge of flight or attach.

In the calf only photo, notice how the calf's ears, head and body express curiosity and calm.

Poor handling, bad animal care, not poor breeding, is the cause of the red cow's anxiety.

The calf lets me be quite close.

It will walk up to me.

That forced the cow to be closer to me than she would like.

The calf's calm demeanor is noticeably building the cow's confidence.

I have seen this at other times but seldom so clearly.

There is always much to learn. Tom