

Effect of Breeding Yearling Heifers to Texas Longhorns VS Other Breeds To Increase Longevity and Total Production

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Large calves cause a lot of calving difficulty for heifers. The associated stress causes heifers to be less likely to recycle and remain in the herd.

There are several ways to try to improve conception rate and calving ease. One of current interest is to breed yearling beef heifers to Texas Longhorns, which are known to produce small calves at birth. Small birth weights lead to more calving ease. This easier calving may leave heifers in better condition to recycle and conceive the following year, thus improving their chances of remaining in the herd. However, heifers bred to Texas Longhorn bulls wean lighter calves. This might be made up by producing more calves in the following years.

The costs of maintaining a cow are very high. A cow weaning a calf every year, starting as a two year old, is obviously desirable.

The purpose of this study was to see if lifetime production of cows bred as yearlings to Texas Longhorn bulls was the same as the lifetime production of cows bred to other beef breeds as yearlings.

Two mating schemes were established to see if breeding yearling beef heifers to Texas Longhorns (TLF) or other beef breeds (OTF) would increase longevity and/or lifetime weaning weight production. Eight hundred records over eight years were obtained. The weaning weight was adjusted to 205 days for sex of calf and age of cow. Breeding heifers to Texas Longhorns did result in easier calving for two year olds. In subsequent years, the heifers bred to Texas Longhorn bulls to calve as two year olds, had about the same difficulty as cows bred to other breeds as two year olds. The conception rate of heifers bred to Texas Longhorns was lower. These cows also had a lower conception rate in following years than cows in the OTF class. Thus, the easier calving of the TLF class as two year olds did not improve the conception rate in subsequent years. The average age and the average number of years in herd for each class was the same. The total lifetime production adjusted weaning weight per cow was the same in each class. The reason for longevity and total production being the same for both classes may be due to the poor conception in the Texas Longhorn class.