

September News 2014

It's a busy time of year when school gets into full swing and my calendar fills up with the blink of an eye. I somehow find time to care and spoil Belle even if that means late nights in the barn because of early morning livestock judging practices and afternoon practices looking over farm facts for the FFA Quiz Team. The month of September is a hectic and busy month in particular because it is also a time when I am putting my final touches on all my county fair projects that will be showed at our annual fair October 8-12. Unfortunately that mean that Belle and I have not been on the show circuit this month and she has been in semi-retirement, which means she gets fed twice a day as usual, gets to graze the pasture with my other show heifers and only get a pampering once a week.

One thing that I have been doing the last month is trying to decide when to get Belle bred, since she will be a year old in November. In the past I waited a little too long to breed my other Simmental heifers and hurt me in the show ring because they had not calved by the time they were 2 years old. Bovine Elite, a nationally known semen bank has a good selection of Simmental bulls that I have begun studying the EPD of but in the end I will make my final decision after I consult with my breeder, Knezek Simmental Simbrah Ranch.



Although it doesn't seem like there have been a lot of activity with this project this month in terms of shows Belle and I have been still working on our showmanship skills to prepare for the upcoming shows.

Feeding Program:

(twice daily)

10 lbs of Show Chow 2 lbs Beet Pulp 1.5 lbs Cottonseed Hulls

0.75 lbs Depth Charge 0.5 lbs VitaFerm Unlimited Hay & Pasture Grazing

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Feed Program:

(twice daily)

Show Chow – 8 pounds

Beet Pulp – 3 pounds

Cottonseed Hulls- 1.5 pounds

Depth Charge – 1.25 pounds

Vita Firm – 0.5 pound

Coastal Hay – 4-5 flakes

Pasture Grazing – Unlimited

Stress Tub – Free Choice

It's hard to believe this month marks the halfway point for my Majors Scramble Project with Belle; over the last few months we have been awarded many ribbons and a buckle or two but we still have a few things we have to accomplish before the end of the 2014. One is getting Belle bred. As I stated in last month's report I started researching the bulls that were available through Bovine Elite, a semen dealer, and I've gained the knowledge and expertise of my breeder Knezek Simmental Simbrah Ranch. Between his suggestion and my thoughts we decided to breed Belle during the month of December so that she would calve during the late summer months. This will help ensure she would be ready for the 2016 Majors Spring Circuit.

Belle has remained in semi-retirement mode due to all the preparation with my animal projects for our County Fair at the beginning of the month, where I was awarded Grand Champion Goat and Class Champion with my County Scramble Heifer. Unfortunately she remained in semi-retirement mode throughout the month of October due to the many FFA activities that I am involved in. During the months of September and October most of the area county fairs have livestock judging contests and with that comes before and after school practices and weekend competitions. Along with livestock judging contests the fall brings LDE (Leadership Development Event) season, which kicks in to full swing during the month of October.

With my absence in the barn I've had to depend on my family to help feed, maintain order in the barn and ensure we have feed on hand for my herd. Although much of my week is consumed with FFA practices and/or activities I try to ensure I have one day a week, usually Sundays to spend the full day in the barn. During that time Belle and I work on our showmanship skills to prepare for the 7th annual HLSR Progress Scramble Show at the beginning of Nov. Although Belle hasn't received her daily attention over the last month when my schedule allows it we stroll through the pasture and practice as we would set up in the show ring; of course Belle is like a pro and is always on point with her feet. There are days that she just wants to be a normal bovine and run and kick in the pasture and when she does that of course my other heifer join her like kids on a playground.



Picture Captions –

Top – Jacob Diezi and Phillip Shackelford check Belle's ear tattoo and pull hair (DNA) for the Statewide Heifer Validation in effect for all Texas Majors.

Bottom -- Belle and I working on our showmanship skills in the pasture to get ready for the 7th Annual HLSR Progress Scramble Show next month.

By: Jenna Hein