



FROM THE PINEYWOODS

Volume 7 Number 1 - January 2010

Conserving the Pineywoods

Newsletter of the Pineywoods Cattle Registry & Breeders Association

PCRBA Meets to Prepare for Another Phenomenal Year

The Annual PCRBA Meeting, rescheduled to January 9, 2010, took place at 3:00 pm in Hattiesburg, MS at the James Lynn Cartledge Center. Among agenda items were the 2010 Cattle Sale and registration certificates.

Members present celebrated several major events in the Pineywoods community, three of which are listed in the article below. They also finalized plans for the next annual sale to be held April 10.

Two changes noted were

1. Raise of annual dues from \$25 to \$35 to cover publishing and advertising expenses,
2. Restriction of registration rights to members current with dues.

Additionally, the newsletter is scheduled to go out no later than the second week of each quarter so if you have news or ads to place, please submit them by the first week of January, April, July, or October.

Pineywoods in the Spotlight

Brantley Ridge Farm an Emerging Leader in Georgia Pineywoods.

Jay Wells together with his sons Bryan and A.J. have taken the lead in Georgia both to promote the Pineywoods beef in new markets such as Emory University and to save the Holt strain in its native Georgia.

Pineywoods Reach New York Times

Pineywoods has not only gone international, thanks to Justin Pitts and Slow Foods, but also has reached the top of the news chain in a recent New York Times article about heritage livestock, quoted below.

“As an example of how vulnerable our milk supply is, Dr. Saperstein points to a heat wave in California in 2006 in which some 16,500 Holsteins died, despite farmers’ efforts to save them with cooling mists of water and fans. In contrast, the Pineywoods cattle in SVF’s collection were introduced into the forests of the South by Spaniards in the 1500s specifically because they tolerated heat. In all likelihood, the hardy animals would have survived the heat wave.”

From *Rare Breeds, Frozen in Time*, by Barry Estabrook, New York Times, January 5, 2010

Pineywoods Rates at Ayrshire Farms Annual Beef Tasting Event

On September 14, 2009, Hudson River Landing Farm again enjoyed participating at Sandy Learner’s annual beef-tasting event held at her farm, Ayrshire, in Upperville, Virginia. One of 10 animals selected for the event, the Pineywoods steer ranked 6th out of 10 in the group tasting but one of 3 top tastes in the chef and food editor’s choice.

In this event, animals are brought in and finished for 100 days on the same feed, then prepared identically for blind tasting as 1”-2” cubes identified only by a number on a toothpick. Participating guests, breeders, food editors, and chefs, then rate each for taste, texture, and color.

The pleasure of beef tasting, company, and Ayrshire Farm itself makes this a most enjoyable way to promote the Pineywoods as a feature of fine dining as well as heritage preservation.

Announcing the Annual PCRBA Sale

***April 10, 2010
The Magnolia Center,
Laurel, Mississippi***



Terms and Conditions of the PCRBA Sale

1. The Fourth Annual PCRBA Sale will be held Saturday 10 April 2010 at the Magnolia Center in Laurel, Mississippi. All stock must be in the barn by 10:00 a.m. Saturday. Stock may be viewed from 10:30 until 12:30 p.m.
2. A \$25.00 per head for cattle consignment fee will be required in order to sell your cattle. This fee, along with a copy of your registration papers and vet inspection, is due no later than 28 February 2010. All entries past this date will be rejected. There is a limit of 45 head of cattle for the sale with no producer selling more than 5 head total. Consignment is first come first served. The consignment fee will be refunded at the time of sale unless you do not bring your consigned cattle. It will not be refunded if you do not bring your stock; no exceptions. The purpose of this fee is to help fund and cover the expense of the sale.
3. All cattle are subject to inspection by the PCRBA Board of Directors and are subject to being rejected due to health or outside genetics.
4. Commission is 5%. PO fee is \$10.00 head. All proceeds are used for the promotion of Pineywoods cattle.
5. No cattle over 5 years of age will be accepted.
6. All breeders will have their cattle inspected prior to the sale by a veterinarian and will provide those papers with their consignment fee and registration papers. The State of Mississippi requires that all cattle be tested for bangs (brucellosis).
7. We encourage all breeders to bring the very best as they will be the ambassadors for the breed and will serve to promote the Pineywoods breed.
8. For every breeding age bull you sell you must consign two females. No exceptions. These may be grown cows, heifers, or bred heifers.
9. The order of the sale shall be as follows:
 - (A) Dry cows
 - (B) Pairs
 - (C) Adult bulls
 - (D) Bred or breeding age heifers
 - (E) Heifer calves
 - (F) Young bull and bull calves
 - (G) Oxen or steers for oxen
10. All buyers paying by check are asked to have letters of credit from their respective banks.

For more information contact Justin B. Pitts at 601.543.5173, justinbpitts@peoplepc.com, or P.O. Box 906 Ellisville, Mississippi 39437

Ads for Program. We need to sell ads for the program for the upcoming Sale. Contact anyone that you do business with such as your bank, tractor and equipment dealer, feed store or Co-op, your vet. etc. The purpose is to raise money for the PCRBA. Whole page ads are \$80.00, 1/2 page ads are \$40.00, and 1/4 page ads are \$25.00. Help out with this project and help the PCRBA grow.

Re: Dues, Fall Meeting, 2010 Sale Booth Displays, Volunteers

In a recent meeting of the PCRBA it was brought to the attention of the membership that people are registering their cattle but aren't paying their dues. Many believe that by registering cattle they are automatically members of the PCRBA. Not so. By paying dues you are a member of the PCRBA and this entitles you to register cattle. In the future the Registrar will have a list of all dues paying members and if you submit cattle to be registered and are not on this list **your cattle will not be registered** with the PCRBA. The dues you pay are used for the promotion of Pineywoods cattle and if you aren't paying it isn't fair for you to receive the benefits without having helped.

There will be a fall meeting of the PCRBA at the farm of Dottie and Fred Diamond in Saucier, Miss. on 02 Oct. 2010 at 10:00 a.m. with dinner to follow. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss any business on hand for the PCRBA and mainly a time of fellowship and fun. We will be visiting area farms with Pineywoods cattle and celebrating our heritage. All members and interested parties are encouraged to attend. Contact the Diamonds by calling 228-832-3190 or e-mail diamondlogging@peoplepc.com.

All dues paying members of the PCRBA are encouraged to create a display and set it up at the 2010 Sale even if you don't have cattle consigned. Be as creative as you wish and design a display promoting your farm or ranch. Have cards and other contact information available for potential customers. Also, if you have any old time arts and crafts that you wish to demonstrate please feel free to do so. For more information contact Justin Pitts.

We need volunteers for the following jobs at the 2010 sale:

- Unloading and loading
- Tagging in at check in
- Clean up
- Ticket writers
- Penning help during the Sale
- Concession stand volunteers
- In ad finitum

Contact Justin Pitts, Chairman, Board of Directors, for how you can help. [See contact information below.]

Best Practices

In this column, we post items of interest from members who hope to make significant contributions to Pineywoods in breeding and in marketing nationally and internationally. Here are some questions recently posed for our experience breeders. Please send your responses to the newsletter editor or webmaster listed below.

1. Is an animal considered grass-fed if it has been finished off with a grain mix?
2. Should breeders try to maintain the original features of the breed or try to improve for commercial value?
3. What commercial or other advantages are particularly strong in various strains?

Pineywoods in the Spotlight *Continued from page 1*

Wikipedia on Pineywoods

Perhaps the most referred to site on the web for general information is Wikipedia. As a community encyclopedia, this site depends on informed individuals to combine their knowledge of a subject. They submit information that is checked and usually posted with the understanding that other individuals may add, contradict, or comment on it.

Below is the article on Pineywoods. Since PCRBA is the repository of the most primary information available, those of you on-line should consider adding to the site. Those of you not on the web may be interested in what has been published so please ask an internet friend to go to the website below or go to your local library and they will help. If you have information to submit, one of the officers or staff will try to help you do so.

Pineywoods (cattle)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pineywoods_\(cattle\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pineywoods_(cattle))

"Pineywoods cattle are an endangered breed of **landrace heritage cattle** that are descended from the original Spanish stock left along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of **Florida, Georgia, Mississippi** and **Alabama** by the **Spanish explorers** in the early 1500's. The breed was historically cultivated by the "Crackers" of **Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi.**^[*citation needed*]"

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“The cattle bred without human interference in the brushy wooded terrain of the [Gulf Coast](#). They developed natural resistance to disease and are able to forage on marginal vegetation.

“History

“Origins and Development

“Spanish explorers in the 1490s and 1500s brought to the [new world](#) breeding stock of small, hardy cattle which were able to survive the sea crossing. Some were released deliberately, trusting that their survival instincts would allow them to survive and reproduce. Thus months or years later a ready food source would be available. Pineywoods (also called woods cattle and Rakestraw), [[Florida Cracker cattle|Florida Crackers, [Corriente](#), and [Texas Longhorns](#) all descended from the same original Spanish stock.]] In time, these Spanish cattle acquired different names from the localities where they were concentrated. The name pineywoods was derived from their location in the Pineywoods of southern Mississippi.

“The Pineywoods survived and adapted to their new home. For the first 350 years in the new world they lived in the wild. The ones moving west into Texas evolved to a [plains](#) habitat and developed wide sets of horns characteristic of the longhorn breeds. Those remaining in Florida, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi had to survive in thick woods and brushy areas. This environment favored small, nimble animals with slender horns allowing passage through narrow brushy trails. Since the mid 1800’s they have live in semi-wild conditions on very large family ranches along the Gulf Coast. [1]

“Early [settlers](#) and [Native Americans](#) used the cattle as [oxen](#), meat, milk, [hides](#), and as a trading commodity. During the early 1800s the [Choctaw Indians](#) began migrating west in search of agricultural opportunities and brought livestock, including Pineywoods, with them. History tells us only a limited number of livestock was brought west during the great [Indian removal](#) of the 1830s. Many people and livestock were lost due to the harsh traveling conditions before reaching Oklahoma. Presumably therefore the majority of Spanish type livestock were introduced to Oklahoma prior to the 1830s.

“Pineywoods numbers began a decline in the late 1800s and early 1900s, displaced by improved English and European cattle in the southeastern United States. As the overall popularity and abundance of Pineywoods declined, only a few families continued to keep [purebred](#) herds. During this time the agricultural programs of the [land grant universities](#) were promoting highly bred domestic cattle and saw these as inferior “scrub” animals. The effect of these programs was to endanger the Pineywoods existence as a breed. As time passed, these herds became isolated from one another to the point that each herd has become a unique and self-contained strain. [2]

[edit]

“Current Status

“In 1999, some estimates were that the herd had shrunk to fewer than 200 breeding animals. The [Pineywoods Cattle Registry & Breeders Association](#) (PCRBA) was formed to preserve the breed. PCRBA members are dedicated to preserving the Pineywoods breed, viewing them as a national resource, and attempt to keep them in natural conditions. [3]

“Pineywoods cattle are listed on the “critical” list by the [American Livestock Breeds Conservancy](#) (ALBC). The conservancy’s definition of critical is fewer than 200 North American annual registrations and an estimate of fewer than 2,000 global population. Less than 1000 head of pure stock, but not necessarily registered, have been located by the Pineywoods cattle registry.

“The pineywoods cow is well known in some areas and has some impact on more general culture. [4]

[edit]

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“Traits

“The Pineywoods cattle have been developed largely through [natural selection](#). They developed natural [resistance](#) to most diseases, insects, and parasites of the region and are able to [forage](#) on rough vegetation that commercial cattle will not touch. Even though they graze grass like domestic cattle, Pineywoods also browse on brush and tree leaves and twigs like [goats](#). This makes more efficient use of the land than domestic cattle who will graze only selectively on [non-native](#) grass.

“Pineywoods are also “dry land” cattle and have evolved to avoid predators by spending only a minimum of time at their [water hole](#). This makes them very low impact cattle, as they do not contribute as much to bank erosion and fouling of streams like most domestic stock.

“Pineywoods are noted for their ability to survive and reproduce under the often-harsh conditions of the South, withstanding high temperatures and high humidity. These American breeds have important qualities, such as fertility and longevity, that are lacking in the Brahman, Zebu, and other heat-tolerant cattle commonly used. [5] They require no assistance with [calving](#). They are very self-sufficient due to their varied foraging habits, low birth weights, gentle disposition and hardiness. The Carter strain in particular is noted for its excellent mammary system, reproduction, longevity, docility, self-sufficiency and calving ease.

“Pineywoods are generally red, brown, or occasionally black and white, spotted, or speckled. They often resemble the related Texas Longhorn and Florida Cracker cattle in color. Compared to the Texas Longhorn, the [horns](#) of the Pineywoods cattle are small to medium in length and tend to curve inward or upward, and can ward off most dogs and predators with their sharp horns. Mature weight ranges from 600-1000 pounds, occasionally larger depending on the environment. The smaller structure and horn size has been retained to meet the needs of farmers and [loggers](#) of southern Mississippi. Despite their apparent advantages, at least in some regions, the term “pineywoods” has come to mean a thin, bony, or poor looking cow.[6]

“Strains

“The various races, strains, or sub-[breeds](#) are identified by the names of the families who owed the land where the herds ranged: Holt in Georgia, Barnes in Alabama, and Conway, Bayliss and Carter in Mississippi.[7] All are Pineywoods but the animals on each farm evolved under slightly different conditions and can be recognized by differences in color, shape, and size. Some of the family strains have been selected for specific colors or patterns. For example, Conway cattle are red/white in various patterns; Holt cattle are nearly all black/white spotted to roans; while the Griffin strain tend to be yellow.

“The Carter strain began to be developed in 1850, by William Carter of Perry County, MS. No outside genes have been introduced to the herd since 1895. The Carter family owned a dairy and selected their cattle for milk production. After 1942, which marked the end of their dairy business, using the same strain of cattle, they began selecting stock for beef quality.

“References

1. ^ <http://www.pineywoodscattle.org/id19.html>
2. ^ <http://www.albc-usa.org/cpl/piney.html>
3. ^ <http://www.pineywoodscattle.org/id1.html>
4. ^ Cultural reference: pineywoods cow babysuit: <http://www.belleanddean.co.uk/organic-pineywood-cow-white-baby-bodysuit-p-31.html>
5. ^ <http://www.albc-usa.org/cpl/piney.html>
6. ^ Dictionary of American Regional English. By Frederic Gomes Cassidy, Joan Houston Hall Published by Harvard University Press, 2002 ISBN 0674008847, 9780674008847, page 168
7. ^ http://www.kerrcenter.com/overstreet/heritage_breeds.htm

“External link

Picture of a Texas Pineywoods Cow, Barrington Living History Farm
Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site, Texas: [1]”