

# The half blood Lowline cow is diamond in the rough

USING LOWLINES IN A COMMERCIAL RESEARCH HERD

At 2012 American Lowline Annual Meeting Kris Ringwall, North Dakota State University Dickinson Extension Research Center spoke on how the center has been using Lowline cattle as part of their cross breeding system in their commercial cow herd since 2004. This is an extract from his talk taken from the American Lowline Ledger.

The center initially used Lowline bulls over conventional commercial cattle to produce F1 first cross cattle and followed them through to the feedlot. They established that with final weights of 1100 - 1300lbs (498 - 588kg) and consistent quality grading the turn-off could definitely fit into the industry. They then took a couple of years off from using Lowlines but then something happened that really turned their heads. "We were using these conventional calving ease bulls and ended up pulling a lot of calves so after not using Lowlines for two years, we got back in. OK so we had established usage on the males and determined they had a place in the business but where did the females fit? We bred the F1 females to Red Angus and Angus calving ease bulls and were quite pleased with the resulting calves. What really impressed us was the average cow weight of the F1 relative to the weight of the calf they produced. The other thing impressive was the less acres per pair required by the F1 compared to the conventional pair.

We have about 80 head of F1 Lowline females. From our research we know the Lowline influence will reduce cow size. It will reduce calving issues. We produce more ribeye area per hundred weight. We produce more gain per acre. And the Lowline influence creates management options that we can implement. We have an opportunity to breed Lowline bulls to conventional heifers. The male progeny can be marketed through traditional channels. The F1 females from this cross - 1/2 Lowline and 1/2 conventional heifers become your replacement heifers in a terminal Lowline herd where all offspring from these F1's are marketed. This beef cattle system results in shaving 300lbs (136kgs) off cow size while maintaining muscle and producing mainstream industry carcasses".

Kris' enthusiasm for the Lowline cross brimmed over as he wrapped up his discussion on the Lowline influence at the Dickson Research Center. "The half blood Lowline is really a diamond in the rough, she is really somewhat undiscovered. Our research shows the F1 Lowline female makes a terrific cow herd. Your challenge is to breed more heifers to Lowline bulls to make the F1's and let people try them. **You need to tell your story - they work, they really do**".



Cross bred female with her calf .