

**LASATER**  
**BEEFMASTERS**  
FOUNDATION HERD OF THE BEEFMASTER BREED

“The Pedigree  
is in the Name”

The 6 Essentials

**Summer 2013  
NEWSLETTER**

DISPOSITION  
FERTILITY  
WEIGHT  
CONFORMATION  
HARDINESS  
MILK PRODUCTION

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**We select cattle to work for us, so we know they will work for you.**

## **Come to the Sale!!**

**September 6: Cow Contract Selection and  
Field Day - A vibrant discussion about land  
stewardship**

**September 7: 10:00 am - Selling 120 Bulls**

**We will send the 2013 bull sale video on or about the middle of  
August.**

**Private Treaty Foundation Females available now.**

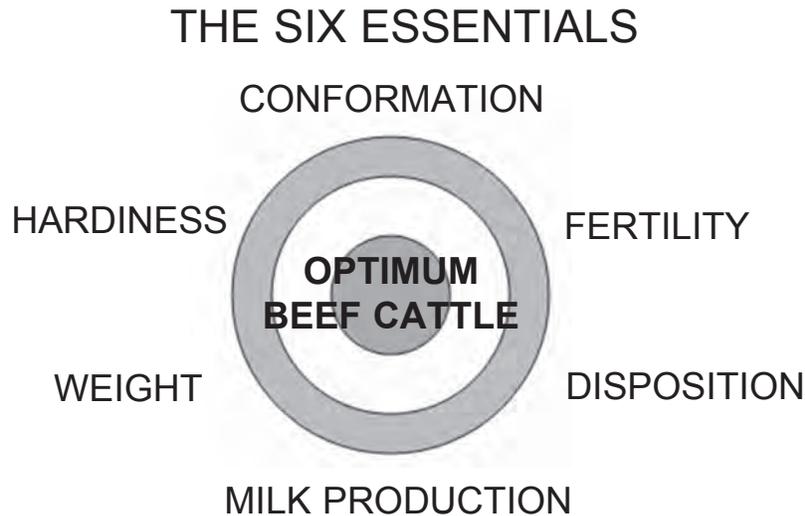


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Featured AI Sire: 7261**

# The Lasater Ranch Selection Program: A Summary

How the **Six Essentials** are used in the selection of **Lasater Beefmaster®** Genetics.



**“Each of the Six Essentials is equally important to hitting the target of producing optimum cattle. Removing any one of the Six Essentials results in the animal’s productive value being greatly diminished.”**

Tom Lasater

**Multiple trait selection means compromise and will eliminate individuals who may excel in a single trait (for example weight), but do not meet the other optimum criteria outlined in the Six Essentials. Nature itself culls out extremes.**

**We believe that optimum cattle are those that will sustain long-term profitability through the efficient conversion of forages into lean beef for the least possible cost.**



## 1. Disposition:

Having been raised under identical range conditions, the difference in disposition between individuals is apparent during the first several days following weaning. Those with poor dispositions are culled. Thereafter, disposition is judged continually and animals which exhibit unacceptable behavior are culled from the herd.



## 2. Fertility:

Bulls retained for use in our herd go into service at approximately 14 months of age. All breeding occurs in large multiple-sire herds. For more than 50 years, the bulls with the highest libido and the strongest competitive instincts have left the most progeny. Less fertile bulls, or those less willing to compete, have left little or no progeny.

Females are first exposed at 12 to 14 months of age. All age groups are bred under range conditions during a 45-day breeding season. Here in the Foundation Herd, strict culling on fertility goes back to 1948. That year, Tom Lasater decided that, to remain in the herd, a female would need to calve as a two-year-old, and every successive year, and actually bring an acceptable calf to the weaning pen each year. Those basic production rules have been enforced, with no exceptions, for more than fifty years.

Even cows losing calves for reasons beyond their control, such as having a calf killed by lightning or in a blizzard, are removed from the herd. That ensures that every calf's dam has worked and rested on the same schedule, making all performance data and comparisons more valid.

This selection history means that every bull purchased out of this herd not only carries the visible facts of performance such as weaning weight, yearling weight, and conformation; he also carries the genetic imprint of his dam and other female ancestors who have been held to these stringent production requirements for these many years.

Remember, the goal of a selection program is not to keep every cow in the herd, or, in the case of fertility, to get every cow bred. Herd improvement comes through culling, by weeding out those that don't measure up to their mates. If you are getting plenty of your heifers and cows bred, then tighten the screws: reduce your feeding program and shorten your breeding season. Your herd will advance genetically, and the cattle that make the grade will be producing "more beef for less money."



### 3. Weight:

Bulls to be retained as herd sires are selected based upon weaning weight, post-weaning gain and yearling weight. Weaning weight primarily measures the milking ability of a bull's dam, but also gives an indication of a bull's own growth potential. Post weaning gain to a year of age (in our program) measures how efficiently a bull is able to convert native forage to pounds of beef. Yearling weight is a combination of weaning weight and post weaning gain and therefore is the most important weight used in selection.

Approximately 85% of the heifer crop is retained for replacements. Only defective heifers or those that appear unable to reach puberty at 14 months of age are culled at weaning. After that time a cow is not culled based on her own weight, but for weaning a lightweight calf. What do we do with all the females resulting from keeping so many heifers? The strict selection for the Six Essentials and the resulting rapid attrition drastically limit internal herd growth.



### 4. Conformation:

Conformation is defined as "type on the hook, not type on the hoof." Muscling, along with length and width of hindquarters is emphasized in the selection of bulls as potential herd sires. Animals with any type of structural defects such as problems with their feet and legs or frame are culled from the herd.

### 5. Hardiness:

Hardiness is exemplified by those animals that relentlessly carry on their production assignments year after year in a range environment with minimum assistance. For example in our herd, first-calf heifers are expected to calve out on the range with no assistance. These criteria favor those individuals that are able to carry on production with minimal intervention and with the least cost.



### 6. Milk Production:

Only bull calves with above average weaning weights are considered as potential herd sires. These bulls will most likely sire daughters that will perpetuate the heavy milking characteristics demonstrated by their individual dams. Lightweight calves, both bulls and heifers, are culled at weaning. Dams weaning bottom-end calves are also culled from the herd.

# An Interesting Genetic Experiment

## By: Dale Lasater

The Lasater Beefmaster herd has been a closed herd since 1937, for more than 75 years. That means that no bulls, cows, frozen semen or embryos-no outside genetic material- have been introduced into the herd since that time. As far as we know, this herd, the foundation herd of the Beefmaster breed, is the oldest closed herd of beef cattle in existence.

Tom Lasater (1911-2001), founder of the breed, began asking animal scientists in the late 1950's, when the herd had been closed for more than 20 years, how long a herd this size (450-500 mother cows) could continue as a closed herd. The typical response was: "We don't know, because no one has ever maintained a closed herd of this size for an extended period of time. However, we think that sooner rather than later the herd will develop some type of genetic problem which you will not be able to deal with internally, and that will force you to go outside the herd to bring in new genetics."

For this reason, the herd represents an interesting genetic experiment, as we don't know how long it will be able to continue. Today (2013) we have no indication of any problem, such as that predicted more than 50 years ago, which would force the owners to go outside the herd and bring in other genetics.

The herd also represents an on-going example of the results that can be achieved by a continuous selection program over an extended period of years. In the case of Lasater Beefmasters, it is a herd where selection has been focused on productivity (heifers must conceive at 14-15 months of age, and all females must bring an acceptable calf to the weaning pen each year in order to remain in the herd) and on natural selection (all breeding is done in multiple sire herds; no insecticides of any kind have been used since the late 1960's).

The Lasater Beefmaster herd, originally developed in Falfurrias, Texas, has been located in Matheson, Colorado since the early 1950's. Dale Lasater, a son of Tom Lasater, has been Managing Partner of the ranch since 1986.



## Lasater Beefmasters: Bulls Bred For the Commercial Operation

Here are just a few reasons why our bulls are the choice of successful cattle raisers:

**Forage-based Program:** Our sale bulls have been raised and developed on forage, as they have been since our first production sale in the 1940's. The ratios are all derived from performance and gains on forage, with no grain-based "performance test." That means they will continue gaining when they walk off the truck on your ranch, with no loss of condition when they go to work. It also means their daughters will utilize native forages in South Florida, Missouri or Nevada better than the progeny of bulls selected for generations on high-concentrate tests.

**Early Puberty:** Every bull in the offering has a dam that first conceived during a short breeding season at 14 to 15 months of age. Early maturing females are a critical factor in profitability.

**A Calf a Year:** Every cow in the herd has not only been expected to have her first calf on her second birthday, but she is required to bring an acceptable calf to the weaning pen each year in order to stay in the herd. No cow that misses has been given a second chance because she produced an outstanding calf in a prior year. That means that every bull carries the heritage of productive females in his genes.

**No Insecticides since the Sixties:** We discontinued the use of all insecticides more than four decades ago. That means our cattle been developing a natural resistance to insects for many years. This is probably the only ranch in America that has been practicing and promoting the genetic resistance to insects for this many years. We have followed this same program with positive results in our satellite herds in New Mexico and Texas. Even on ranches where insecticides are extensively used, our customers tell us that our cattle exhibit noticeably less flies and lice than other cattle in the herd.

**Udders and Such:** Our cows have the milking capacity necessary to bring a good dividend to the weaning pen. But for decades they have been required to deliver that milk unassisted or leave the herd. As one customer wrote many years ago (and countless others have echoed the sentiment): "...using your bulls on our commercial cows eliminated pink eye and bad bags in our herd."

**Best Cow Size:** Our perfect cow size is the cow who raises a good calf every year. Beyond that criteria we do not spend much time thinking about it. There are plenty of more worthwhile items to think about; we should not waste time thinking about that which mother nature can handle for us. Why must we meddle when it is not

needed? **"Cattle breeding is relatively simple endeavor. The only difficult part is to keep it simple" - Tom Lasater**



**Avoid Charlatans:** If you avoid buying from charlatans you will avoid being sold something which is not as it is purported to be. There are those in our breed who want BBU to stand behind the cattle, when it should be the seller who guarantees the animal.

Lets not forget why Tom Lasater insisted on prefix names; in every breed there are functional cattle and cattle which have never walked more than 100 paces from the feedbunk. Know who you are getting in bed with ...buy from proven programs. Buy from proven long standing programs. The average lifespan for a purebred operator is less than 7 years. We have been at it for more than 60 years.

**The Genetic Experiment:** My father wrote a short piece on the Lasater Ranch closed herd which was run in the Cattlemen - it is attached to this newsletter. It is well worth reading

**The Bottom Line:** Yes, ranching can be an agreeable "way of life" and for many it is a pleasant hobby. The above are just some of the reasons why our bulls can help a serious cowman (or woman) increase profitability.

## **64th Annual Production Sale Friday and Saturday September 6 and 7, 2013**

Motel Information: Limon Colorado - 16 miles from the Ranch

Comfort Inn - (719) 775-2752 - \$87.00 - mention LR

Holiday Inn - (719)775-9033 - \$82.00 - mention LR

### **Contract Cows Still Available**

**Semen Available from Lasater 0192, 3705, 4290, 4211, 8208 and 7261. 7261 sired 5 of our 15, 2012 keep yearling bulls. 7261 sons will be in the sale.**

### **Musings from the Short Grass Prairie**

Greetings from Matheson. We had a mild winter with timely spring snows which gave the grass a boost when the weather warmed. We are growing grass though we are far from fully recovered after two years of drought.

There are several items which have been front and center for us this year; desertification and land stewardship. I hope all of you will take time to watch the Allan Savory talk on desertification at [ted.com](http://ted.com)

[http://www.ted.com/talks/allan\\_savory\\_how\\_to\\_green\\_the\\_world\\_s\\_deserts\\_and\\_reverse\\_climate\\_change.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/allan_savory_how_to_green_the_world_s_deserts_and_reverse_climate_change.html)

As landowners become more aware of desertification and the role hoofed animals play in the health of our rangeland, perhaps the cow will be less vilified, and we will restock ranches which have been destocked for recreation purposes. Unless we reverse desertification and promote pasture health the species will not survive.

I picked up the Progressive Cattleman earlier this year and was pleased by how "progressive" the articles were: "Battling Pests" - these pests were put here by someone a helluva lot smarter than us, "parasite control" by a fellow at Merck, "Fly control"

in your mineral by a fellow at Purina. Low input ranching is slow to take off.

We need to constantly remind ourselves not to treat to the weak..... let them eliminate themselves. A good friend says the elk can do it on their own, so should my cows. Makes sense.... though modern Pharma wants us to think otherwise.

Our grassfed beef deal is growing. Buy our bulls and call us to find out how you can make more money on your calves, open heifers and cull cows.

The world is full of those who are envious and would tear us down. In these trying times, Lasater Beefmasters is vibrant and expanding. We have leased a ranch in New Mexico which will run 700 mother cows. We must evolve as ranching during the next 40 years will be very different from the prior 40. Remember: the harder you work, the luckier you get.

We look forward to seeing you here in September. If you cannot make the sale, we will gladly buy bulls to your specifications.

Lasater Beefmasters  
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**We select cattle to work for us, so we know they will work for you.**

### Lasater Beefmaster 7261



Lasater 7261 has the distinction of being the sire of 5 of our 2012 keep bulls. He is extremely correct and thick. An efficient machine..... not a scrap of loose hide on him. Perfect for a few hundred F-1's. He sold as a Retired Herd Sire in our September 2012 to Dr. Gustavo Lara in Veracruz Mexico. **Semen Available.**

WN	Wn-Yr	YR	2 YR	3YR			
WT	Gain	WT	WT	WT	SC	Sire	Dam
630	180	797	1245	1710	43	3512	2759