

# Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association

Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association—Productivity and Quality



## Upcoming events:

- January 20—Mississippi BCIA Spring Bull Sale nomination deadline
- February 10—Mississippi BCIA Annual Membership Meeting, Jackson, 1:00 p.m.
- March 1—Hinds CC Bull Test Sale and Mississippi BCIA Spring Bull Sale, Hinds Community College Bull Sale Facility, Raymond, MS
- March 13—Beef Cattle Handling Facilities Workshop, MSU, Biloxi, Oxford, Raymond
- March 15-17—MSU Artificial Insemination School, Mississippi State, MS
- April 3—Cattlemen's Exchange Feeder Calf Board Sale, Winona, MS
- April 13—Beef Cattle Boot Camp, MSU, South Farm Beef Unit
- April 20—Beef Cattle Boot Camp, Poplarville, MS
- April 18-21—Beef Improvement Federation meeting, Houston, TX

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## Mississippi BCIA Bull Sale Nomination Reminder

Preparation continues for the Spring 2011 Mississippi BCIA Bull Sale to be held on March 1, 2012 at 12:00 noon at the Hinds Community College Sales Facility in Raymond, Mississippi. This sale will once again be held in conjunction with the Hinds Community College Bull Test Sale on the traditional Hinds Bull Test sale date.

Current bull sale information is posted on the BCIA website at [msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/bcia\\_bullsale.html](http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/bcia_bullsale.html). The Rules and Regulations and nomination form are available on this website.

### Mississippi BCIA Spring Bull Sale Nomination Deadline

**January 20, 2012**

If you are interested in consigning bulls to this sale, please complete the nomination form and return it to Box 9815, Mississippi State, MS 39762 no later than **January 20, 2012**. Be sure to include the nomination fee, a signed registration certificate, actual birth weight, and adjusted weaning and yearling weights and ratios for each bull. If you have any questions

about the sale requirements or past results, please call your local Extension Service office or contact Jane Parish at 662-325-7466 or [jparish@ads.msstate.edu](mailto:jparish@ads.msstate.edu).

## Make Plans Now to Enter Fed Cattle in the 2012 Challenge

The Mississippi Fed Beef Challenge will now be led by Dr. Brandi Bourg. Mississippi producers and youth may enter fed steers or heifers in the 2012 program. Cattle in the 2012 Mississippi Fed Beef Challenge will be harvested in April 2012.

Goals of the program are to:

- Offer an opportunity to collect carcass information on cattle finished in Mississippi
- Provide assistance with carcass data interpretation and use
- Supplement the educational efforts of the Mississippi Farm to Feedlot Program
- Facilitate productive interaction among local beef producers and the MSU Meats Lab
- Result in custom harvest where beef is packaged according to each producer's specifications and satisfaction

- Provide awards that producer's can use in farm promotional efforts
- Integrate into student teaching programs in Animal and Dairy Sciences

Program details are online at [msucares.com/livestock/beef/fedbeefchallenge.pdf](http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/fedbeefchallenge.pdf)

Please address questions about the program to Brandi Bourg at 662-325-7465 or [bbourg@ads.msstate.edu](mailto:bbourg@ads.msstate.edu)



## MBCIA Annual Membership Meeting Ahead in February



The annual MBCIA meeting is a good opportunity to network with other cattle producers

Mississippi BCIA will hold its annual membership meeting on Friday, February 10, 2012 at the Trademart on the state fairgrounds in Jackson, MS in conjunction with the Mississippi Cattlemen's Association annual convention.

The BCIA session will start at 1:00 p.m. It will feature Mr. Landon Marks, graduate research assistant with the MSU Animal and Dairy Sciences Department, speaking on "Factors Affecting Performance-Based Bull Sale Prices in the Southeast U.S." This session will focus on recent research

conducted using historical Mississippi BCIA Bull Sale and Hinds Community College Bull Test data from the inception of these sales to present day. Similar datasets from Alabama and North Carolina are included in this one-of-a-kind analysis.

Educational presentations at the MCA convention will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, February 10 and continue through Saturday, February 11. For the complete schedule of events, call the Mississippi Cattlemen's Association at (601) 354-8951 or visit the MCA website at [www.ms cattlemen.org](http://www.ms cattlemen.org).

### MBCIA Annual Membership Meeting

**Friday, February 10, 2012, 1:00 p.m.  
Trademart, State Fairgrounds, Jackson, MS**

## The Diverse Structure of U.S. Beef Cow-calf Operations

Key findings from a 2008 survey of U.S. beef cow-calf producers included as part of USDA's annual Agricultural Resource Management Survey administered by ERS and USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service are summarized below. The survey covered 22 States and targeted beef cow-calf producers with at least 20 beef cows on the operation during 2008.

### General Summary

Beef cow-calf farms operate in an industry characterized by large numbers of small farms. Many of these farms specialize in beef cattle production, but farm households on these operations tend to generate more income from off-farm sources, such as wages and salaries or retirement income, than from the farm businesses themselves. Large farms account for most beef cow-calf production in the United States, but on many of these farms, cow-calf production is not the primary enterprise. These findings suggest that operators of beef cow-calf

farms, large and small, have varying goals for their cattle enterprises, of which farming as a lifestyle choice is not uncommon.

### Key Findings

- About 60 percent of U.S. beef cow-calf farms produce calves that are sold at or shortly after weaning. These are usually small farms, and most are located in the Southeast and Southern Plains. Many of the farm households on these operations generate most of their income from off-farm sources.
- More than a third of beef cow-calf farms retain ownership of calves after weaning and continue grazing, or backgrounding, the calves from 30 to 90 days before selling. These farms are generally larger, have more beef cows, and are distributed throughout the United States, with many in the Northern Plains and West regions.

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*"...The majority of U.S. beef cows are located in the South..."*

## Cattle Operation Facilities Short Course Set for March 13

The Mississippi State University Extension Service will offer a Cattle Operation Facilities Short Course on Tuesday, March 13, 2012 from 9:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Facilities are important components of all beef cattle operations. Proper facilities are essential for performing recommended health management practices, providing good nutrition to cattle, reducing cattle stress, and improving operation efficiency, productivity, and profitability. This short course will provide producers with practical information to plan new facilities or modify existing ones.

Topics to be addressed include:

### Cattle handling facilities

- Designing efficient and functional cattle handling facilities with animal behavior and low-stress handling in mind
- Virtual (video) tour and interactive critique of various beef cattle handling facilities
- Construction materials, design plans, custom design features, facility components available commercially, and cost considerations

### Fencing systems

- Design and material considerations, construction specifications, and cost comparisons

### Water and shade systems

- Pond construction basics, automatic watering system options and installation, and artificial shade construction

### Feed storage structures

- Hay, silage, and commodity feed storage structure design and construction

The short course brochure is online at: [msucare.com/livestock/beef/cattlefacilities.pdf](http://msucare.com/livestock/beef/cattlefacilities.pdf)

This brochure lists the complete schedule of topics with times. A short registration form is also included in the brochure.

Workshop attendees will receive a copy of Dr. Temple Grandin's book, *Humane Livestock Handling*, which contains corral layouts and other designs for beef cattle operations.

Presenters will include agricultural engineers and animal scientists. Presentations will focus on practical design and construction considerations for various cattle operation structures.

The workshop registration fee is \$50 per person in advance and \$75 per person at the door and covers the book, course materials, refreshments, and lunch.

The short course will be hosted on the Mississippi State University campus in Starkville. The presentations will originate from Bost Theater on the MSU main campus. Distance locations hosting the short course will include the Coastal Research and Extension Center in Biloxi, the Central Mississippi Research and Extension Center in Raymond, the Lafayette County Extension Office in Oxford.

Additional distance broadcast sites may be added if at least 10 participants preregister for a particular site. County and area Extension personnel can work with interested participants and short course coordinators.

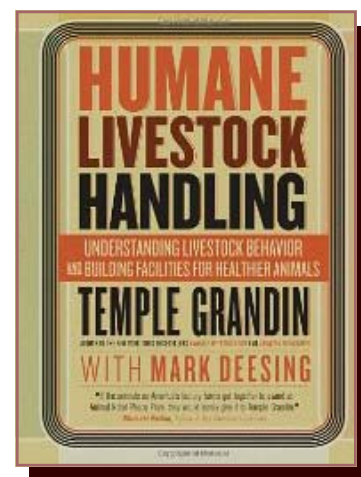
Producers interested in attending or with questions about the workshop should contact either:

Jane Parish  
Phone: (662) 325-7466  
E-mail: [jparish@ads.msstate.edu](mailto:jparish@ads.msstate.edu)

or

Brandi Bourg  
Phone: (662) 325-7465  
E-mail: [bbourg@ads.msstate.edu](mailto:bbourg@ads.msstate.edu)

*"...Presentations will feature ag. engineers and focus on practical design and construction considerations for various cattle operation structures."*



Attendees will receive a copy of *Humane Livestock Handling*, a book by Dr. Temple Grandin containing corral layouts and other designs

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Box 9815  
Mississippi State, MS 39762

Phone: 662-325-7466  
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Email: jparish@ads.msstate.edu



Send questions or comments to  
Jane Parish, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist,  
Mississippi State University Extension Service

*Jane Parish*

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**Visit MBCIA online at  
[http://msucares.com/  
livestock/beef/mbcia/](http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/)**

## MBCIA Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(Check one) Seedstock:  Commercial:

Cattle breed(s): \_\_\_\_\_

*Completed applications and \$5 annual dues or \$100 life-time dues payable to Mississippi BCIA should be mailed to:*

*Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association  
Jane Parish, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist  
Box 9815, Mississippi State, MS 39762*

## Diverse Structure of U.S. Beef Cow-calf Operations (Cont.)

- The majority of U.S. beef cows are located in the South, including the Southern Plains (primarily Texas) and the Southeast. These regions have the advantage of a longer grazing season and less need for supplemental forage to support beef cattle during the winter, which results in lower feed costs. Despite higher feed costs in the Northern Plains, large beef cow-calf producers in this region are able to compete with those in the South due to production efficiencies and economies of size.
  - Economies of size in beef cow-calf production suggest that farms have an incentive to become larger. However, the significant land area required for large-scale beef cow-calf production inhibits many producers from expanding. In most areas of the United States, beef cow-calf production is the residual user of land. As the opportunity cost of pasture and range land increases for uses such as crop production or recreational activities, the size of beef cow-calf operations may be limited or fragmented into smaller units.
  - Most farms with beef cows do not specialize in beef cow-calf production. In 2008, cattle production accounted for less than 40 percent of the average farm product value on U.S. beef cow-calf farms. Regionally, cattle production accounted for about two-thirds of farm product value on beef cow-calf farms in the Southern Plains and West regions but less than 40 percent in other regions.
- Specialization in cattle production increased with farm size and peaked at 60 percent of farm product value for operations with 250-499 beef cows. Among the largest operations, those with 500 or more cows, less than 50 percent of farm product value was from cattle.
- Operators of more than a third of beef cow-calf farms worked off-farm in 2008, and half of beef cow-calf farms are classified as rural residence farms. These farms are small operations that specialize in beef cow-calf production but report off-farm earnings as the primary source of household income. Commercial farms with beef cow-calf enterprises are mostly diversified farm operations on which cattle are a secondary enterprise that accounts for about a fourth of farm product value. On intermediate farms, which have annual farm sales under \$250,000 and report farming as the main occupation, the beef cattle enterprise accounts for over half of farm product value. Intermediate farms are among the most financially vulnerable to the input and output price variations of beef cattle production.

*Source: William D. McBride and Kenneth Mathews, Jr. March 2011. The Diverse Structure and Organization of U.S. Beef Cow-Calf Farms. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Economic Research Service.*