

South Devon...

The Right Breed at The Right Time

by Dave Nichols

South Devon cattle are an English breed whose traits compliment both English and Continental cattle breeds. South Devon cattle are well-known for their maternal longevity and docility.

Profit driven cow/calf operations that wanted to add high levels of heterosis, fertility, low feed intake, and high weaning weights found that South Devon delivered as promised.

In the feedlot, heterosis, lower feed intake, and superior carcass merit, especially marbling and tenderness, are compliments of the South Devon breed.

In 2004, Nichols Farms' North Carolina Division purchased the renowned Brandy Creek South Devon herd in its entirety. Shortly thereafter, DLCC Black Enuf 127J, the first homozygous polled Purebred black South Devon bull, was purchased.

Tony Matthis served as President of the American South Devon Association and purchased several sires for the NC Nichols Division that had outstanding records that lead the breed in performance and carcass merit.

Nichols Farms (Iowa) has added elite Purebred South Devon sires and significant numbers of dams to their Iowa operation acquired mostly from the Matthis family. The Nichols breeding program will mirror what they've accomplished in Angus and Simmental seedstock that have been exported to over 30 foreign countries. By focusing on economic relevant traits (both quantitative and genomic) we can deliver additional profit to our commercial customers. The recent "Adjustment Factors to Estimate Across Breed EPDs" as determined by USMARC certainly validate South Devon's value to the beef industry.

Nichols Farms South Devon (DX) Hybrid Bulls



TABLE 1: ADJUSTMENT FACTORS TO ADD TO EPDs OF EIGHTEEN DIFFERENT BREEDS TO ESTIMATE ACROSS BREED EPDs

Breed	Birth Wt.	Weaning Wt.	Yearling Wt.	Maternal Milk	Marbling Score ^a	Ribeye Area	Fat Thickness
Angus	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.000
Hereford	2.7	-2.8	-20.1	-16.7	-0.34	-0.11	-0.053
Red Angus	2.4	-0.6	-12.0	-3.1	0.03	-0.10	-0.034
Shorthorn	6.0	15.7	39.4	17.9	-0.14	0.17	-0.148
South Devon	4.2	3.2	-6.3	-2.3	0.05	0.15	-0.111
Charolais	8.6	40.1	46.8	5.7	-0.46	0.92	-0.222
Gelbvieh	4.0	5.7	-13.5	13.6			
Limousin	3.8	-0.9	-34.7	-9.2	-0.70	1.07	
Maine-Anjou	4.1	-13.0	-34.5	-4.7	-0.79	0.88	-0.210
Salers	1.8	-3.1	-14.3	2.4	-0.11	0.75	-0.210
Simmental	5.2	24.9	22.4	19.8	-0.55	0.92	-0.215



Dave Nichols, owner of Nichols Farms and Ross Havens, Bridgewater, IA talk with prospective bull buyers at the annual Private Treaty Nichols Farms bull sale. 350 yearling bulls were offered on opening day. Nichols Farms is the seventh top 25 seedstock operations in the U.S.