



Today's **TAREN**TAISE



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American
 Tarentaise Association

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Tarentaise - The "Other" Breed

Tarentaise (pronounced TAIR en taze) has proven to be the perfect "other" breed for many progressive cattlemen in both crossbreeding and purebred environments. Tarentaise isn't a "one-trait" breed. It is a thrifty beef breed, balanced for optimum commercial performance from conception to dinner plate.

Tarentaise is a pure breed from France, with a herd book dating back to 1888.

You have many options with Tarentaise. You can market purebreds for seedstock, and crossbreds for cow-calf producers, for recipient cows, or stocker-feeder and freezer beef. Tarentaise cattle will give you the freedom to profit in any or all of these market segments.

Tarentaise Breeders

The American Tarentaise Association (ATA) was founded by commercial people whose livelihoods depended on their cattle. These "feet-on-the-ground" folks give the breed a solid base that is not easily moved by fads or gimmicks. Does that apply to you? The Tarentaise breeders listed in this brochure are just a small part of the network of producers in the U.S. We invite you to stop by and see the cattle for yourselves, and give them a try when you need a new influence in your herd.

The American Tarentaise Association will happily provide you with a year of the Tarentaise Talk, a copy of the National Membership list, and a copy of the current Sire Summary. Just contact the ATA as listed on the back of this brochure, or a breeder near you.

"From my twelve years of experience, the Tarentaise infusion in my Angus cattle contributes length, muscling, and maternal values. It's important for people to realize that fertility and muscling do go hand-in-hand with Tarentaise. Combining these traits with the British cattle's inherent features offers a terrific cross."

- Tim Neale, Commercial Breeder, Gordonsville, VA

"I would doubt there is such a thing as a poor yielding Tarentaise. Most Tarentaise will have a higher percentage of 1 & 2 yield grades. When we infuse Tarentaise, we consistently improve yield grade from a 3 to a 2 on a moderate British cow without increasing cow size or sacrificing quality grade."
 - Doc Hatfield, Oregon Country Beef, Brothers, OR

"The real proof of the quality of our Tarentaise crossbreeding program is the numbers that show in our bank balance at the end of the year."

- Jack Pennell, Willow Ranch, BC, Canada



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"With Tarentaise, you keep the taste fat without the waste fat. This causes us (Oregon Country Beef) to kill cattle both earlier than ideal and later than traditional ideal, which allowed us to see the effects of feeding versus genetics. Tarentaise have the ability to Quality Grade at light weights with little waste fat, but have enough stretch in them that they can be held on feed for longer periods of time without depositing waste fat. Their muscle to fat ratio stays relatively the same; they just get larger on more feed."

- Stacy Davies, Manager, Roaring Springs Ranch, Frenchglen, OR

Carcass Trials

For several years, the American Tarentaise Association has sponsored carcass trials for Tarentaise influenced cattle. The cattle fed were consigned by the ATA members from widely different environments and breeding programs throughout the United States. The project helps the ATA identify superior bloodlines for carcass merit and is an ongoing effort. While still a young effort, the carcass trials have demonstrated Tarentaise ability to feed, yield, and grade within industry targets, and most importantly, they made money!

Year	Number of Head	Average Daily Gain	% Choice and Above	Ribeye Area Yield	Grade
97-98	97	2.80	61%	13.41	2.70
98-99	63	2.90	68%	14.05	2.64
99-00	43	3.11	71%	12.80	3.00
00-01	131	2.72	76%	13.20	2.70

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The Padlock Ranch Co. runs 13,000 cows in South Central Montana and North Central Wyoming. They specialize in raising high quality, very maternal females. The breed makeup of their composite herd is Red Angus, Shorthorn, Polled Hereford, and either 1/8-1/4 Tarentaise or Gelbvieh. They have used Tarentaise genetics for eight years.

“The Tarentaise breed is everything that the breed association and breeders says it is and more. The females are extremely fertile and have wonderful udders. The cattle perform well in the feedlot and really hit the beef industry’s targets in terms of carcass specifications. Tarentaise is one of the two possible continental breeds that are optimum in a crossbreeding program. Because of the breed’s moderate mature size, the potential for utilizing Tarentaise cattle in crossbreeding systems or in the development of a composite breed is endless. Tarentaise genetics give breeders the opportunity to infuse continental genetics into a British cowherd and not only reap the many benefits of heterosis in the steers (increased growth and carcass yields), but also have heifers that make wonderful cows. During the 1994-95, the Padlock Ranch participated in a program called Rocky Mountain Ranch to Rail. This program evaluated operations from conception to the plate from an economic standpoint. Included in the study was a feedlot and carcass portion. In 1994 we sent three truckloads (90 head each) of the calves to the study, one load Shorthorn sired, one load Red Angus sired, and one load Tarentaise sired calves. The following table includes the data from the trial. (Note: a yield grade score is not shown, as the carcasses we hot fat trimmed)”
 - Scott James, Padlock Ranch Co.

Out Weight	Average Daily Gain	Hot Weight	Trimmed Weight	% Trim	Ribeye Area	% Prime	% Choice	% Select
1221	3.32	774	723	6.6	13.4	0	83	17
1222	3.15	796	731	8.2	12.72	4.8	85.5	9.7
1256	3.5	807	746	7.5	13.34	0	81.5	18.5



Maternal Traits - The “Opti-Mom”

The optimal cow would calve unassisted at 24 months of age. Her calf would be long and flat, vigorous at birth, nursing within minutes to access the rich milk that would fill them out rapidly. She would feed and wean that calf, then do it again. Her rumen would prefer pasture to concentrates. She would spend her time feeding, breeding, and mothering. Her udder would be balanced, with finger sized teats that would not balloon with age. Her milk would be rich, with 3.6% milk fat and 3.35% protein, and plentiful enough that she could wean a calf over 50% of her body weight in 205 days. Her moderate size would allow a given acreage to support more cows, thereby giving the owner more salable pounds of calf per acre. She would have a large pelvic area for easy deliveries. Her eyes would be dark pigmented to resist pinkeye and cancer naturally. Her udder would be dark to resist snow burn and sunburn. Sturdy legs and hard, black hooves would allow her to travel through rough terrain to graze where the grass is. She would be protective, yet docile, easy to handle in small farm operations or on the range. She would do this all a dozen times.

The average Tarentaise is that “Opti-Mom.” She’s a professional - the best mom a calf could have.



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"Opti-Mom vs. Maxi-Mom"

"Cattlemen are realizing that bigger isn't always better, and that sometimes more mean less. The most milk, the largest frames, and the highest growth rate don't necessarily add up to a profitable operation. The reality was, in addition to the calving problems, our big exotic crossbred cows require more feed and their calves lacked the fighting instinct to get up and nurse after being born in a snow bank. With considerable thought, we changed our focus from "big" to "fault free". The fault-free moderate cow that works, makes the carcass that works."
- Doc and Connie Hatfield, Hatfield's High Desert Ranch, Brothers, OR

Virility

Tarentaise bulls are very masculine, smooth up front, long bodied, deep, and with well balanced quarters. Their calves come long, not square, and fill out quickly. They mature early and are ready for service by 12 months of age. Scrotal development is quite generous, and it would be very rare for a Tarentaise bull to be culled for a lack of it.

Tarentaise bulls are predictable. Across North America you will find a consistency in bull composition throughout herds that would be the envy of many breeds. Since all registrations require both birth and weaning weights, you can depend on their performance and EPD's.

"We have been happy with our Tarentaise bulls. There's lots of power in these bulls. They've got good fertility and sexual drive. We've bred up to 58 head in a 60 day breeding program with one bull."

- Wade Straub, Rancher, Chamberlain, Sask., Canada



Due to the Complete Herd Reporting program, The American Tarentaise Association has made significant strides in obtaining information about the performance of Tarentaise cattle in a relatively short period of time. Every application not only supplies a pedigree observation, it also gives us a performance observation. This is true in only a small number of breed associations.

Crossbred Tarentaise

Although we are very proud of our purebred and fullblood carcass data, using Tarentaise in a crossbreeding program is of primary interest to most producers. The following information reflects a variety of types of crossbreeding and goals.



The HAT Ranch, Inc., Coon Rapids, Iowa has a Tarentaise – Angus breeding program. They have been carcass testing since 1984 for use in evaluating herd sires and herd bases. The following data was compiled using cattle from 23 producers in 8 different states. The cattle range from 3/4 Tarentaise to 5/8 Angus, were 12 to 14 months of age, and had an average carcass weight of 718 lbs.

Venner Farms Carcass Data Summary June 16, 2009-Feb. 2, 2010	Total Tarentaise Influenced Cattle		Total Group Average	
Quality Grades	Head	%	Head	%
Prime	74	5.6	52,578	4.5
Upper 2/3 Choice	320	24.4	202,854	17.5
Choice	728	55.4	611,175	52.7
% Choice and Above	1122	85.5	866,473	74.7
Select	173	13.2	268,345	23.1
Standard	3	0.2	13,843	1.2
Commercial	2	0.2	5,242	0.5
Other (Dark Cutters)	13	1	6,072	0.5
Yield Grades				
Yield Grade 1	470	3.6	49,564	4.3
Yield Grade 2	512	39	404,515	34.9
Yield Grade 3	652	49.7	636,558	54.9
Yield Grade 4	97	7.4	65,530	5.6
Yield Grade 5	5	0.4	4,295	0.4
Carcass Weight				
Light	1	0.1	3,624	0.3
Heavy	4	0.3	15,260	1.3
Total Group	1313		1,160,109	
Premium/Head	\$30.21			
Total Premiums	\$39,661.99			

Curt Knight of the Knight Ranch in Wyoming runs a cow-calf operation and has been testing all his steers on a retained ownership basis since 1996 in order to obtain data on his bulls. He test Angus bulls on Tarentaise and Tarentaise-cross cows, and Tarentaise bulls on Angus, Tarentaise-cross Cows.

"In general I have found that the average Tarentaise purebred steer will grade 55% choice with a yield grade of 2.3 – 2.5, a rib eye of 13 – 13.6 on a 750 – 800 pound carcass. If average Tarentaise bulls are used on average Angus cows, I have found that 70 – 75% will be choice with an average yield grade of 2.85, and 80 – 85% will be yield grade 2's. In test where I use Tarentaise bulls with above average carcass characteristics, I will produce 88 – 93% choice with an average yield grade 2.75 – 2.85 with 85% yield grade 2's. I have found that if I stay above 50% Tarentaise in the feed lot, the steers are easier to feed for a Quality Grade Grid because they have less backfat and larger rib eyes. This combination gives you more latitude on how long you can feed them."

- Curt Knight

Feedlot Performance and Carcass Data

Most people agree that the Tarentaise cow is a superior mother, but many do not know the carcass capabilities of the breed. Through the years we have collected significant data that sometimes has surprised even us.

Purebreds

The charts of information and data below show primarily results from purebred & fullblood cattle. Where there are breed specific percentage cattle included, that number is shown. The type of data available varies from test to test.

As an example, the Ankenman Ranch has been testing steers for 10 years in Oklahoma, in the OSU Steer Feedout. Of 150 steers, 146 were purebred Tarentaise and four were Tarentaise-cross. During this period, they had Two Gold Pen Awards, Six Silver Pen Awards, as well as top or high placing for Carcass, Carcass Pen, Average Daily Gain, and Profitability. The combined results are:

Average Days on Feed	165.7
Average Age on Sale Date	15.9 months
Average Daily Gain	3.34lbs/day– highest 4.33 lbs/day
Average Dressing Percentage	63.8% - Highest 68%
Average Fat Cover	.25 inches
Average Rib Eye Area	12.95 inches – highest 16.3 inches
Average Yield Grade	2.3 yield grade – 90% being YG 1 & 2
Number Choice	64 steers
Number Select Plus	67 steers
Number Select Minus	16 steers – 89% of Quality Grade was from Choice to Select plus

Similarly, Seven Lakes Tarentaise, Eastanollee, GA reports the following results on eight head – four purebred Tarentaise and four Tarentaise/Angus cross in the 1999 – 2000 TCSCF Georgia Challenge – Rod Bently - October steers. One of the purebred steers had the highest percentage retail product (77.58) of all 190 head tested.

Choice	Choice -	Select +	Yield Grade	Back Fat	Rib Eye	Carcass Wt.	Yield	Profit
3	4	1	2.07	0.28	14.64	818	74.61	\$143.44

Also, PBF Tarentaise, Orange, VA data from 13 purebred and fullblood steers on the 1999 Horse-shoe Farm test in Virginia showed the following Data:

Choice	Choice -	Select +	Select	Yield Grade	Back Fat	Rib Eye	Yield	ADG
2	6	2	3	2.27	0.3	12.27	70	2.459

Silver Ridge Tarentaise, Martin, South Dakota tested 44 purebred steers at the Schroeder Land and Cattle Feedlot in 2000 with the following results. CCDS is the Cattlemen's Carcass Data Service database.

	Hot Carcass Wt.	Marbling Score	Back Fat	Rib Eye	Yield	Quality Grade
SRT	812	39.273	0.38	13.88	2.47	Select +
CCDS	759	41.03	0.461	13	2.8	

University Research

Several prestigious agricultural research stations have conducted lengthy projects on Tarentaise and Tarentaise crossbred cattle. The results of these projects validate the importance of the breed to the industry.

- South Dakota State University found Tarentaise X Hereford to be 10% more feed efficient than other breeds studied (straight Hereford, Simmental X Hereford, and Angus X Hereford). They also found that the difference between an efficient cow and an inefficient cow will remain essentially the same regardless of the bull to which they are bred
- Also at South Dakota State, a study indicated that Tarentaise-cross cattle had the highest cutability, least fat cover and tied for the largest ribeye, with the lowest total cow/calf feed required for each retail pound produced.
- The U.S. Range and Livestock Experiment Station at Miles City, Montana, has found that Tarentaise not only produce a high level of milk, they also milk at high levels for a longer lactation than the other breeds tested.
- The Miles City research also showed that Tarentaise X Hereford heifers has less calving difficulty and larger pelvic measurements than the straight Hereford and Hereford X Red Angus heifers in the study.
- A study from Oregon State University involving Hereford, Angus, Simmental, Pinzgauer, and Tarentaise breeds concluded, " All three European breeds transmitted genes for heavier weaning weights to their calves, compared to Hereford and Angus. The Tarentaise accomplished this without increasing calf birth weight above that of the Angus cattle in the experiment."
- Studies conducted at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center at Clay Center, Nebraska, have consistently shown Tarentaise wean calves heavier than Hereford X Angus, while being comparable to Simmental-cross cows.
- A study done by the Department of Animal Sciences, University of Hawaii at Manoa, noted that crossbred and composite cows had calves with higher average daily gains than straight bred Angus, Hereford, or Santa Gertrudis cattle. The advantage was partially explained by the extra milk production associated with adding Tarentaise.



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Crossbreeding Tarentaise

Tarentaise is an ideal choice for the “other” breed in your crossbreeding program. Tarentaise were originally imported to North America to cross with British-based herds to increase milk, fertility, and carcass value. They are the same size as the British breeds, so crossing them does not lead to larger, harder-to-maintain cattle. It is also possible to trim down the frame score of an exotic-based herd.

Infusing Tarentaise into your herd can drastically improve milk production, and udder and teat conformation while maintaining that high level of milk production calf after calf. It can also improve yield grade and carcass value in one generation. Their moderate size means you don't have to compensate with extra feed.

According to a study conducted on British breeds, cow and calf heterosis in a three-way rotation increases your total pounds of calf weaned per cow exposed by 23% (about 80 lbs). The study also said that it is possible to obtain a higher level of productivity by cross breeds of greater genetic diversity. Tarentaise have many of the desirable traits of our domestic cattle, but they are genetically diverse enough to provide this heterosis. As Tarentaise come from a remote valley in the French Alps, they are quite unrelated to any other breed and can thus give a program a tremendous boost. This means increased calf survival, higher weaning weights, more milk production, and greater cow efficiency and increased longevity.

Early maturity is another highly heritable trait Tarentaise has to offer. Early puberty has been linked to higher pregnancy rates as well as earlier pregnancy. Heifers who become pregnant early in the breeding season continue to calve early in subsequent years. Over the lifetime of a cow, this is more money in your pocket. Heifers who mature sooner reach full growth earlier. The closer a heifer is to her full height, weight, and pelvic size when she calves, the better she will perform. Calving will be easier. Her energy will go into milk production and she will be in condition to breed back on schedule.

- Tarentaise are noted for small, tight udders that maintain their ideal shape for many years. Teats don't “balloon” after several calves. The small teats have dark brown pigmentation. These characteristics have proven to be highly heritable.
- Calves are hardy and vigorous at birth, usually up and nursing within 5 to 10 minutes.
- Longevity is impressive. In a farm situation, the average age of culling can be as high as 14 years of age.
- As important as these maternal characteristics are, they are only one of the four corners of a cow: **maternal, meat, muscling, and marbling are what we look for in the ideal cow.**

Breed Background

The Tarentaise breed's home is in the rugged Savoie region of France, site of the 1992 Winter Olympics. It surprises most people to discover that in France the breed is not dual-purpose, but is used solely for milk production for the making of Beaufort, a Gruyere-type cheese. Tarentaise cows produce milk with a 3.6% milk fat, and milk protein content of 3.35%.

The cows are managed on pasture under intensive grazing management. The average production is 5,500 kilos (12,199 lbs) of milk in a 305 day lactation with no fed concentrates in the summer. Cows are dried off in the fall and kept in the barn from October through April because of snow and the danger of avalanche. Their basic ration is hay, sometimes haylage. Only high-producing cows get up to 5 lbs. of concentrates daily and then only for the six weeks leading up to their AI breeding. Most calving and breeding occur in winter.

In May the cows are turned out onto lush pastures at 2,500 feet. In June they are moved to high (and extremely steep) pastures at an average elevation of 8,000 feet. Daily temperatures often swing from below freezing to high above 80 degrees. Grazing ski slopes, the cattle are so removed from any town that the herdsmen actually stay with the cows for the entire three months and make the cheese on the spot. Tarentaise are the only cattle in Europe hardy enough to graze this region profitably. Climbing at these altitudes is what makes their remarkable natural muscling and marbling, as well as endowing the breed with a very robust cardiovascular system. This contributes to their inherent high resistance to the common respiratory/shipping disease complexes found in North America.

The first Tarentaise in North America were imported to Canada in 1972. A year later they were introduced to the U.S. beginning in the northern plains states and spreading to all corners of the continent with outstanding performance. They are also used as dairy cattle in Equatorial Africa and the Indian sub-continent. Able to adapt from Alps to deserts, dry plains to humid coasts, Tarentaise will perform for you also.



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