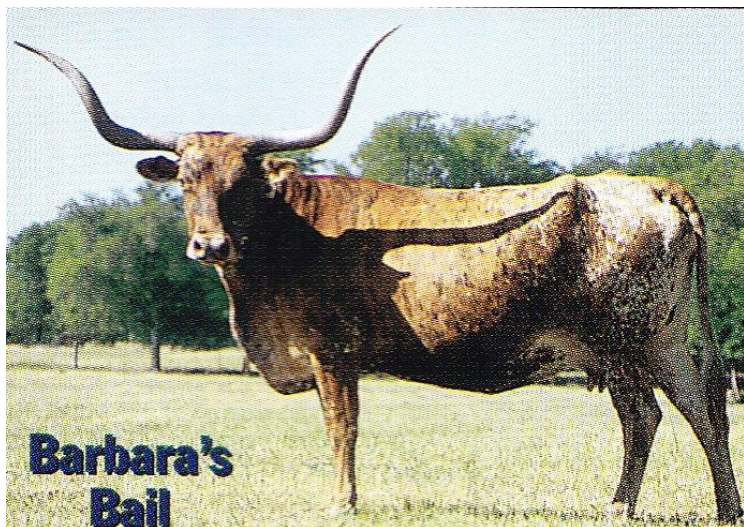


## First Time Buyers Checklist



The following is a checklist of some basic things to keep in mind when evaluating cattle that you are thinking about purchasing. These may seem like simple and obvious things that would not be easily overlooked. But they are when a buyer is not focused on the overall quality of the animal but rather on one trait. First time buyers and sometimes even experienced buyers will lose focus of the overall quality of animal. In most cases it is the amount of horn that overwhelms the buyer. In some

cases I have seen a buyer overlook a major genetic defect because the animal was young and had 80" inches tip-to-tip. If you want to be taken seriously and be involved in this breed for a long period of time you will not want to overlook genetic defects just because the animal has a lot of horn. An educated buyer is one that will be happier and more profitable with his purchases.

### ✓ Functionality of animal

- Does it have a correct bovine structure?
- Good top line. Easy movement in hips and shoulders.
- Is it sound on its feet, legs and joints? No swelling in the joints? Can the animal move and travel well and easily?
- Mouth and jaw – Is the mouth and jaw set straight and correct? A crooked nose, mouth and/or jaw will make it more difficult for the animal to forage.



These are important to the overall health and wellbeing of the animal. If the animal is unsound structurally it will have problems making good use of forage and pasture. Bulls with structure problems will have difficulty in keeping up with the cow herd, thus they will not be able to services the cows.

✓ **Reproduction**

- Bulls – Does he have two evenly developed testicles, hanging straight without any signs of a twist? Does he have a normal size sheath and penis opening? Swelling around the opening could indicate an injury or infection.
- Females – Does her reproductive area look normal for age? Does she have a calf at side? Is she palpated bred or just exposed for a long period of time? Under development (looking like a virgin heifer) on an older female that should have had a calf or two could indicate a possible breeding problem.
- Ask the seller about production history. Most will be more than willing to provide that information.



✓ Udder – Is the udder functional? This is a must! If she can't raise a fat and healthy calf, she is useless! If she has a calf at side it will give you some idea as to the quality of her udder. Photo at left shows two nonfunctional front quarters.

- ✓ **Body Condition** – Is the animal overly fat? Is the animal extremely thin? Each one of these body conditions could indicate possible problems. An overly fat animal could be a poor or non breeder. An extremely thin animal could just be a hard keeper or it could indicate several possible problems, some of which are correctable. A couple of these would be coming from poor range or pasture with poor nutrition or could need treated for parasites. There are numerous medical reasons that could be the cause but could be more sever.
- ✓ **Pedigree** – Is the pedigree of proven genetics? In order to know the quality of the pedigree...Study. Study pedigrees in sale catalogs, attend sales as a spectator, visit websites and ask questions. Often the cattle that an individual likes or is draw to will have similar bloodlines. While studying pedigrees and bloodlines keep in mind that the most advertised (bulls and cows) pedigrees are not always the best or most proven. They just happen to be owned by someone who can afford to advertise.
- ✓ **Horn** – Are they of good length and shape? Horn is a must, after all this breed is the Texas Longhorn. Horn is not the most important trait that is why it is lower on the list. You can have the longest horn cow in the breed but if she has defects then you don't have much in my opinion except a shoulder mount to hang on your wall.