

2019 GREETINGS



It's hard to believe that this season begins our 21st year of direct marketing 100% grassfed beef! From the original Princess the cow to her great, great, great, great granddaughter Q, it has been an amazing 20 years!

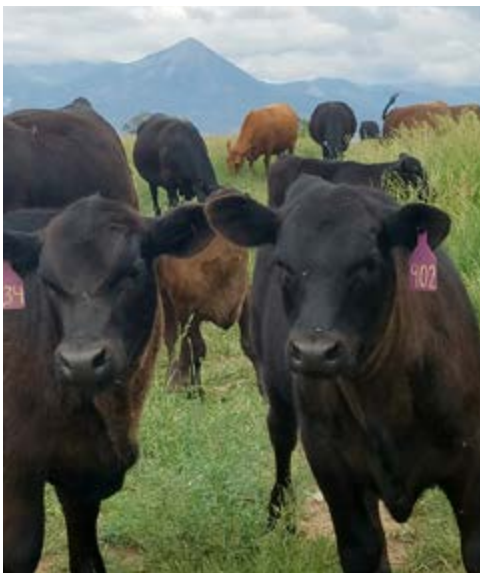
Here are some highlights from our 20th season.

Enjoy!

Cynthia, Ira, Izzi and CeCe



First calf of the season born in March. Our nephews named him Windy for the breezy spring day he arrived.



We are proud of our unique operation. Unlike many in our industry, we raise and own our mother cows. Owning the mother herd enables us to raise their calves for their entire life cycle. We have one herd of mother cows and their calves and one herd of yearlings from last year's calf crop.



This was a year for the books! In 2018, we endured the worst recorded drought since 1977. A much lower than average snowpack in the high country translated into a greatly shortened irrigation season. We were finished irrigating the first week in August as opposed to the end of September. The shortened season contributed to both hay and pasture prices that were substantially higher than those of prior seasons. We counted our blessings that our Century Ranch has water rights that enable us to irrigate longer than most other ranches in this area. We also realized the value of our updated irrigation system of pivots and gated pipe that enabled us to water more acres in a more efficient manner. We are incredibly grateful and thankful to family and neighbors who allow us to hay and graze their pastures.

Shirley Ela, 94-year-old neighbor and orchardist once said, "to be in agriculture you must have a tolerance of risk." 2018 was certainly a year that tested our risk tolerance and resilience. I believe that we came out of 2018 with a stronger sense of our purpose, and an improved more efficient business.



Our latest idea to help keep our cows happy was to construct a covered area that would provide shade when they were in a pasture without trees. Our first attempt was a bit laughable. I got my mind set on wanting purple cloth for the shade and although I couldn't find a large purple shade, I did find a small purple shade. The purple cloth did stand out, but it didn't produce much shade. In fact, only one cow could fit under it at a time! We are not giving up. In 2019 we are going for aesthetics and function. The swimming pool cover Ira wanted to install in the first place will be quite a bit bigger!



Our bulls are carefully selected to genetically enhance our grassfed herd and are suited to our climate. We select for a smaller size with thick and stocky builds versus larger bulls currently in vogue for feedlots. Our bulls are ultrasound scanned for good potential for production of meat that will be marbled and tender.



We welcomed ranching intern Meg Schatte in June and July right before she entered Colorado State University as a freshman in pursuit of a career in veterinary medicine. Meg spent time in the Houseweart Veterinary Clinic with Ira's parents, Dr. Bill and Betty Houseweart. She was a help with Princess Beef's operations, setting up and moving electric pasture fences, irrigating, and sorting cows.



Around the end of March we begin our intensive grazing rotations. We keep the cows tightly together on small sections of fenced land called paddocks, using electric fences. We continually move the cows through different paddocks. This rotation creates healthy soil rich in organic nutrients. The cows stamp down pasture they don't eat and fertilize it with their manure. We move the cows to a new paddock before they eat the same grass twice encouraging grass growth and preventing overgrazing. Overgrazing damages and/or kills the grass, contributes to soil erosion, and hampers the soil's ability to hold water.



If we are grazing pastures adjacent to each other, our border collies do most of the work. When grazing cows in nonadjacent pastures, we need additional help besides the border collies! When moving cows to neighboring pastures, it often takes family and friends to get the cows moving to their new fields and block driveways and other places we don't want them to go.



FEEDING OUR ANIMALS THROUGH THE WINTER

Having enough hay to feed mama cows, yearling calves, horses, and bulls through the winter months is no small feat in a drought year.

We were able to make it through the drought by cutting and baling hay on our neighbors' properties. Without these leases, the cost of buying hay would have been exorbitant.



Izzi and CeCe have told us that the Delta county fair is more fun than Christmas! This year CeCe won 1st Place for Showmanship in her chicken class and Izzi exhibited the Grand Champion chicken.

Both girls won second place in their respective classes for heifers. For the competition, CeCe picked a Princess Beef heifer having a facial marking in the shape of a question mark. Not surprisingly, she named her heifer Q! Q is Princess the cow's 5-times great granddaughter! For the competition, Izzi chose one of her Grandfather Bill's heifers. Cassidy, Izzi's heifer, is related to Great Great Grandfather Houseweart's cow herd. We look forward to seeing their first calves this spring. CeCe

is already planning on taking Q and her calf back to the fair again in August 2019.



We take pride in our friendly calm cows and yearlings. Here Ira is giving one of the beef animals a scratch on the tail when the herd came in to drink water.





This winter I started training our one year old puppy Quinn to herd stock. I started with a group of three sheep because sheep are less likely to run me over when chased by an exuberant border collie student than cows. We still have a long way to go, but he has become more useful now that he knows the commands, "lie down" and "back" to get around the stock animals.



Weaning is the process of accustoming a calf to no longer drink its mother's milk. The weaning process can be stressful for both the calf and its mother. We eliminate this stress by weaning calves within sight of their mothers. The calves are separated from their mothers by a fence. Mamas and babies can see and smell each other, but not nurse. This is MUCH more humane than separating the pair and not allowing them to see or smell each other.



2018 was our 20th year of directly marketing grassfed beef to our customers. Princess Beef sold to over 100 families! The girls are an integral part of our family business. Here they are in Hotchkiss getting ready to take payment for the beef and to hand out homemade treats. The whole family works together to make Princess Beef the best.

WHAT'S FOR DINNER Chicken-Fried Steak with Gravy

Recipe courtesy of Ree Drummond from her cookbook *The Pioneer Woman Cooks*
This is our family's favorite comfort food meal of all time. It gets better reviews from Izzi and CeCe than a tenderloin does and it is made with round steak!

3 pounds cube steak
2 large eggs
1 ½ cups milk, plus 2 cups for the gravy
3 cups all-purpose flour, plus about 1/3 cup for the gravy
2 teaspoons seasoned salt
¾ teaspoon paprika
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 ½ teaspoons black pepper
½ cup canola or vegetable oil for frying (*We use olive oil*)

Begin with an assembly line of dishes for the meat, milk-egg mixture, and flour mixture (flour mixed with spices)...with a clean plate at the end. Lightly season a piece of meat with salt and pepper, then dip it into the egg-milk mixture. Flip to the other side to coat. Next, place the meat on the plate of seasoned flour. Turn over to coat thoroughly. Now place the meat back in the egg/milk mixture, turning to coat. Finally, dredge in flour one more time. This repetition will create a nice thick crust—the signature quality of chicken-fried steak. If you do it correctly, your hands will be a mess. Place the breaded meat on the empty plate until ready to fry and repeat the process with the remaining pieces of meat.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When the oil is sufficiently heated fry 3 pieces of meat at a time. Cook on one side until the edges start to look golden brown, about 2 ½ minutes. Turn over and cook for 2 or 3 minutes, until the other side is golden. Remove to a paper towel lined plate and keep warm. Repeat until all the meat is cooked.

Now it is time to make the gravy!

After frying all the meat, pour off the grease into a heat proof bowl. Without cleaning the pan, return it to the stove over medium-low heat. Add ¼ cup grease back to the pan. Allow the grease to heat up. (I add butter if I don't have enough grease.) Sprinkle 1/3 cup flour evenly over the grease. Using a whisk, mix the flour with the grease, creating a golden brown paste. This is known as a 'roux' and you want the roux to attain a deep, rich color. If the paste seems more oily than pasty, sprinkle in another tablespoon of flour. Whisk again and check the consistency. After a couple of minutes the paste will start to turn golden brown. That's when it's ready. Whisking constantly, pour in 2 cups milk. Whisk to combine, then let the gravy come to a slow boil. The gravy will thicken gradually, but if it seems thick at first, add splashes of milk as needed. The total cooking process should take 5 to 10 minutes. Generously season with salt and pepper, tasting to ensure that it's seasoned adequately. Under seasoned gravy is one of life's great sacrileges.

Place the meat on a plate with a heaping pile of mashed potatoes. Drizzle with gravy.

POSTS TO BEEF BOOK

"I thawed one package of ground beef for our dinner last tonight. It may be the most delicious ground beef we can recall ever having! And it was so tender. I have recently been buying grass fed ground beef at Natural Grocers, City Market or Sprouts and there is no comparison. Thank you for the wonderful beef you make available for people who want the healthy meat."

— Allison, Cedaredge, CO

"Thanks again for the wonderful beef! We sure appreciate all you do to make your cows so pure and healthy and the land healthy too. I think your beef has to be some of the best in the country!"

— Deb, Nucla, CO

"We enjoyed a sirloin steak on the grill last night! Delish! And happy knowing they are raised happy and healthy!"

— Krista, Grand Junction, CO

Thank you for all you do, we love your cows!

— Crystal, Grand Junction, CO

COINAGE, WEIGHTS & MEASURES

Our 2019 price will remain the same as last year at \$4.60 per pound hanging weight which includes processing. The hanging weight in 2018 averaged 151 pounds for a split quarter. Processed weight averaged 88 pounds. The approximate price for a split quarter in 2019 will be \$695.00 (\$1,390.00 for a half.) This means a price of about \$7.90 a pound for the finished product.

"Our most profound engagement with the natural world happens on our plates."

— Michael Pollan, Oprah's SuperSoul Conversation Podcast

WHAT SETS PRINCESS BEEF APART FROM OTHER DIRECT MARKET BEEF OPERATIONS:

- We raise our beef on a hundred-year-old family ranch.
- We certify our animals and operation through Animal Welfare Approved and the American Grassfed Association.
- We adhere to rigorous standards. These standards include owning the mother cows and not buying calves to finish on grass; pasture rotations instead of continuous grazing; no antibiotics, no hormones, no GMO feed; across the fence weaning; no branding; and audited processing plants. We are proud of our extremely high standards.



This past July, after an extremely brief sickness, we lost our dear friend and customer, Jeanine Cowan.

Jeanine was one of our biggest cheerleaders. Buying a whole beef for just her and her husband, she understood and appreciated exactly how and why we ranch the way we do. Jeanine was the kind of customer we love producing beef for, and we miss her and her unflinching support.

“One regret, dear world,
That I am determined not to have
When I am lying on my deathbed
Is that I did not kiss you enough.”

— Hafiz (recited by heart by
Jeanine on the last time we visited)

WEBSITES

PrincessBeef.com
AmericanGrassfed.org
AnimalWelfareApproved.us
Eatwild.com
ColoradoBlacksmith.com



FUN ACTIVITIES



In addition to managing the Princess Beef herd and being good stewards of our land, we do occasionally get out and enjoy the beautiful lands surrounding the Houseweart Ranch. This picture shows our family riding in the West Elk Mountain range.



One of our family goals was to share an international trip with the girls before they were out of high school. So, we took the family to Costa Rica over Thanksgiving. We chose Costa Rica because CeCe, our 13-year-old, loves sloths and enjoys watching t.v. shows about the sloth sanctuary in Cahuita, Costa Rica. What an experience to see it in real life!



Our neighbor Jack Sparks helped us restore our 1955 GMC dump truck, Big Red.



“Why do farmers farm, given their economic adversities on top of the many frustrations and difficulties normal to farming? And always the answer is: 'Love. They must do it for love.' Farmers farm for the love of farming. They love to watch and nurture the growth of plants. They love to live in the presence of animals. They love to work outdoors. They love the weather, maybe even when it is making them miserable. They love to live where they work and to work where they live. If the scale of their farming is small enough, they like to work in the company of their children and with the help of their children. They love the measure of independence that farm life can still provide. I have an idea that a lot of farmers have gone to a lot of trouble merely to be self-employed to live at least a part of their lives without a boss.”

— Wendell Berry, *Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food*

For More Information and To Visit Princess Beef

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