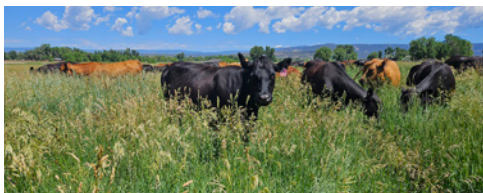


2025 GREETINGS



Princess Beef

Little Princess with her fellow pasture mates under a rainbow – Summer 2024



Looking back through the year of photos, it's hard to believe time isn't speeding up as we get older. What seems like just yesterday was actually a whole beef season ago! We had a good year with our animals. We increased our average hanging weight to 664 pounds - up from 622 pounds the year before. I contribute that gain to a multitude of factors, including purposefully bred genetics in our cow herd, quality hay and pasture, and planned pasture moves for daily weight gain and low stress.



Ira is staying incredibly busy with his custom metal work. He works mostly in Crested Butte, CO and the surrounding area, but he has some fun local projects that really highlight his sculptural talents too. Check out his instagram @ irahouseweart to see all that he has been working on. The History Channel FINALLY aired his second winning show on *Forged in Fire* this past November. In it, Ira went up against a judge from the show that had never been beaten and WON by building a sword! Ten blacksmiths before him had tried. A highlight from the year was renting out a large room at our local fairgrounds and having a viewing party to watch the episode. It was heartwarming to see how many people from our small town showed up.



REFLECTIONS ON 2024 RANCH LIFE AND THE 26TH YEAR OF PRINCESS BEEF

Enjoy,

Cynthia, Ira, Izzi and CeCe

We are grateful for the soil, and the grass, and our cows, and all of our friends and family and customers who believe in this way of ranching, and our ranch.

In April we bought a bull I named Rangus (RedAngus) to work alongside Eyebrows, our other bull. Over the years, comparing the well being of our brown and black cows, I'm finding the brown cows seem to be a little more tolerant of the summer heat. The last several bulls we have purchased have been Red Angus or Red Angus crossed with Simmental or Gelbvieh breeds. We specifically choose bulls that will produce smaller calves at birth which help with birthing ease, but which are able to quickly achieve high weight gain after weaning and are highly marbled with fat, which helps to produce tender meat.



Izzi is in her junior year at Montana State University. As an animal science major with an emphasis on the ranching industry and management, her classes align well with her current goal of working with the land. Her instagram, which she is happy to share (@ isabelle.houseweart), would lead you to believe that all she does is ride horses. In all honesty, who knows what tomorrow will bring and we are glad she has found a passion. She continues to have a wonderful relationship with her "Montana Grandma" Connie, a family friend she met in Bozeman her freshman year. Connie provides the horses, truck, and trailer that allow Izzi to dream up horse adventures. This fall she and a friend rode horses in the wilderness of Glacier National Park, and this winter she took up the sport of skijoring. She, and her horse Samson, pulled a friend on skis around a snowy timed course. She was even able to compete at a skijoring event near Bozeman this winter. Last summer she worked as a wrangler on a guest ranch near Crawford, and led guests of the ranch on horseback rides in the backcountry. She plans to do the same this coming summer.

Eat these good beasts that eat
What you can't eat.
Be thankful
To them and to the plants.
To your small, fertile homeland
To topsoil, light, and rain
That make you what you are.

Be thankful and repay
Growth with good work and care--
Work done in gratitude,
Kindly, and well, is prayer.
You did not make yourself,
Yet you must keep yourself
By use of other lives.
No gratitude atones
For bad use or too much.

This is not work for hire.
By this expenditure
You make yourself a place;
You make yourself a way
For love to reach the ground.

Your blessed economy
Beloved sufficiency
Upon a dear, small place,
Sings with the morning stars.

— Wendell Berry





CeCe, not unexpectedly, knocked her high school senior year out of the park! She was awarded the top girl athlete award, the top fine art award and was her graduating class valedictorian. She gave the most wonderful speech about not being afraid to be different to stand out. You can watch it on youtube at <https://youtu.be/ny71RHC5sOg>. In April she found out she was one of 50 seniors in the state of Colorado to win a Boettcher Scholarship. That scholarship is giving her a full ride to her college choice of Colorado State University in Fort Collins. She currently plans on majoring in pre-veterinary animal science. She has started her freshman year strong, interning under a veterinarian who invented a way of testing cattle for high altitude disease, and working in the veterinary hospital preparing animals for surgery. She joined the horse jumping club and next summer plans to continue training horses with the trainer she has worked with the last six years.



CeCe won ribbons for both Grand Champion chicken and Senior Showmanship for her last ever local Delta County Fair.

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

We are proud of our extremely high standards. These include:

- owning the mother cows and not simply buying unrelated calves to raise (called finishing) on grass;
- continuous pasture rotation;
- no antibiotics, no hormones, no GMO feed;
- across-the-fence line-of-sight weaning;
- no branding;
- using a single processing plant (Mountain Meat Packing)
- we raise our beef on a Centennial family ranch; and
- both our animals and our operation are certified through the Animal Welfare Approved label, the American Grassfed Association label, and the Audubon Bird Friendly label.

NEW ADVENTURES AWAY FROM THE RANCH

"Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer." – unknown author



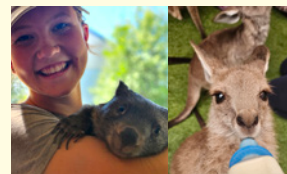
After taking Izzi, who loves country music, to Nashville, TN to celebrate her high school graduation, we gave CeCe a trip to the Lake District in England for her high school graduation trip. CeCe has always loved books where the animals talk. *Small Pig* by Arnold Lobel, *Winnie the Pooh* by A.A. Milne and the classic tales of Beatrix Potter were her favorites over the years. We had an incredible experience, staying in a cozy Inn, walking the footpaths, and experiencing firsthand the countryside of the Lake District we had only read about. It was just as enchanting as we had envisioned and a great learning experience about why the conservation of land is so important.



At the end of June, in between cutting our first and second hay crops, we took a quick family excursion to North Dakota so I could check it off as the last of the 50 states I hadn't been to. I had read about the Teddy Roosevelt National Park and about a "Cowboy Musical" and "pitchfork fondue" dinner they have in Medora, North Dakota every summer. Happily surprised that Ira and the girls wanted to go, we jumped in the car and drove the 14 hours to Medora. Our stay in a covered wagon, the fun patriotic musical near the 4th of July, and the easily hiked National Park with buffalo and wild horses was the perfect family vacation!



ANOTHER incredible travel experience CeCe and I had this year together was traveling to Australia in January over CeCe's winter



break from CSU. This trip was a longtime dream of CeCe's, and she paid for it herself by writing grants. She wanted to learn about wildlife rescue, and in particular, rescue of wombats, a favorite animal of hers. We found a wildlife rescue place two hours north of Melbourne that rescued mostly kangaroos but had ring tail possums, a cockatoo and connections to places with wombats. We feel like we "won the lottery" with the family that took us in as they shared their knowledge of rescue with incredible passion and care. We learned how to check kangaroo pockets for live joeys, bottle feed orphaned joeys, care for wombats, euthanize ones ravaged by mange, and check on the kangaroos that had been successfully released back into the wild. We were in an area of farms and ranches and I loved seeing and comparing them to our place. I can't say enough about how kind and mellow all the people we met were.

COINAGE, WEIGHTS & MEASURES

Buying directly from us ensures that you know exactly where and how your beef is raised and that every dollar you spend is going directly to a small farming business (and that of a small family meat processing facility, Mountain Meat in Fruita, CO).

Our 2025 price is \$5.77 hanging weight per pound, and this includes the butchering (the processing facility has raised their price this year 0.25 cents per pound hanging weight and \$25.00 more per slaughter). The smallest animal from the 2024 season weighed 535 pounds hanging weight, and the largest animal was 765 pounds. You should be prepared for either possibility as I don't assign names to a particular animal.

Therefore, the approximate price for a split quarter (based on last year's average hanging weight of 664 pounds) in 2025 will be \$955.00 (+/- \$100.00); \$1,910.00/half; and \$3,820.00/whole. This means a price of about \$10.00 to \$10.50 a pound for the finished product. As always, half down is required when placing your order.

POSTS TO BEEF BOOK

"We continue to LOVE the high quality beef grown on the West Slope of Colorado. How blessed we are to eat meat raised in such an ethical manner."

— Mary & Dean, Grand Junction, CO

"Thank you once again for our wonderful, beautiful, delicious, healthy gourmet beef! It is the best! I brag about my beef all the time."

— Deb & Fritz, Nucla, Colorado

"Thank you for all the years of Princess Beef – the best beef I have had the privilege to enjoy."

"All the newsletters w/recipes are stuck in my cookbook!"

— Bob & Jo Ann, Hotchkiss, Colorado

"The first meal (chile con carne) was the best we ever had." The chuck roast made me realize I should have gotten half a beef!"

— Amy, Loveland, Colorado

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RANCH



Maintaining and continually improving the land is a cornerstone of our stewardship of the ranch. This year I lightly tilled some of the unimproved ground that was part of our newly purchased 30 acres, and planted an annual grass seed, triticale. Triticale is a cross between wheat and rye, and is thought to increase nitrogen, phosphorus and organic matter levels in soil. Additionally, I wanted to make sure I could direct water from our existing irrigation system to this particular area. The ability to grow grass where none had existed not only improves the land but also helps to force out the prairie dogs that had moved in. Once the land can successfully sustain grasses, my long term plan is to replace triticale with native grass perennials that can withstand droughts. The triticale did well and I was able to graze it twice with the beef herd.



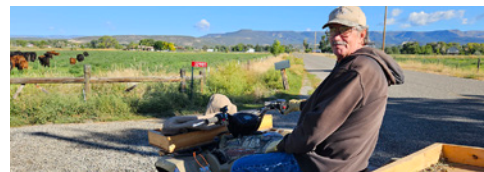
PRINCESS BEEF IS THANKFUL FOR...



We are thankful for Bill and Betty Houseweart for all of their veterinary care over the years. This year they were given the "Citizen of the Year" award by the North Fork Chamber of Commerce.



We are thankful for our neighbors Brett and Heidi who not only allow us to cut and bale hay off their fields but know how to cook an old-fashioned chuck wagon meal extraordinaire.



We are thankful for Peter Campbell who allows us to cut and bale hay and later graze his pastures. Peter is also quite good at lending a hand moving cows the mile down the country road from our place to his and back again.

We are thankful for two other neighbors (not pictured), for letting us use their fields to graze our cows. Cody Houseweart, for letting us use his "back field" in the early spring when we are trying to get our fields ready for irrigation, and the Anglewich Family, for letting us use their fields for early winter grazing to extend our grazing season and prevent us from having to feed harvested hay early.

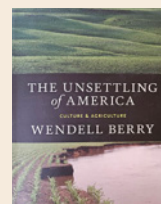
TRACTOR TIME



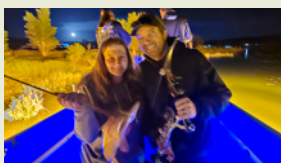
I have a good time looking back at my playlists for the music and books I listened to over the past year. With a whole lot of solitary time, I put my headphones on and

work away. This spring while marking fields, I listened to Beyonce's "Cowboy Carter" album on repeat. It is such an intelligent, progressive country album featuring guests from Willie Nelson and Dolly Parton to Post Malone and Miley Cyrus. I also enjoyed Orville Peck's latest album, *Stampede* and lately I've got soundtracks to David Lynch movies playing in the background. For podcasts, I really enjoy the *Accelerated Culture* Podcast that breaks down new wave and alternative albums that I was totally into during the 1980's and 90's. A shout-out goes to Scott Arciniegas, who does such a fantastic job with this podcast.

I listened to quite a few books while putting up over 250 tons of hay. Two of my absolute favorites were given to me years ago by a beef customer who had come out to visit and later sent them to our family because they had reminded her of our lifestyle. *The Virginian*, by Owen Wister written in 1902, and *Little Britches*, written by Ralph Moody in the early 1900s. Even though they were both written over a century ago, they were still relatable to our current ranching life. The book I'm listening to at the moment is Wendell Berry's *The Unsettling of America*. It is going to take me several listens to get all I want out of it.



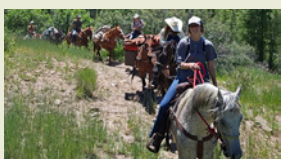
NEW ADVENTURES CLOSER TO HOME



Ira especially, but the girls as well, have done target archery shooting over the years. This year Ira and Izzi tried their hands at bow fishing on a reservoir near us.



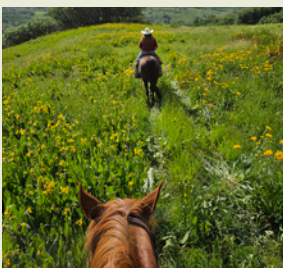
Ira's dad, Bill, has watched his granddaughters' enjoyment of horses grow over the years. This year, at age 81, he decided he wanted to see the ranch on horseback with them. They made it happen by putting him in his old saddle on Ira's calm mule, Boone.



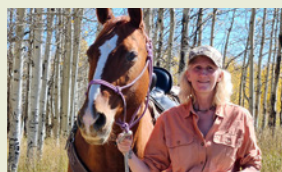
As they do every summer, Ira took the girls and some of their friends packing on horseback into the West Elk Wilderness.



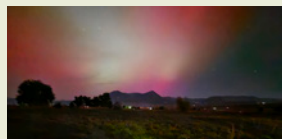
This year I tried fly fishing for the first time with friends at a cabin in the Flat Top Wilderness, near Meeker, CO. Not only did we fish but got to ride horses into wilderness areas.



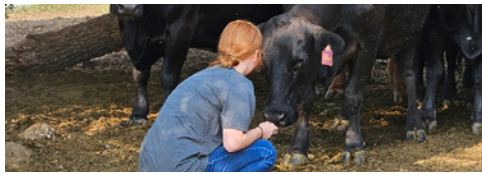
Due to the 24/7 requirements of a working ranch, it is hard for all of us to be gone from the ranch at the same time, so I don't often do overnight trips with Ira and the girls. I did however ride with Izzi several times on new trails in different wilderness areas. I am so impressed at both Izzi and CeCe's confidence and aptitude for horseback riding.



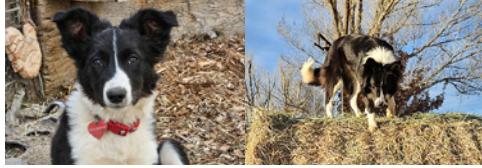
This fall Ira and I did a fun trade with three women from Scotland. In exchange for taking them horseback riding to see the changing aspen leaves in Colorado, I got to participate in a dog handling clinic taught by one of the women, Julie Hill. Julie is an incredible dog trainer who has developed her own kinder, softer way of teaching dogs to herd animals, using the dog's own innate instincts for herding supplemented with additional subtle cues from the dog handler. I am trying to incorporate Julie's methods into my own training of our working herding dogs, Patty and Quinn.



This October 10th we got to view the Aurora Borealis or Northern Lights in the sky right out our front door. I got to check that off my bucket list without leaving the ranch!



We are thankful for our 15 year old friend and neighbor who helps chop the heads off the invasive thistle, pick up and put out electric fencing, and any other odd job we come up with.



We are thankful for our new herding dog Patty! This past March we were given a Patagonian Herding dog. The people who gave her to us had imported a male and female Patagonian Herding Dog from Chile, South America. They had lived in Chile and respected the breed's disposition and ability to work with stock animals. When they moved back to the United States and had their first litter of puppies, they wanted ranchers who had stock animals to try them out, and see how they behaved. The whole family loves Patty. She may be the most athletic dog we've ever had. She jumps on 5 foot hay bales like they are a foot off the ground. She is friendly and kind to all of our other animals. At first I wasn't sure she was very interested in moving cows, but as she matures, she is becoming more and more interested in herding them into the corral.

"Life's symphony isn't played in perfect notes, but in the harmonious blend of highs and lows."

— Sarah Adams

Sometimes reading through this newsletter and looking at all the photos, it seems that our ranch life is too good to be true. I don't take pictures of the things that are not pleasant and the things that are difficult, but we have our share. With calving season imminent, I am bracing for the reality that some calves won't make it. Even more heartbreaking, some mother cows won't make it. Cows get sick from viruses and die, break their legs and have to be put down, or mistakenly eat poisonous plants and die. We have mechanical problems- tractors that won't start, tires that we have to call someone to fix, and irrigation and water line breaks. For me, the biggest ongoing stress is drought and the implications not only for the year but for the future of our ranch.

"Persistence and resilience only come from having been given the chance to work through difficult problems."

— Gever Tulley

SLOW COOKER SHORT RIB RAGU OVER PAPPARDELLE

Sent to me from Johnny and Angelica who have bought beef from us for years and were finally able to come visit and hug a cow!

Prep Time: 30 minutes, 6 to 8 hours crockpot



2 lbs. Princess Beef bone in short ribs
salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup finely diced carrot
1/2 cup finely diced celery
1/2 cup finely diced yellow onion
1/4-1/2 lb pancetta cut into small cubes
1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper (use 1 tsp. for a little more heat)
3 cloves garlic finely chopped
1 tbsp. flour
1/2 cup red wine (any Cabernet or Merlot works great)

1/2 cup beef broth
1 tsp. anchovy paste
28 oz. can of whole peeled tomatoes (preferably San Marzano Tomatoes)
1/2 tsp. dried thyme (1 tsp fresh preferred)
1/2 tsp. dried oregano (1 tsp fresh preferred)
2 bay leaves
2 tbsp. freshly chopped parsley
2 tbsp. freshly chopped basil
12 oz. pappardelle or tagliatelle pasta

- Season all sides of the short ribs generously with salt and pepper.
- Heat a pot or dutch oven over medium-high heat with 2 tbsp. olive oil. Brown all sides of the short ribs (about 2 minutes per side). Remove and set in the bottom of the crockpot.
- In the same pot, add the pancetta and let it brown for about 4 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Add the diced celery, onion, carrot, crushed red pepper, and garlic. Season well with salt and pepper. Saute until veggies are tender and the pancetta is cooked through, about 5-7 minutes.
- Turn heat down to low, add the anchovy paste and saute for 1 more minute.
- Sprinkle in the flour and stir until it coats the veggies.
- Pour in the red wine and beef broth, stir and scrape up all the brown bits off the bottom of the pot.
- Add the can of tomatoes, and using the back of your spoon, break them up a bit.
- Add the fresh or dried herbs.
- Pour sauce over the short ribs in the slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 6-8 hours, ready when short ribs are fork tender and shred easily.
- When ribs are fork tender, discard the bay leaf and remove short ribs from the slow cooker and place onto a cutting board, with two forks, shred the meat and discard the bones and any unwanted fat/tendons. Place shredded meat back into the crockpot to let them soak back up the sauce.
- Meanwhile, bring a pot of water to boil. Cook pasta according to package instructions.
- Drain pasta and top with the ragu. Serve with freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano and loosely chopped parsley.

The ragu keeps in the fridge for 3-4 days, you can also freeze it for up to 1 month.

UNSUNG HEROES

I want to give a shout out to my friend Shannon Castle. She and her family have been friends of ours since our oldest daughters played together at library story time. Shannon helps out during our biggest beef delivery of the year. She works behind the scenes, keeping track of receipts and money so I can visit with customers. She sells our T shirts and books, hands out cookies, and even loads boxes of beef into customer's cars. Most of all, throughout the year, when I'm strung out and anxious about a multitude of issues that come with ranching and agriculture, her friendship and her calm, even disposition help keep me sane. Thank you Shannon! You are an integral part of Princess Beef.



WEBSITES

PrincessBeef.com
AmericanGrassfed.org
AGreenerWorld.org
Rockies.Audubon.org/Ranching
EatWild.com
ColoradoBlacksmith.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO VISIT PRINCESS BEEF

Cynthia and Ira Houseweart
32282 J Road, Hotchkiss CO 81419
970-216-5897
princessbeef@gmail.com

MANY THANKS TO

Laura Arciniegas, Editor
Cassi Cooper, Graphic Design