

## NCBA Productivity Award 2000

September 20, 2000

National Cattlemen's Beef Association  
5420 South Quebec Street  
Post Office Box 3469  
Englewood, Colorado 80155

Re: Application for the IRM Tips for Profits Award Contest

Ladies and Gentlemen:

### SECTION I:

Company:	Pine Ridge Ranch
Name:	Bill and Jane Travis
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The pork and poultry industry have greatly reduced harvest dates. Beef must also reduce the age of harvest to reduce production costs and obtain a more tender carcass. **The single most important economic issue after obtaining a live calf is high growth genetics.** Our primary desire was to reduce production costs.

The goal of Pine Ridge Ranch is to produce a twelve hundred pound (1200#) steer at twelve (12) months of age with a high select to mid-choice carcass and to produce cattle that are environmentally bred to thrive in the warm weather grasslands of the world.



**Herd Sire  
Two years old**



**Herd Sire  
Three years old**



**Herd Sire  
Mature**

For a background, Pine Ridge Ranch began operations in the beef industry in 1972 and established its current breeding goal in 1981. The ranch consists of 2400 acres of cattle and timber and stocks a one to three animal unit ratio.

## SECTION II:

We recognized that this project would be ongoing and require extensive records, selection, testing and culling. It was determined that it would take forty years even if AI and Embryo transfer was extensively utilized. We have made great progress during the last nineteen years of this breeding program, but have many more tests to perform.

Our cow was designed to meet an environment of hot, dry and sometimes humid weather and be able to walk and graze over a long distance. The environmental color of red hair and dark hide was selected since all animals in nature have red hair and dark hide except for nocturnal, high altitude and high latitude animals, exceptions are nelore cattle (white hair, dark hide) and the zebra (white and black hair, dark hide). A high heterosis, Bos Inducus and Bos Taurus crossbred was selected as the medium.



**First Calf Heifer**



**Springer**

Simbrah is the consummate cow for producing high growth calves. Pine Ridge Ranch utilizes purebred Simbrah bred to purebred Simbrah, 3/4 x 1/4 Simbrahs or Fleckvieh Simmentals to maximize growth genes.

We prefer Fleckvieh Simmental bulls to achieve our goal of meat and milk. Fleckvieh Simmental are early maturing, moderate, long, thick, and the females are the milk cow of Bavaria . . . truly great meat and milk and the Brahman furnishes longevity, heat tolerance and heterosis.



**Seven Month Calf**



**Nine Month Heifers**



**Pairs**

The following specification was designed to meet our performance goals:

### **Pine Ridge Ranch Breeding Traits for Simbrah**

1. Fertility—Heifers to calve at two years of age and cows at twelve month intervals
2. Low birth weight and calving ease
3. High growth
4. Carcass tenderness and choice beef
5. Small head, moderate bone to achieve 65% red meat
6. A 1,350 pound steer at 13.5 months of age with low grain to weight ratio
7. Environmental cattle to prosper on the grasslands of the warmer climates of the world
8. Multigenerational cattle for breeding predictability and consistency of type
9. Heat traits
  - A. Dark hide
  - B. Red Hair
  - C. No naval leather, with neck leather for heat dissipation
  - D. Minimum of 1/4 Brahman
10. Structure
  - A. Female structure—frame score 6 to 7
  - B. Bull structure—frame score 6 to 8
  - C. Structurally correct; free moving
  - D. Gentle, non-kicking cattle
  - E. Shoulder height to brisket is equidistant to brisket to ground but not over a 55/45 ratio
  - F. Large scrotums, early maturing
  - G. High to moderate milking females with excellent teats and bag structure
  - H. Deep twist with flank as deep as chest wall
  - I. Longevity
  - J. Polled
  - K. White on face for ease in location of livestock
  - L. Pigmented eyes for protection from sun
  - M. Long, strong, wide and straight-backed, with small hook to pin slope and long tail set
  - N. Heavy muscling in rear quarter and over the loin

### **SECTION III:**

The average steer in the United States is harvested at 19 months of age. The extensive use of calf-feds with high growth genetics has the potential of saving United States producers over a billion dollars (\$1,000,000,000.00+) in the annual cost of raising beef.

On July 20, 2000, Pine Ridge Ranch weaned and weighed 22 of the following calves. These calves were not creep fed.

Calf Weaned	Average Age, Days	Average Weaning Weight	Average Gain/Month	Average Weight/Day of Age
15 Heifers	243	685#	84.56#	2.812#
7 Bulls	240	759#	94.88#	3.163#

Obtaining a 12 month, 1200# steer is practical and obtainable using the proper genetics. It costs approximately \$25 to \$30 per month to maintain a steer. The cost savings provided by harvesting a 12 month calf versus a 19 month calf is tremendous! The 12 month steer dramatically reduces both costs and risk. In addition, a 12 month steer is a more tender eating experience than the 19 month steer. The high performance cow will cost approximately \$35 per year more to maintain but should save calf production costs by \$175 (7 months x \$25) for an estimated savings of \$140 per carcass.

Pine Ridge Ranch has made great progress in producing high growth, lean and tender beef. The two most developed carcass bloodlines in the Simbrah breed are Pine Ridge bloodlines by evaluating over 700 carcasses over a twelve year period.

#### **SECTION IV (SUMMARY):**

1. Any cowman, in any geographical location, and with any breed or combination of breeds could potentially produce the 12 month, 1200# steer with an excellent carcass.
2. Within three years, all producers, regardless of size, will have the ability to market cattle on the rail through the LMA Network and benefit from their genetic improvements.
3. Early maturing, high growth genetics will become available to every cowman in the new information age. DNA will, in the near future, supply carcass data to the cowman prior to having to wait for lengthy test results.