

Why the Nguni adds up to real profit

The Nguni is by far the most profitable beef cattle breed in South Africa. Compared with other breeds, it produces meat at a lower unit cost.

Based on practical experience and scientific evidence, the Nguni Breeders' Society has identified the breed's characteristics and benefits. Ngunis are used in various roles in the beef industry – for stud breeding and genetic improvement, for free-range beef production on the veld with oxen, and to produce females as the dam line in terminal cross-breeding.

NGUNI COWS PROTECT THEIR CALVES FIERCELY

As a pure breed, it is also utilised in developing composite breeds such as the Sanganer and PinZ²yl.

Nguni bulls are used to open heifers in dairy herds. Registered animals are inspected and approved according to guidelines

on pure genetics and functional efficiency for herd improvement, whether in stud herds or commercial herds. A comprehensive gene pool of top-class breeding animals is available in South Africa.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTABILITY

Natural selection and directed genetic development have contributed to different ecotypes and genotypes to ensure genetic variability within the breed, as well as adaptability.

The Nguni's unique pigmentation protects it from solar irradiation and eye and skin cancer. It is hardy and resistant to ticks and tick-borne diseases. It can tolerate extreme climatic conditions, while a high



ABOVE: The Nguni cow is ideal for terminal cross-breeding in low-cost production systems.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LBC BIGGS TRUST, KZN.



internal urea level enables it to utilise low-quality forage. It resettles well and is easy to work with.

CHARACTERISTICS

The Nguni's unique hide in a variety of colours and patterns provides a bonus income for the breeder. The quality and taste of the meat compares favourably with that of other breeds and holds potential for brand development and export.

Loss to predators and stock-theft thieves is negligible, as the cows protect their calves fiercely. Calf mortality from birth to weaning is low; calves grow rapidly and often wean at more than 50% of their dams' weight.

Maintenance, labour and veterinary costs are low.

The Nguni requires little supplementary feeding and graze veld efficiently, utilising grass, trees and bush, and covering long distances to forage. It matures early and rounds off quickly on free-range. It is highly efficient at converting even poor

quality veld into prime beef and produces more beef per hectare than other breeds. This holds promise in providing free-range beef to health-conscious consumers.

COWS THAT LAST

The Nguni cow is the ideal dam line for terminal cross-breeding in low-cost, extensive production systems. It is exceptionally fertile, calves easily with strong maternal behaviour and achieves a high re-conception rate, even under challenging conditions. Heifers breed at an early age and, along with their longevity and good calving performance, ensure long-term utilisation at a low replacement cost.

The Nguni offers the cattleman a unique, economical and sustainable natural advantage. It is part of our indigenous heritage, yet belongs to the agricultural future of South Africa.

• Phone the Nguni Cattle Breeders' Society of SA on 052 4448 7302/3. Visit www.ngunicattle.info.



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