

When you ask Don Holtzen of Davenport, Neb., to describe his ideal bull, he uses words such as a frame score 6 or 6.5, good feet and legs and skeletal structure, well muscled and carries his weight. He also wants a bull that will cover a lot of cows and has longevity. Another descriptor: a Goldrush Genetics bull.

“I’m sold on Goldrush Genetics bulls,” Don states. “Mike has done an excellent job of producing top-quality bulls with a focus on carcass quality balanced with other economic traits. And I like the fact that Mike DNA tests.”

Don runs about 120 commercial cows that are mainly Gelbvieh and Angus cross—what is also known as Balancers. He favors this cross, citing Gelbvieh for its tremendous growth and Angus because “if you have a little Angus in it, the calves seem to sell better.”

“I like the black calves,” he reveals.

Fertility is another trait high on Don’s list. He needs highly fertile bulls as his breeding season is just 60 days long. Plus, he likes to keep replacement heifers, and wants them highly fertile.

He puts bulls in and takes them out 60 days later. Females that don’t get bred are out of the herd.

“Right now about 60 percent of my calves are born during the first three weeks of my calving season,” he states.

Don began purchasing Goldrush Genetics about eight years ago. He started out buying just bulls but bit by bit moved over to purchasing Goldrush Genetics females too.

“I just wanted more of his genetics,” Don elaborates. “Plus Mike’s females help move my herd toward my idea of the ideal cow: one of that milks real well, has a moderate frame, is highly fertile and is good fleshing.”

The Nebraska commercial cowman said he was buying Gelbvieh bulls long before he met Mike Hynek. But meeting Mike and learning about the Goldrush Genetics program caused him to look at the Goldrush program.

“DNA testing and the carcass focus set Mike’s herd apart,” Don tells. “Then, too, Mike is one of the good guys who takes care of his customers.”

Don has also learned that calves sired by Goldrush Genetics bulls perform. His weaning weights have moved significantly since adding Goldrush Genetics. It isn’t uncommon to sell weaned calves the middle of October with the scales hitting 750 to 800 pounds.

“You gotta be happy with those heavy weaning weights,” he summarizes. “And the calves are very nice to look at too.”