

Nguni - Nature's Masterpiece



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PURPOSE

For many years, the authorities in South Africa discouraged the breeding of indigenous cattle. The qualities of hardiness, fertility, adaptability and tick resistance that cattle farmers tried to introduce through imported breeds already existed in the indigenous Nguni breed, acquired through centuries of adaptation and natural selection.

PROCEDURES

Tick counts were done at monthly intervals on Nguni, Bonsmara and Hereford Cows.

Interviews were held with Nguni farmers to obtain information on temperatures, vegetation, diversity, rainfall and tick-borne diseases.

European breed farmers were interviewed.

Questionnaires were sent to Nguni stud farmers to obtain information about calving intervals, adaptability, age, dipping and tick-borne diseases.

Magazine articles were collected for information, social, spiritual and economic importance.

DATA

Counts of naturally infested cattle showed that Ngunis had significantly fewer ticks than other cattle. The lower tick counts are attributed to years of natural selection, smooth coats and the exertion of a waxy serum.

The Nguni is capable of coping with stresses such as very high and low temperatures and extreme rainfall patterns. They also thrive on all three vegetation types. The research has shown that one can farm with Ngunis in any ecological region without any influence on them.

Fertility and longevity under extreme ranching conditions are exceptional and the Nguni has the shortest calving intervals of all the breeds.

Ngunis have the potential to be 100% organic and the hide is a very marketable commodity with more than 94 patterns registered.

AS A BREED, ARE THEY VALUABLE IN A NEW SOUTH AFRICA?

Two factors that often deter conventional cattle farmers as far as the Nguni is concerned, are size and colour, but these

are actually positive traits. The Nguni is the smallest beef cattle breeds in South Africa, but the most productive in terms of kg/calf weaned. The Nguni has a high fertility and very high levels of tick resistance relative to all other breeds in South Africa. The Nguni cow, being small, allows more cows to be kept in a given area together with their high productivity equates to more kg beef per ha.

This, combined with low maintenance requirements, means more money in your pocket.

The Nguni consists of irreplaceable genetic resources and it is very much about our future. The Nguni is a breed for our future and it is proudly South African.

 Christopher Kleynhans

is 'n leerling aan St. Andrews Skool in Welkom. In 2005 het hy met sy navorsingsprojek oor Ngunis begin. Hy verower 'n goue medalje by die Goudveldse Expo kompetisie en kwalifiseer daarmee vir Nasionale deelname.

By Eskom Expo vir jong wetenskaplikes verower hy ook 'n goue medalje asook 'n spesiale prys om Suid-Afrika op die Internasionale Expo in Mexico te verteenwoordig.

By die ESIAMLAT Science Expo te Veracruz ontvang hy die toekenning vir die beste Internasionale projek in sy kategorie.

In 2006 word die Free State Youth Award aan hom toegeken vir sy projek Nguni - Nature's Masterpiece in die afdeling Wetenskap en Tegnologie. St. Andrew's Skool wen in 2007 die Echo toekenning vir Christopher se Expo-prestasie, tesame met ander Expo-prysweners van die skool.

Christopher het soveel wonderlike mense tydens sy navorsing ontmoet en sien die Nguni-boere het 'n groot aandeel aan sy sukses gehad. Mnr. Albertus Erasmus, Andre Nel asook Dr. Michiel Scholtz van die LNR se bydraes was van onskatbare waarde, so ook al die boere wat 'n aandeel in die voltooiing van die vraelyste gehad het.

Mnr. Francisco Rizzuto het sy volledige projek in Spaans vertaal wat dit toeganklik vir die publiek in Veracruz, asook vir die beoordeling, gemaak het.

Christopher hoop om verder met sy navorsing te gaan en wil graag betrokke by nuwe opkomende boere, asook die uitvoer na lande soos Argentinië en Brasilië raak.

