BUIS BEEF RANCH

Fourth generation family owned & operated farm
4 full time 2 part time 1 seasonal
650 acres growing
- corn (sweet, seed and commercial)
- soybeans, wheat, hay & pasture

225 spring calving cows (April & May)
75 fall calving cows (Aug & Sept)
12 Bulls
Background and Finish all calves

Selling our own farm raised Beef
As individual cuts, sides and quarters
Fully traceable, chosen pre-harvest by ultrasound, no added hormones /antibiotics

Southwestern Ontario ???
The challenge ……

Large Cow Herd
Retail outlet
Very expensive Land
High value cropping choices
Limited affordable staff available
HOW CAN WE MAKE IT WORK
In the middle of
CASHCROPPING
COUNTRY ????

Traditional System

Cows require lots of land

- Grazing Season 100 to 150 days
- Permanent grass pasture , acres of hay
- Capacity **2 acres per animal** or more
- Rely on stored feed for 200 days
- Calving indoors Feb /March
  
  Traditional beef production model in Ontario

Tradition is nice

>>>>>BUT >>>>>
• Pasture OR Cropland ???
  • Peas / Snap peas ?
  • Sweet corn / Seed Corn ?
  • Tomatoes? Cucumbers ?
  • Corn , Soybeans
  • Wheat

OR ???

Can we raise beef like this
……………HERE ?………..

WHY NOT ?????
HOW ?????

RYE VS OATS
Dec 20/2015
What have I Learned ????

...........>......>

“Make ONE new mistake EVERY Year”

Oats in wheat stubble
Now What?

January fencing
Annual Forages as Pasture

Yield of Annual Forages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Average Yield TDM/ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>12.0 +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>5.5 – 8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Rye (pasture)</td>
<td>1.0 – 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forage Sorghum</td>
<td>7.0 – 9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kale (pasture, green feed)</td>
<td>9.0 – 12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Ryegrass</td>
<td>8.0 – 12.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remember as days get colder animals are attracted to the warmth of cars so check wheel arches or other hiding places.

We need a grazing plan!

Opportunities don’t happen YOU create them….
Grazing Options

Rye seeded in sweet corn stubble - 20 acres
Alfalfa 4th cut still standing - 40 acres
Corn silage ground seeded to oats - 40 acres
Oats & Rye after snapbeans - 25 acres
Rye seeded after tomatoes - 20 acres
Oats in March

March Rye pasture
Grazing Schedule

1. Jan 8  Rye and sweet corn 20 acres
2. Jan 29  Alfalfa 4th cut 40 acres
   – Plus Corn silage ground 40 acres
3. March 5  Oats & Rye 25 acres
4. March 20  Sweet corn & Rye 20 acres

**NO EXTRA FEED ADDED**

**160 cows Jan 8 to Mar 30**

**145 acres**

Winter Pasture yield

- 145 acres of crop residue and cover crops
- 160 cows 82 days
- 14,000 lbs / day of silage before Jan 8
- 1,148,000 lbs 574 tons
- Value = $16,072.00
- Cover crop return $110 acre

Cover Crops

- No harvest costs
- No feed storage and delivery to cows
- No manure to haul or bedding to put in
- Improved organic matter
- Erosion protection (wind water)
- Roots to aid soil structure
- Improved water holding capacity

The power of covercrops
Cover crops ……
Not just above ground
BUT ......

Isn’t this supposed to be a
BEAN FIELD ????
CHALLENGES ??

I have not failed…
I’ve just found 10,000 ways
THAT WON’T WORK
Thomas Edison
Find crop that works

GETTING IT PLANTED
Covercrop trials
No till Drill

Broadcast after sweetcorn

Oct 2019

Jan 15 2020
Nitro Enhanced Maize

- 60% nitro Italian rye grass
- 25% Crimson clover
- 10% Nitro Radish
- 5% hairy vetch
- Target seeding rate 15-17
- $1.70 lb  $25-$29 acre
After Wheat Harvest

After liquid manure application
Sorghum Sudan
Planted after wheat
No till drilled
Rye grass and turnips
Put on top

Sept 12 2016

Seven weeks after planting
Seed cost  
$1.10 lb  
@ 15 lb  
$16.50 Ac

Yield  
6 bales/ac  
(4 X 5)  
Cost at feeding  
$14 bale

Sorghum Sudan Grass Analysis

Moisture 66.8
DM protein 13.6 %
TDN 53.66 %

Similar to late-bloom alfalfa silage

ROOTS !!!
Clean, good quality SEED .....always (you get what you pay for)

COWS in the neighbours field ??.

On purpose !!!!!!!...
CLIMATE CHANGE?
Every “NORMAL” year Always has the same Growing conditions
Coconut

Corn Distillers soluble

What did I learn ????

- Seed Costs & Availability
- Establishing in the crop / fencing $
- Timing of harvest(Clovers,grasses,Turnips)
- Moving Livestock (daily,farm to farm)
- Water source ? SNOW ?
- No-Till ? MUD ?
- EACH Field has specific advantage
Challenges

- Need summer feeding areas
- MUD, MUD & more MUD
- Growing season variability
- Ration balance is a challenge
- Need Plan “B” feed supply
- Crop rotation & grazing plan have to fit
- Have a Positive impact on our environment
YES We Can
Raise cows in cash-crop country

• Grazing season extended to 365 days
• Unlimited forage choices - annual/perennial
• Options/vegetables planted/harvested early
• Utilize crop residue and cover crops
• Reduce harvesting & storage of winter feed
• Healthy cows calving outside
• Permanent pasture optional
At the end of the day...

“Ensure our daily practices demonstrate good stewardship towards both land and animals to provide a sustainable family farm for future generations.”
Buis Beef
7792 Seventh line
(Bloomfield at 401)
Chatham Ontario

mike@buisbeef.ca

Selling our own farm raised Beef
As individual cuts, sides and quarters
Fully traceable, chosen pre-harvest by ultrasound, no added hormones / antibiotics

Buis Beef Retail

- Ultrasound prediction of harvest date
- Consistent finish point 10 ml backfat
- Triple A marbling or better
- Target carcass weight of 700 lb
- But can use 500-800
- Animal attitude also observed

Ultrasound Prediction
Selecting only premium animals for retail!

Buis Beef Retail

“No added hormones or antibiotics”
- Reduce stress at handling times
- Two step Weaning with vaccination protocol
- Vaccinated back on cow for 4 weeks
- Bunk broke with ration they are going to
- Nose flap back with cow for 5-7 days
Buis Beef Retail

Fully traceable using “BIOLINK”

- Each package has barcode with animal id
- Can trace each package back to animal with full history including dam
- Name of cut, Weight, price, date
Buis Beef Retail

- Staff must know each cut & preparation
- How it was raised
- What is going on at the farm today
- Anything that is on internet or social media regarding all food esp. beef
- Organic, GMO, Animal rights ……

Decision Making Process

“The most important tools on the farm are a sharp pencil and effective communication”

Questions

Mike - mikebuis@gmail.com
Theresa - theresa.m.buis@gmail.com