



BEEF BRIEFS

AMERICAN
Simmental
ASSOCIATION

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Description of a Simbrah

Simbrah is a composite breed. Animals containing 5/8 Simmental blood and 3/8 Brahman or Zebu blood are designated as purebred. A sixteenth of other breeds is allowed making it easy to incorporate traits, such as polled or other characteristics, for specific purposes into the purebred.

The flexibility of the “floating sixteenth” also allows for a slight shift in the amount of Simmental and Brahman in the purebred. This enables Simbrah to better adapt to the different environmental conditions in which they are produced. Within this wide genetic pool, the purebred Simbrah breeder can perfect his own type. This standard is not intended to limit the imagination or goals of individual breeders, but is only a guide that has been put together by established breeders to help new breeders, judges, and others to better define the breed called Simbrah.

The Simbrah has been described as the **All Purpose American Breed**, meaning that it is not only an outstanding choice for maternal and survival characteristics in a hot environment, but it produces a modern, lean, high quality beef product.

Size

Simbrah is a moderate to large breed with most cows in the range of 1100-1500 pounds and bulls in the range of 1800-2500 pounds.

Color

Simbrah breeders in the warmer climates have shown preference for red color and eye pigmentation, although no special color is

required for registration. A unique color helps with breed identification and with buyer satisfaction of crossbred progeny. Black Simbrah are quite popular with some breeders, especially in the cooler areas. Eye pigmentation is an advantage for protection against the sun’s damaging rays. Skin color may be red or black, but white or pink skin, especially around the eyes, is usually discriminated against.

Hair Type

Fine sleek hair is desirable in the summer for its ability to reflect the sun’s heat rays. The red color is also good in this regard. Most Simbrah grow enough hair in winter to thrive up into the central plains of the U.S.

Skin

Simbrah animals usually have more loose skin, in the dewlap and navel area, than Simmentals. This added surface area, in the dewlap, is part of the adaptability to hot climate inherited from the Brahman. Pendulous sheaths and “lazy prepuce” should be avoided with the sheath not hanging lower than the knees and with a preferred forward angle. Some Simbrah animals are as clean as any Simmental in their underline. The rationale for this is that a pendulous sheath can easily become damaged and the bull can become nonfunctional.

Conformation

The Simbrah is a beef animal and, as such, shows evidence of muscling. Bulls are much more muscular than females. No hump (or very little) is present, but bulls do have a noticeable crest. The topline is long, strong, and muscular,

but some slope from hooks to pins is common. The rump should be long with thickness of muscle evident down into the stifle area. The body should have a large capacity with very good spring to the ribs and adequate depth in both flank and heart-girth. Shoulders should be sloping and neatly laid into the body to help prevent calving difficulty. Legs and feet should be very sound with some angle to the hocks and pasterns allowing for a long easy stride and cushioning of impact. Hooves should be relatively large in proportion to body size and have two claws of equal size and shape. Feet should be straight, allowing the animal's weight to be carried evenly. Bulls should have well-developed secondary sexual characteristics with large scrotal circumference at sexual maturity. Yearling scrotal circumference has been shown to be associated with early puberty and high fertility in daughters as well as good fertility in bulls.¹ Cows and heifers should appear feminine, with well developed and strongly attached udders and small evenly spaced teats.

¹ J. Brinks, Colorado State University – Fort Collins

Maturity and Longevity

The earlier maturity of the Simmental is desirable in the Simbrah with animals able to breed by 14-15 months of age and produce progeny by age two. The longevity of the Brahman is advantageous, with many cows able to remain in efficient production to age 15 or older.

Temperament

Simbrah animals are alert and cows are protective of their calves. They should be tractable and able to be worked easily in groups. Animals with dangerous or difficult dispositions should be culled.

Polled or Horned

Polled Simbrah are popular and becoming more numerous. The polled gene can come from any polled foundation animal or from either Simmental or Brahman, or both. An additional gene called the African Horn Gene must be considered in breeding polled Simbrah.