

“The Beef Maker”

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In the beef business, it all starts with the cow, the production plant, and the fall of the year is when many farmers and ranchers in the area get their first glimpse of the new year’s “models” when calving season begins!

Such is the case at Bull Hill Ranch in Gray Court, SC, where I manage a herd of Red Angus females. This year’s calving season began in a hurry with over one third of the calf crop being born in the first two weeks of the season. These Red Angus females have really been rolling the new models off of the assembly line this year!

Among the proud new mothers is Bull Hill Burgandy 1046, a six-year old Red Angus cow who gave birth to her third set of twins on November 8th. Beef cows need to have their first calf by their second birthday and have a calf every year afterward to be on schedule in production, but “1046” is certainly doing all of that and much more.

In 26 years in the beef business, I’ve never had a cow to do this! The “1046” cow has a calf or two every 370 days on average, and in the two years that she had singles, she posted a 107 average weaning weight ratio or seven percent above the average of her herdmates.

All of her calves have been born unassisted, and she has accepted all of her twins, which is very rare with cattle. In addition, over half of her eight calves were the result of artificial insemination, and only one calf from the first two sets of twins was raised by another cow. This 1,200 lb. cow was responsible for over 2,500 lbs. of weaned calves in her first three lactations.

Unlike my twin daughters, twins in the cattle business are usually a lot of trouble, but I sure can’t complain about the way that the “1046” cow does her job. Red Angus are known for being great mothers, and this one has got to be one of the most fertile and productive beef cows I’ve ever been around!