

Raising Lowlines What to look for in a Lowline Breeder? (part 1)

It is important to buy your Lowlines from a reputable breeder. Lowlines are an investment and as such you want to purchase your animals from someone who has both quality animals and is an honest business person. You may ask, how can I know that I am dealing with someone who is reputable if I am new to the breed?

A few things you can look for to help you evaluate a potential Lowline seller could include the following.

- Is the breeder a current member of the American Lowline Registry, also known as the ALR? Members of the ALR are listed by state on the ALR web site. This web site is maintained separately from the ALR herd book so sometimes the ALR office does not get new members listed for a few months.
- Does the breeder have American Lowline Registry issued registration papers for the animal they are trying to sell that they can show to you? Registered full blood Lowlines have the highest value, but only if they are registered. To register a full blood Lowline the animal must be DNA typed by the lab that the ALR contracts with to perform this testing. This will confirm that the animal from whom the DNA sample was taken parent verifies back to its sire and dam. The sire and dam must have already been registered with the ALR and their DNA on file with the lab for comparison. If this DNA typing does not match on a sufficient number of genotype markers then the animal can not be registered. Paperwork is important here so if they tell you the registration is pending or that they will get the animal registered for you as part of the sale, my advice is to pass. Have them call you once the animal is registered. Percentage Lowlines are not DNA tested so you will have no independent proof that the animal you are considering is really part Lowline. It is solely the integrity of the breeder who submits animals for registration with the ALR to honestly report the percentage Lowline of a given animal. For this reason many new Lowline owners feel most comfortable purchasing full blood animals to ensure they are getting what they expect for their investment.
- Is the person selling the animal a breeder or a broker? If you are looking at a young animal, is this a mating that the breeder made or is this an animal that has been recently been purchased and is being re-sold. There may be a very good reason for the sale, but ask questions.
- If the breeder made this mating what can they tell you about the sire and dam of the animal? Do they have other offspring from the same mating or offspring from this sire and /or dam that you can see? This can give you a clue on what to expect from the young animal you may be purchasing.
- Is the breeder pushing you hard to make the sale? If so, you might ask yourself, why? These Lowlines are in high demand and I usually have many more customers than animals available to sell. That is why they make such a good investment. Because of the high demand for these cattle you should expect that a breeder will be speaking to a number of potential customers about a given animal at the same time and will sell to the buyer who is first to make their decision to purchase. To protect both buyer and seller I request a signed sales agreement along with a non-refundable deposit to hold the animals for a buyer.

More suggestions on what to look for in a Lowline breeder next time...

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