

Raising Lowlines What to look for in a Lowline Breeder? (part 2)

Lowlines are an investment and as such you want to purchase your Lowlines from someone who has quality animals and is a reputable and honest breeder. A few more questions you can ask yourself to help you decide if this is a breeder you feel comfortable working with to make your Lowline investment.

- Do the other animals owned by this breeder appear healthy and well cared for? Particularly those that are not currently for sale? I like to buy directly from the breeder and if possible go to the seller's farm to see for myself the environment where the animal has been raised. Are the animals being raised on grass? Do all of the animals look to be in good condition or only those that are being fed for show. It always amazes me that breeders promote Lowlines as grass fed cattle and then proceed to fatten their young stock on grain for shows. I would rather see how the animals do raised on the cows and grass the way that I intend to raise them.
- Are the animals raised and cared for by this person? Can they speak knowledgeably about the characteristics and disposition of the individual animal? This may be quite important to you if you plan to show this animal or have it around your children or grandchildren?
- Are you looking for an animal that has been handled a lot and is used to people, pets and horses? If so you may want to buy from a smaller breeder who is more likely to have spent time "socializing" their animals than from a larger breeder or a commercial breeder that raises Lowlines on the side. Large breeders or those whose herds are managed by a professional farm manager probably have little knowledge of and little or no contact with individual animals since they will generally be raised in large pastures or paddocks with little or no daily human interaction. If you can walk out into the pasture with a breeder and look over the animals without them running off from you they are more likely to be easily handled and used to people. When people visit my farm they are often quite surprised that we walk right out into the field in the midst of a grazing or resting herd and the animals continue to quietly go about their business. They do not swarm around us looking for "treats" but are content by and large to let us walk up to them at our leisure. I walk around my cattle out in the field nearly every day.
- Is the breeder willing to answer your questions? Can they tell you about the vaccinations and other herd health practices they follow? Have the heifers and cows being offered for sale been calthood vaccinated? This vaccination must be done between 4 months and before 1 year of age.
- Is the seller providing a written sales agreement for the sale? They should also provide a health certificate from a licensed veterinarian. A health certificate is usually required for transporting animals from farm to farm, or from farm to shows, sales, etc. particularly across state lines. It must list the destination for the animals so is not usually something that can be obtained by the seller for you until the sale is finalized and an agreement or contract is signed. Some states also require registration with the state's brand office to move cattle across state lines.

Next time, some of the items you should expect to see in your sales agreement.

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