

Trip Report
American Simmental Association
Colombia · July 23, 2009 – August 1, 2009
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Activity # M09GXCOS07

Purpose

The purpose of this activity was to promote the use of Simmental and Simbrah genetics in Colombia. This was accomplished by attending the 2009 AGRO- EXPO in Bogotá, speaking at a field day in Cali and visiting key contacts in Medellin, Colombia.

Market Overview

There is a great demand now for both Simmental and Simbrah genetics in Colombia. The growing interest is now a reality and a known commodity among commercial cattlemen in the country. Most of the base "beef" cow herd is a Brahman or percentage Brahman - cross, in the country. Other uses I saw while in the Bogota area, is using both Simmental and Simbrah on Dairy breeds of cattle producing a more desirable calf for the beef industry.

There is now a shortage of purebred and 3/4Sm x 1/4Br Simbrah genetics for the fast growing amount of F-1 females that are being produced. This is an opportunity for American Simbrah producers to take advantage of the situation and offer these genetics to the country. Mexico, in the past was supplying a large part of the void over the past three years but since the outbreak of swine flu, all exports to Colombia were halted by the Colombian government. The Germans on the other hand do not produce Simbrah and cannot fill this void.

Also I see great opportunities for the American Full Blood and Red Purebred cattle, for the country as well. The Colombians have been utilizing basically German genetics and now are starting to consider North American genetics again. ASA still has to overcome the "large framed, hard doing" image though. I know we have gained large strides in the U.S. market, but the outside world still has that image of our Simmentals.

Exporting to Colombia is a complicated process and American producers need to check into all requirements before offering genetics to the country. Anyone considering to export to that market should look at USDA's and Colombia's ICA web site's to obtain what is required. As a side note if you do not have CSS semen or embryos produced with CSS semen do not waist your time. The ICA (equivalent of our USDA) takes animal health very seriously and will not bend the rules as some other Central American countries are known to do.

Itinerary

July 23 - Left Olmito TX at 5:00 am and arrived Bogota Colombia at 2:00pm Bogota July 24th

Flew American Airlines and spent more time sitting on the runway than in the air

July 24 - arrived Hotel at 5:00pm, Went to Agro-Expo and visited with Simmental / Simbrah breeders

Returned to Hotel @ 11:00pm

July 25 - Left hotel at 8:00am and was picked up by Juan Manuel Cabal. Watched Simmental Show and Sale that day. Prices were good at the sale with an average of \$9,000.00. Returned Hotel @ 1:00am

July 26 - Left Hotel at 7:30 am was picked up by Gilberto Igagorri . Returned to show grounds and watched Simbrah show all day; Visited with many Simmental and Simbrah breeders. Returned to hotel @ 10:00pm

July 27 - Left hotel 5:00 am and traveled by ground 12 hours to Cali. Arrived at the home of Juan Manuel Cabal. Visited with he and his father Ciro Cabal until 11:00pm. They are the owners of Hacienda Asturias,

July 28 - Left the home of the Cabal's and we visited several ranches in the Cali area. Arrived hacienda Asturias at noon, Gave a talk at a field day that afternoon about the use of Simbrah genetics and their advantages. Visited with many breeders that night. We stayed over night at the ranch.

July 29 - Left the head quarters at 7:00am and looked at many herds of Simbrah cattle in the area ranging from F-1's, 1/4SM x $\frac{3}{4}$ BR and pure bred cattle. Arrived at Cali airport at 11:00 am. Arrived Medellin at 2:30 pm. Visited with Raul Diaz, Felipe Giraldo until 9:00 pm, Arrived hotel at 10:00 pm.

July 30 - Left hotel at 8:00 am. Went to Colanta and Fondo ganaderos de Antioquia . Visited with several research people and consultants who work out of that office. Arrived hotel at 9:00pm.

July 31 - Left hotel at 5:00 am. (Another American Airlines Flight) Flight supposed to have left at 8:30am but as usual more maintenance problems unloaded three different times. Another on time take off at 3:30 p.m. Missed all connecting flights and was told I would have to wait in Miami until Sunday. I demanded they put me out on continental 's 8:00a.m. flight next day. Finally they agreed.

Aug 1- left hotel at 5:30 a.m. Flight left at 8:00 a.m. and arrived home at 2:00p.m. (Continental had maintained their planes and were on time!)

Personal Contacts: See attachment

Summary

After all the years of work in the Colombian cattle industry by ASA, we are starting to see results. Simmental and Simbrah are no longer "buzz" words in the Colombian cattleman's vocabulary. They are now a reality, that is starting to play a large role in commercial beef industry of the country. Both breeds have gained major "in roads" in the beef and dual-purpose industry of their country. The Colombian Simmental Association, is also to be commended for having stepped up the

last two years for promoting both of their breeds, within their country by national advertising and being in the spotlight on major agricultural television shows.

The border is still closed for live cattle at this time due to "mad cow" but from what I was told this embargo should end shortly. Their Department of Agriculture takes things very seriously when it come to protecting agriculture in their country. I believe that in the near future we will be able once again to market live cattle and now see great demand for both semen and embryos.

Sales of domestic cattle are at very attractive prices and American Simmental/Simbrah genetics have an opportunity to take advantage of this market. It will be very important to maintain a presence in the country and let the Colombian's know what we have to offer.

Hans Lettmair

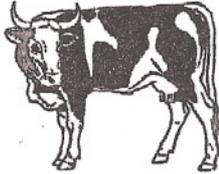
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