



# Lessons Learned

November 2015

Y Knot Farm & Ranch

Bird City, KS

# Y Knot Farm & Ranch has 1,115 acres producing:

## Highest per acre gross listed first:

- Organic Produce
  - Organic Wheat
  - Registered Belted Galloways & Retail Beltie Beef
  - Organic Forage
- Also;
- Free Range Eggs
  - Show & Rescue Horses
  - Supports an extended family



Limited land holdings make us focus on increasing the income per acre.  
Homestead had been empty for ~20 years, buildings sound but in need of TLC

# Overcoming Limited Budgets

“Behind every successful rancher is a wife who works in town” in our case, we turned that on its head

- Resources:
  - Your own savings and sweat
  - Family, friends, co-ops (HPFC), others such as WWOOFers...
  - A sense of humor
  - Silent partner “Uncle Sam”
  - Ability to deal with the other silent partner “Murphy”



# Our partner “Uncle Sam”



- Government: One hand helps and the other ...
  - Help; FSA \$300K for land (3.25% 40 yrs) and \$300K equipment, buildings & and livestock )1.875 % 7 yrs
  - Help; NRCS EQIP program, USDA, KDA & others
  - Other hand; regulations, taxes, & did we mention regulations?
  - Pressures key support like local processors & local businesses. Laws; one size fits all

# Objective: Self sustaining family farm, high per acre yield with nature as a partner

**2006**

Purchase 320 acres & empty homestead

Focus: rebuild, rent farmland. Funds – sale of prior house

**2007-2009**

Transition to organic

Added 640 acres (IRA used - not allowed to farm)

KS Forest Service, tree lines. NRCS EQIP to upgrade pastures.

**2009-2014**

Beltie heifers

Certified Organic (OCIA)

Pull land from IRA

Hoop House

Join HPFC - retail \$18K/yr (KDA)

**2015**

Family expansion:

160 acres (FSA)

Equipment (FSA)

WWOOFers.

**Next:** Wood/Food Trees (NRCS), 2<sup>nd</sup> Hoop House, Retail \$36K+/ year

# Thank you







## Registered Belted Galloway

- Belties take more time;
  - Heifers an extra year
  - Steers need 30 months
- We do not use steroids or growth hormones)

## Unique Attributes of Belted Galloway Beef

### Y Knot Ranch: Grass Fed & Finished

Rib Eye, trimmed to 0" fat:

<u>Per 100 g sample</u>	<b>Beltie Beef Grass Fed &amp; Finish</b>	Beltie Beef Grass Fed, Grain Finish	USDA Reference
Total Calories	119.0	176.7	274.0
Fat Calories	27.0	102.0	234.0
Total Fat (g)	3.0	11.3	22.1
Saturated Fat	1.0	4.7	9.0
Cholesterol (mg)	11.3	47.3	68.0
Protein (g)	23.0	18.7	17.5
Calcium (mg)	17.7	15.7	10.0
	<b>Y Knot?</b>		

Source: "Beltie.org" extracted from full referenced study