



Things to Know Before you Buy Highland Cattle

So you think you want to purchase some Highland cattle. Now what? We were in that same spot not all that long ago. This is what we would do if we had known what we know now.

Find people in your area who have cattle – commercial and Highlands.

- a. Do they have a source for quality hay? Will they deliver, or do you need to find a way to get it yourself?
- b. Do they have a large animal vet willing to work with you?
- c. Do they have someone who will do artificial insemination, or do you need to have a bull?
- d. Do they have a hoof trimmer who would be willing to stop at your place when they are in the area?
- e. Do the businesses listed above work with horned cattle?

You don't need any of these people often, or maybe not at all. But it is important to know they are available if you need them.

Local farmers are a great source for information and often willing to help out if you need it. It is important to do some research on your own, too. There are lots of books out there with information on how to raise cattle.

Quality hay is very important! I hear over and over that the Highland cattle will eat hay other animals would never eat. Of course they will – they want to live! But, if you want to raise quality animals, whether for meat or breeding, and do that efficiently, they need good food.

Other factors to consider:

- What is your water source – will your animals drink from one water source or several. Is each source cold weather proof?
- If keeping animals in a dry lot, do you have a means of hauling and spreading manure?
- Do you have sturdy fences for both large animals and calves?
- Do you have a means of working on animals – squeeze chute, head gate, gates set up to squeeze animals?

Talk to people! Develop your own network of people who can answer your questions. Visit farms to see what their cattle setup is like. Everyone has great ideas and you can take all that knowledge and develop a plan that will work on your property. Have fun!