

Excuses for Not Cullin'

by Baxter Black

Reprinted from "On the Edge of Common Sense," Baxter Black's regular column. An entertaining cowboy poet, philosopher and ex-veterinarian, Black is the author of three books, including "The Cowboy and His Dog or 'go, git in the pickup!'" For further information about these books, contact the Coyote Cowboy Company, Dept. K, 102 Livestock Exchange Building, Denver, Colo. 80216.

I try not to make this column too educational but sometimes there is a need that can't be ignored. This is the time of year when ranchers and cowmen work their cow herd. They are often under pressure to cull cows that they have developed a peculiar fondness for. Their excuses for keepin' the ol' darlin' can be pretty feeble. I present to you a list of excuses which can be used as a handy reference while yer standin' there at the chute.

"I always keep the roan cows. They're good luck."

"She'll be good as new once the hair grows back."

"She can see just as well with one eye. Saw that horn off!"

"We can turn her out on the J.P. That'll wear off those long toes."

"My sister had a C-section and we didn't ship her!"

"I read Playtex has a new cross yer heart veterinary bra for swing bags."

"So she's a little thin . . . it's just the Jersey comin' out in her."

"I admit her head's not too feminine, Ma, but that never kept you from settlin'."

"Since when do you have to have all yer teeth to be a good mother?"

"She weaned the biggest calf on the place in '74."

"My horoscope told me ten was my lucky number and she turned ten last spring."

"I know she's slunk her last two calves but this year might be different!"

"She's always had a snotty nose and watery eyes. I think it's hay fever."

"You can't cull one just because she can't walk as fast as the others."

"Her mother was a good cow."

"If she had brucellosis, I'd know it!"

"You gotta admit she knows the range."

"She is not weak! Just gentle!"

"So what! Even I have arthritis!"

"I know she's barren, but look how fat she is!"

"But she was Wava Dean's first 4-H project."

"I say as long as three out of four work, she's worth keepin'."

"That's not lump jaw! She's only got misaligned nostrils."

"I realize that's an odd place for a dewlap."

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