

WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

In Due Time

There are things that cannot be forced so why do we sometimes try to make stuff happen that should and usually could wait for another day?

We only cause ourselves unnecessary stress when we get impatient. Allowing things to happen in due time makes life much easier.

My best example of this when speaking of cows is when wanting to move your herd to a new pasture, and they are simply not ready to go. How can you tell they are not ready?

When we approach our herd, driving our Ranger into the pasture where they are, if they are ready to move, they will immediately head toward the gate. Many times, when they are ready, the herd will have already gathered at the next gate waiting for us to notice and make it magically open for them.

If they are not ready to move yet, they totally ignore us or give us the, "Heck no we won't go," look. It does not matter how much we call them or drive around trying to round them up. If they do not want to go yet, they will not budge.

Probably most of us are familiar with the 12th-century metaphor in John Heywood's proverb collection of 1546, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink." With cows, you cannot make them do anything they do not want to do.

Of course, this is not to say they ever want to be loaded up into a stock trailer or enter a chute to



The best motivation for Annette's cows moving easily to a new pasture is when they are ready to find more plentiful grazing. (Photo courtesy Annette Bridges)

get vaccinated. There is a way to make cows do what they would rather not when working with a few at a time in a confined and controlled space.

It is only in their pastures where they pretty much rule the roost, and our life is easier when we follow their lead as much as we possibly can.

I do not think we humans are too different. Even if we comply with what others want us to do, we do not always do so easily, happily, or willingly. Our behavior is very different when we are doing

something we want to do.

One of my best country boy examples of this is when we are heading out the door to do something he is excited about, and he gets ready in a timely fashion, but if it is something I want to do and he does not, let us just say that being on time is not a priority. Yet, when we are both thrilled to be going wherever, we will arrive an hour or two earlier than necessary. Mutual happy anticipation is pure bliss and rocks our world in the best possible way.

I would say for our cows, their

best motivation for moving easily to a new pasture is when they are ready to find more plentiful grazing. In other words, food is their great motivator and often this is true for us humans, too.

I must say I continue to be more and more impressed with myself sharing with everyone about this city girl's transformation into a country one.

I am always surprising myself at how much I have learned and know from living on our ranch these 40-plus years. Cows apparently make great teachers. 🐮