



Livestock Branding in Oklahoma

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The beef cattle industry is a dynamic business that must continually adjust to market signals, public opinion, state and national policies, and other industry issues. Branding cattle to show ownership, legal title, and record keeping have been promoted and practiced by cattlemen in the western states for the past 150 years. However, in recent years, questions have been raised concerning the humane treatment of cattle with respect to certain management practices, and the impact of those practices on the overall value of a beef product and/or by-products.

According to the 2016 National Beef Quality Audit, of the \$49.06 lost per head to the beef industry due to discounts for various carcass defects, and quality issues, only 98 cents of that loss was due to brands and/or other hide defects. This reduction in value (price) due to hide defects is compatible to \$1.95; 1.90; 2.39; 2.67 and 2.43 in beef quality audits conducted in 2011, 2005, 2000, 1995 and 1991, respectively. This improvement suggests that more producers have moved the location of the brand from the rib to the hip, thus restoring more value to the hide.

The 2007-2008 USDA National Animal Health Monitoring System study of 2,872 beef cow/calf operations in 24 of the nation's major beef-producing states represented 80 percent of all cow/calf operations, and 88 percent of all the beef cows in the U.S. The study showed that the hot iron brand was used on 12 percent of all the operations and was the source of identification on 21 percent of all the cows in the study. The freeze brand was used on 2.4 percent of all the operations surveyed, and identified 4 percent of all the cattle in the study.

Why Brand?

Branding today is still the most recognized and accepted means of indicating ownership of cattle in North America. Eventually, other methods such as electronic "chipping" may become the standard for identification, but until this procedure becomes a more economical and practical alternative, producers will continue to utilize the time-tested, permanent and universal method of branding.

Summary of Oklahoma Brand Laws

Those applying for state brand registration must complete and file the Application for Registration of Brands and Marks (found at: <http://www.okcattlemen.org/brand-registration>) with

the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association Brand Division, P.O. Box 82395, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73148. The application must be accompanied by a \$40.00 registration fee. Upon approval, a brand certificate will be mailed to the applicant indicating the brand registered. All brands approved by the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association (OCA) will appear in the following brand book or supplement printed.

All brands must be renewed at the beginning of each five year registration period, regardless of when the brand was registered. State registered brand owners will be notified by mail before the five year registration period ends. At this time, brands are renewed prior to publication of the newest Oklahoma Brand Book.

1. A brand is defined as a permanent mark not less than three inches in length or diameter and burned into the hide with a hot iron. "Freeze branding" is also a form of identifying animal ownership. Acid brands are not recognized as state registration.
2. Single unit brands including one initial, number, bar, slash or quarter circle are not accepted as forms of state registration.
3. Each brand registration must be confined to one location on the animal. When the same brand is used on two sites, two applications must be filed. Brands must be registered in the following eight positions ONLY: left neck, left shoulder, left rib, left hip, right neck, right shoulder, right rib and right hip. However, previously registered Oklahoma brand positions are not affected (O.S. 2, Sections 405). The left jaw is reserved for the use of B and T brands, identifying cattle having a detectable antibody titer for Brucellosis and Tuberculosis.
4. Applicants are required by law to list, in order of preference, three distinct brands and three positions on the animal for application of the brand.
5. State registration of your brand is not required by law. Recorded brands, however, take precedence over similar unrecorded brands when questions of ownership arise, placing the burden of proof on unregistered brand users in the event of controversy. Registered brands are prima facie evidence of ownership in a court of law.



























Brand books are furnished to county sheriffs, county extension agents, vocational agricultural instructors, and libraries without charge. They can be purchased by the public from OCA at a price equal to the cost of preparation, printing, and delivery.

Where, When and How to Brand

When ownership brands are applied it is best to use hot brands. The clarity of the application can be determined shortly

The following examples should give you an idea to help get you started.

Figure 1. Traditional Brand Symbols

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| Bar, a short, horizontal line. |  | Tumbling or tilting brands are no longer registered. Brands must be straight up or lazy. |  | Often letters or letters and numerals are "connected." This is a "J.H.D. Connected." |  |
| Bar, straight up is an "i." |  | Add legs and it becomes "Walking T." |  | Placed on part of a circle, it becomes a "Rocking M." |  |
| Slash, a line slanting right or left. |  | Add wings, it's a "Flying T." |  | This is the "Running M." |  |
| Box. |  | Any letter hanging by its top "Swings." A "Swinging M." |  | TVD connected |  |
| These are read "half box." |  | BVT connected. |  | "KDH" connected. |  |
| But this may read "bench." |  | "J.H.D. Disconnected." |  | Stacked letters are easy to read. |  |
| Circle, (Filed with the OCA under "O"). |  | | | | |
| Half circle, may open up or down. |  | | | | |
| Quarter circle, may be in any position. |  | | | | |
| Cross or plus. |  | | | | |
| May be X or roman numeral 10 as in XIT, "Ten in Texas," but is filed under "X." |  | | | | |
| Diamond. |  | | | | |
| Open "A" (not half diamond). |  | | | | |
| But placed over a letter or number, it's a "Rafter", and filed behind "A." |  | | | | |

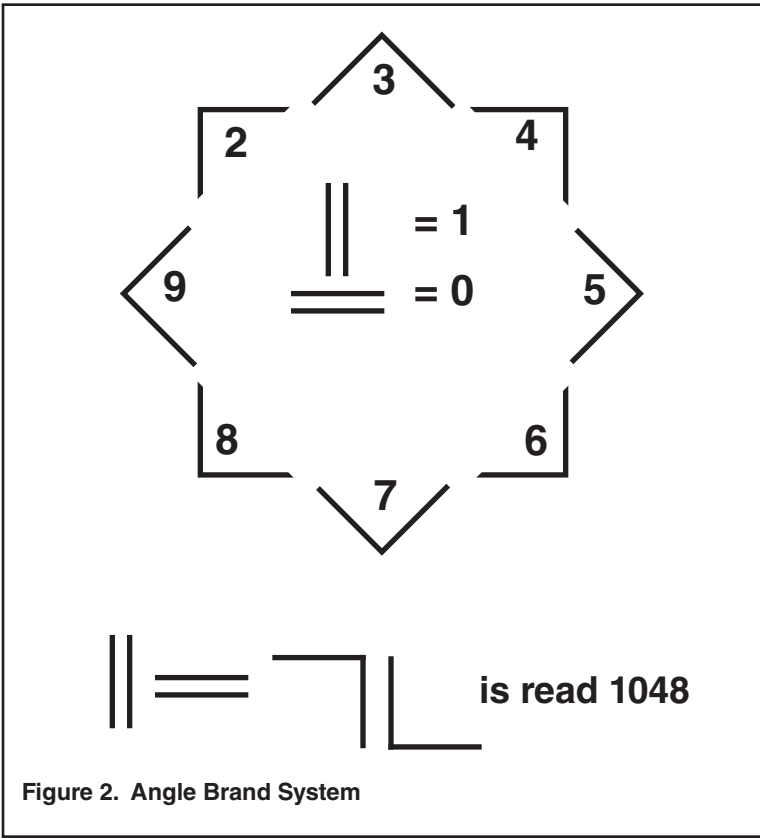


Figure 2. Angle Brand System