UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★ ★news release

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT TO SELL TEXAS LONGHORN CATTLE IN SEPTEMBER

The Department of the Interior said today its annual sales of surplus Texas longhorn cattle will be held at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Cache, Okla., at 1 p.m. September 16 and at Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, Valentine, Nebr., at 1:30 p.m. October 5. Sales are conducted by public auction.

The Wichita Refuge will have about 85 animals for sale this year. Approximately half will be calves and the remainder will be of mixed ages and sex. Most of the older animals to be sold are registered.

The Fort Niobrara Refuge will have 20 longhorns of mixed sexes and ages for sale, and some of the older animals will be registered.

Texas longhorns are the oldest native breed of cattle in North America. They played an important role in the development of the Southwest in post-Civil War days when massive trail drives were used to move the cattle across Texas to northern markets and ranges.

The historic breed was threatened with extinction by 1920 because of the preference for better beef cattle, but in 1927 a few were selected as the nucleus for a herd at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge to preserve the renowned animal.

Some of the cattle at Wichita were transferred to Fort Niobrara in 1936 to develop a second Federal herd.

Texas longhorns were recognized as an official breed last year with the organization of the Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America. This association will hold its second annual meeting in Lawton, Okla., September 15, the day before the sale at the Wichita Refuge. The historic animal of the western frontier is now eligible for the same registration status as other recognized cattle breeds.

Although Texas longhorns are not considered good beef producers, they command a competitive market with cattlemen who want to preserve the breed and tradition.

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