



WARP SPEED RANCHING:

MATT KING ON SINGING HILL'S RAPID RISE IN TEXAS

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When Matt King bought his first Texas Longhorn, he had never set foot on a ranch, didn't own a pair of boots, and thought a "catch pen" was something from baseball. Fast-forward just five months, and King had transformed 20 acres of overgrown pasture in Dripping Springs, Texas into a thoughtfully managed ranch with 22 registered Texas Longhorns, Scottish Highlands, chickens, and even a pair of baby zebras.

What sparked this rapid evolution from curious hobbyist to pedigreed breeder? A vision of family, a hunger to learn, and a healthy dose of bold, fast action.

"Say yes and figure it out later—that's been my motto. I bought Longhorns off Craigslist before I even knew what a chute was."

The Unlikely Rancher

A Wisconsin native with no livestock

background, King now operates a successful family office and business ventures in Austin. But it was his desire to lure his in-laws south that sparked the idea to buy a ranch.

"They kept saying, 'Have another kid and we'll move,'" King laughed. "It didn't work. But I realized if I gave them projects—things to fix, maintain, and build—they might come. That's how Singing Hill Ranch was born."

Named after the road in Wisconsin where he met his wife, Singing Hill Ranch became more than bait for grandparents—it became a place where King discovered a profound love for land, legacy, and Longhorns.

A Craigslist Herd Becomes a Breeding Program

King's first five Longhorns were purchased purely on looks. "I had no clue about genetics, pedigree, or conformation. I just thought,

“We live in Texas. We should have Longhorns.” One of those early cows, April, turned out to be a serendipitous connection. When King responded to a Craigslist ad for another cow, the seller turned out to be Eitan and Sandy Barhum, who had bred April.

“The universe just kept connecting me with the right people. Eitan and Sandy Barhum, Ray Webb, and Randy Murray have all been unbelievable mentors.”

These connections launched King on a crash course in Longhorn breeding, leading to a rapid but strategic herd expansion, all while bringing his family into the fold. His daughter even negotiated a three-toy bribe when she learned one of her favorite calves might be sold.

Pedigrees, Passion, and Power Tools

King’s background may be in finance, but he’s all in on pedigrees now.

“I literally printed out pedigrees from Hired Hand websites and made PowerPoint charts to build a binder,” he said. “I’d go into closed lots, study animals, and read the write-ups to understand bloodlines. It’s been my greatest learning tool.”

“HIRED HAND IS THE BEST FREE TOOL IN THE LONGHORN INDUSTRY. IT’S HELPED ME TEACH MYSELF PEDIGREES, VALUES, AND BREEDING STRATEGIES. I DON’T KNOW HOW I’D HAVE LEARNED ANY OF THIS WITHOUT IT.”

While building his herd’s genetics and profile, King has also been transforming the land. He’s cleared hundreds of cedars, redone all



fencing, rotated pastures, planted winter rye, and invested in a premium chute and working pens—all with the goal of sustainability and safety.

Sustainability and Stewardship

Singing Hill Ranch isn’t just about cattle—it’s about stewardship. King rotates pastures to protect soil and oak trees, drags fields to break down manure, and continually improves infrastructure.

“We’re here to make memories, not just money. If a good program leads to money, great. But our goal is joy, family, and caring for the land.”

His kids collect and sell eggs from their flock of 40 chickens, and the family enjoys raising a variety of animals, including Highland cattle and exotic zebras (though he admits the latter gave his insurance agent a bit of a scare).

Advice for New Breeders

Now firmly established, King offers honest advice for those starting out:

Have a Vision: “Don’t buy just because something looks pretty. Understand what you want—twisty horns, big body, solid color—and build toward that.”

Start with Infrastructure: “Get your catch pens and chute figured out first. Don’t wait until you

have to use them.”

Less Is More: “Buy fewer, better animals. Focus on quality over quantity.”

Learn from Others: “Use Hired Hand. Listen to podcasts. Ask questions. People are generous with their knowledge—take advantage of that.”

“This isn’t an industry you can muscle your way through. It’s a long game—nine months for a calf, 14 months until she can breed. You’ve got to love the process.”

Looking Ahead

Singing Hill Ranch’s herd may still be young, but King is dreaming big—with calculated restraint. “If money were no object, I’d buy more land. That’s the only real limiter on what you can build here.”

He’s preparing to attend his first in-person sale (sans paddle, he claims), and will be consigning to the Texas Treasure Sale this year. And while he downplays flash—“No hat, all cattle,” he jokes—his story speaks volumes. “I’m just a college dropout who wanted to spend more time with his family and make memories. If I can help someone else start their journey, that’s success.”

Singing Hill Ranch stands as proof that passion, humility, and a willingness to learn can go a long way in the world of ranching—even when you start from scratch. Matt King is not just building a herd. He’s building a legacy.

This article has been written based on the transcript of the interview during our from the From the Pasture Podcast. Listen to the full podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or wherever you stream your podcasts.

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BEFORE



AFTER



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