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Smith Acquires Graves Ranch, Creating One of the Largest Recipient Herds in World in Select Reproduction

Melanie Smith, owner of Solo Select Horses—purchased the industry-leading recipient mare farm Graves Ranch, continuing both programs' leadership role in equine reproduction.

Graves Ranch's famous 1,300-mare recipient herd is now under the ownership of Melanie Smith of Solo Select Horses, LLC, joining two of the largest breeding operations in the U.S. to the benefit of the breeding public under Select Reproduction (selectrepro.com).

With the acquisition, Select Reproduction will have more than 2,000 mares available for lease, complementing Solo Select Horses, Smith's rapidly growing reproduction business in North Texas as well as Select Genes, Smith's custom ICSI aspiration business that makes world-class maternal genetics available to the public for the first time.

"Use of these mares will fall on breeders who choose to do their breeding work or ICSI aspirations at Solo Select," Smith said. "Additionally, we will continue to serve the North Texas ranches that have previously contracted with Graves. We do not foresee opening reservations for recipient mares up to the general public; instead, we encourage customers to contact Solo Select for their 2024 ICSI aspiration and embryo transfer needs. Embryos produced at Solo Select will have use of the Select Reproduction recipient mares."

Select Reproduction will release full details on its mare-leasing program for 2024 this fall.

"This recipient mare farm is another tool in our belt to make sure we produce the results people depend on," Smith said. "With the number of mares, exceptionally designed facility and the team we have put together, we know we will have a program that can cater to the demand and expectations of our customers. These recipient mares carry the hopes, dreams and future champions of the performance-horse industry. We understand that the success of the foals these mares produce in 2025 starts right now—it starts as we choose, care for and handle these mares. The bottom line is, people expect results in the breeding barn, and we are committed to producing those results for our customers."

Graves has been in operation for over 20 years, leading the way in efficiency and quality in the recipient-mare population. Glynn Whitman, a long-time cutting horse trainer from Bismarck, North Dakota, will manage the facility, personally overseeing the daily care of the horses.

“The herd has a bit of everything, but the Graves have spent decades improving the quality of their mares,” Whitman explained. “If you come look at them, they look like a herd of Quarter Horse mares with some color and drafts mixed in. Everything we do is set up to make these mares’ jobs as easy as possible, because they’re a critical element of this process and important to the continued growth of the horse industry.”

Dr. Franklin Collins, DVM, and Breeding Manager Quentin Stover will be critical assets to the success of the operation. The Graves family will remain involved in the program, ensuring the dependability and quality of the operation remains top-notch.

ABOUT SOLO SELECT: Melanie Smith, of Whitesboro, Texas, is the owner of Solo Select Horses, a full service breeding facility in the heart of North Texas. Additionally, she owns the leading online horse sale company, Select Horse Sales. Smith has spent the last few years developing a well-rounded breeding program, including reined cow horses, barrel horses, rope horses and cutters. Solo Select owns industry-leading stallions Woody Be Tuff and Metallic Cattack, and is a major share holder in the up and coming stallion, The Darkk Side. soloselecthorses.com

ABOUT SELECT GENES: Founded by Melanie Smith in 2023, Select Genes gives breeders access to world-class maternal genetics with its stable of elite, black-type mares. From the highest-earning rope horse mares in the industry to elite cutters, reiners and race horses all with impressive earnings and progeny earnings, Select Genes is a one-stop-shop for breeders looking to elevate their programs with unrivaled embryo access. select-genes.com