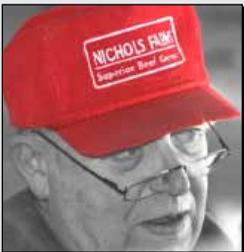




A few THOUGHTS



Twenty-nine days ago at 3:15 PM, I thought I was answering one of those pesky robo-calls.

j. david nichols

Just before hanging up,

I realized that I had real live lady on the line. Her message was short and sweet— “If you get Phyllis Nichols to Atlantic, Community Center by 4:00 this afternoon, she will be vaccinated for Covid-19. If you are her spouse you also may be vaccinated.

This was music to my ears! Phyllis has almost been locked up during the pandemic as she has had MS for thirty years and COPD for two.

I made it to Atlantic in 30 minutes instead of the normal 45— While being admonished by Phyllis, “I would rather die from Covid than in a car wreck.”

Meanwhile— Team Nichols is anxious to get back to normal. We appreciate President Trump kicking Big Pharma in their butts and getting the vaccinations in seven months instead of three years. We’re also thankful that President Biden is getting American citizens vaccinated and expects most of them will get it in time for the 4th of July family gatherings.

I’m also pleased that he hired Tom Vilsack for U.S. Agricultural Secretary, who declared that “he will fight climate change while generating more farm income at the same time”. When Nichols Farms’ headquarters and bull test barn were devastated by a tornado, Governor Vilsack was here to help the next day.

— Continued on page two

Wes & Sherry Swieter Excel at Supplying Kosher Beef

by BOB HOUGH



Wes and Sherry Swieter have a diversified farm in Northcentral Iowa that includes approximately 1,300 acres of cash crops, as well as a 125 commercial cow calf operation. Retaining ownership, they market to a Kosher kill, Agri Star Packing. This is a premium market, but not one all can master. Wes is apparently so good at it that Agri Star packing sent a representative to their farm to learn about their breeding and management practices, which was resulting in so many of their cattle meeting Kosher specifications.

Kosher foods are an important part of Judaism, with the overall belief that they are better for body, mind, and soul. Certain aspects like the complete bleeding out of the animal and the deveining of the meat is done because blood is not Kosher, as it contains the soul of the animal. Because of the logistics of deveining, only the forequarter is used.

Other aspects of Kosher slaughter have a big effect on food safety and what was considered the humane treatment of animals. Before slaughter, the live animal is checked thoroughly for any sign of illness or injury, and if there is any sign of these, the animal is ineligible for being Kosher.

Although today’s cattle must be stunned to render them unconscious before bleed out, when devised, the ancient Kosher method would have been considered hu-

mane. The animal must be restrained, and with a very sharp ritual knife with no nicks or imperfections, the throat (without hitting the bone) is cut in one quick incision rendering the animal dead within seconds.

The animal is then thoroughly examined to assure healthfulness focusing on essential organs. The lungs are inflated to check for unwanted holes or signs of lung disease, which if found... rejects the animal from being Kosher. A close examination would also be done for all the animal’s organs to assure there is no sign of disease, lesions or abscesses all of which would assure the animal is healthy.

The Swieters have mastered a system that lets their cattle excel for Kosher purposes. Kosher kills typically look for very high-quality carcasses in terms of finish and marbling. With Nichols genetics and a less aggressive finishing ration than most commercial feedlots, the Swieter’s are not experiencing the sudden death from pulmonary hypertension that is plaguing many feedlots.

Overall, the Swieters’ system for cattle health and nutrition is focused on keeping animals fit and productive. They do the little things like unrolling round bales when they have frozen ground, so that dominate and timid cows get fed equally.

The Swieters’ cow herd is fully vaccinated annually, and that immunity is passed

— Continued on page three



A few THOUGHTS

I believe that Americans are anxious to get their kids back in school, get business open for commerce, with agriculture leading the way. Animal agriculture depends on real scientists and should not take any advice from Dr. Fauci. He advised cities and states to mandate face masks and changed his mind four or five times.

State governors and city mayors who followed his advice had the most sickness, deaths, bankrupt business and children who can't read, write, spell, or do arithmetic.

Contrast him with those who trusted people to adopt the best practices for their families, friends, and fellow humans.

Covid-19 is not my first rodeo. I was about ten years old when poliomyelitis (polio) hit. I was in country school and we sat apart one desk. All of us had neighbors and relatives of all ages who died or were crippled for life. Jonas Salk developed a vaccine in 1952.

Since those days and the invention of penicillin I've admired "Scientists". It was burned into my psyche when my Champion Angus heifer had a dwarf calf. The Angus Association field man advised—"Knock him in his head, bury him and don't tell anyone you had him."

Instead loaning me a hammer and a spade, our Extension Director took me to Iowa State to meet Dr. Jay Lush who taught me about autonomous recessive genes.

Our first sale had three bulls that were clean by sire/daughter matings; but had "dirty pedigrees". I ran an ad in the local paper and our yard filled with pickups because it said— Guaranteed by Merrill Nichols & Sons To Not Sire Dwarf Calves.

A few years later we were the only Iowa herd that had performance tested bulls. As my brother Lee and I worried about our bulls not performing at the new Iowa Bull Test Station, Dad advised we take a sire group. Lee and I exploded! What are we going to do if we get beat? Pausing a second, he said "buy the one that beats you."

Spring is right around the corner. Stop in and take a look at the bulls we have for sale.

see page 3 - *Stoneybroke Emulous 945.

BIVI Beef Bulletin

How to Prevent PI Calves in Three Practical Ways

John Davidson DVM

Senior Associate
Director, Beef Cattle
Professional Services
Boehringer Ingelheim
www.bicattlefirst.com



Cattle infected with bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV) can severely impact your herd's efficiency and operation's profit. And a sneaky source of BVDV is persistently infected (PI) calves. Because PI calves may be difficult to distinguish from healthy calves, they can be spreading the BVD virus to other cattle without your knowledge.

The PI calf sheds the virus daily from its eye and nasal secretions, saliva, and urine. Calves exposed to BVDV are expected to have a suppressed immune system and, therefore, are at greater risk for other diseases and death.

A good BVDV prevention program can make a difference. Applying a three-pronged approach will help ensure comprehensive protection for calves.

Identify and Separate PI calves

The first step to eliminating BVDV from the herd is to test calves at or before 60 days of age, with the critical time being before cows are bred. Cattle that test positive should be culled or isolated from the herd, and dams of positive calves should be tested as well.

Prevent Exposure with Biosecurity

Increasing biosecurity measures can reduce the risk of BVDV from entering or spreading throughout your operation. Maintaining a closed herd is ideal, however, there are other strategies. When at auction or market, buy only from known sources with appropriate

BVD surveillance programs in place. Whenever possible, purchasing cattle from certified BVDV-free herds reduces your risk of bringing PI cattle into your operation.

Once you purchase cattle, it's important to quarantine them from the rest of the herd for at least 21 days to allow for any transient BVD infections to clear. Note, if you purchase a pregnant cow, there are no tests available to know if the fetus is PI until the calf is born, so the calf should be isolated until it tests negative for BVDV.

Enhance Herd Immunity

It's recommended that producers implement a vaccine strategy that includes protection against BVDV Type 1b, the most prevalent disease subspecies in the United States.

Because cows exposed to BVDV can transmit the virus to the fetus, it's recommended to vaccinate prior to breeding. For ultimate fetal protection, naïve heifers and cows should be vaccinated pre-breeding with two doses of a modified-live virus (MLV) vaccine, followed by annual booster vaccinations. Vaccinating calves with an MLV vaccine twice while still nursing can also enhance protection against BVDV.

Work with your veterinarian to design a BVDV prevention program tailored to the risks of your operation so PI calves don't become a problem.



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Southwestern Community College's Breeding and Genetics Class Toured Nichols Farms



The students were interested in bovine reproduction EPDs. They appreciated the input of Dave Nichols and Ross Havens of careful planning and taking action to achieve their goals. Beth Baudler: Adjunct instructor and Susanah Miller: Lead Instructors accompanied the class.

Wes Swieter from page one

to the calves through the dam's colostrum. The antibodies absorbed from the colostrum provides all the immunity during the first part of the calf's life. The ability to absorb antibodies rapidly decreases with time, so they make sure all calves have nursed inside of 12 hours.

Calves are then creep fed and fully pre-conditioned. Wes does make use of a short-term medicated feed in an effort to preempt respiratory and other health problems at weaning.

This system has yielded excellent results, having only treated two calves in the last five years! Steers and feeder heifers are fed a ration of corn silage, distillers, cracked corn and a supplement. They slowly and steadily increase the cracked corn and use an in-



take regulator (Rumensin) and excellent bunk management to assure optimum rumen function.

Overall, the Swiethers system of Nichols' high-quality superior genetics, nutrition, health program, and a value-added Kosher market has given them maximum rewards for the management practices they employ.

In terms of buying bulls from Nichols Farms, Wes Swieter reflected, "We were first attracted to Nichols Farms because of the data they had to offer, but what we soon liked about them even more was they were real world bulls ready to go to work. What has kept us coming back is

the consistency of the calf crops out of their herdsires, and they represent the bulls exactly for what they are."

Man Carries On Father's Love of Giving With Donation to Southwestern Community College



Merrill Nichols once had a woman hire him to replicate a cabinet she had on one side of her fireplace mantel. However she kept coming back to see if he was doing it right.

Merrill said that was the last time he was going to sell his handiwork. "Because when you start selling it, it's no longer fun," remembers Merrill's son Dave. His Grand Fathers Clocks were works of art. He made and gave over 20 of them to friends and family.

Dave discovered that his dad wasn't the only person who gives treasures to friends. Dave was close friends with Carlton Corbin and his loving wife, Geneva. On a visit to Merrill Nichols and Sons' operation, Geneva marveled at Merrill's king sized Grandfathers Clock and its hourly chimes. Merrill started building "Geneva's Clock", because Dave and Phyllis were taking their pickup to Carlton's Sale later that month.

Shortly after their arrival, Carlton and Dave carried it to the Corbin's home and set it up. When it chimed— Geneva shed tears of joy. Two days later, Carlton tried to stuff cash into Dave's pocket.

Whereupon, Dave said, "if I give Dad your money, it will break his heart". Then Carlton said— "We better get 945 loaded on your pickup because he's yours now. If anyone asks you what he cost you, just tell them I gave him to you. It will drive them crazy".

*Stoneybroke Emulous 945 was the high gainng bull over all breeds at the 1969 National Iowa Bull Test Station and weighed 1300 lbs at one year of age. His progney earned him both PRI 100% Certified Meat Sire and American Angus Pathfinder Sire status.

Recently Dave was doing a rebuild on a machine shed that had a large supply of black walnut, oak and wild cherry lumber that was left when his father retired from woodworking after having a stroke.

Citing a longtime relationship Nichols Farms has had with Southwestern Community College and wanting to carry on his dad's legacy of giving, Dave contacted the college and donated the wood to its carpentry and building trades program so Merrill's cycle of giving would continue.

The carpentry program at SWCC gives college and high school students across the region opportunities at classes for college credit. Students can learn to practice quality workmanship that is required in the carpentry field, they can learn to use appropriate techniques, the tools to use and the safety measures that should accompany their use, and more. Every year, students assist in the building of a Habitat for Humanity home that a needy family benefits from.

"Receiving this load of wood unloaded all sorts of other learning opportunities for the students they might not otherwise get", said one of their instructors, Kyle Harvey. The students were grinning "ear-to-ear when the trailer of lumber was backed into their work shop Nichols said.

Harvey primarily works with the high school students in the program. He said that the hard wood in the donation Nichols gave will give students a chance to true up those boards using a large planer and jointer in the shop. "To be able to take rough sawn lumber in its current state and taking it into something you can make furniture with Alone which is quite an experience for the students," Harvey said.

Lindsay Stoaks is SWCC's Vice President of Instruction. She said the institution prides itself on giving students chances like these where they can learn in a hands on way, where their interests lie. They are also grateful for donations such as the one Nichols gave the college that partners with their efforts to do this. Stoaks said that those wanting to donate to the college may contact Cait Maitlen, Executive Director of the Education Foundation.

by Caleb Nelson for The Adair County Free Press and The Creston News Advertiser





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- ◆ *Continue to check the full listing at— www.nicholsfarms.biz*

Cowboys You Can Count On



Roger Richter

grew up on a family farm near Adair, Iowa. He graduated from Adair/Casey High School and was active in FFA. He held several offices including Chapter President.



Then he enrolled at Southwest Community College at Creston, Iowa.

After college, he enlisted in the Army and served a tour of duty in Vietnam.

Roger's leadership and community service has been a constant his entire life. He's Commander of the Adair Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), long time member of the Guthrie County Fair Board of Directors, and manager of the Adair Central Farm Toy Organization.

Roger is Nichols Farms' **Rover**. His main responsibility is helping Alex Antisdell calve out the first calf heifers in March and April. After calving out the first calf heifers, Roger jumps into Nichols Farms' Red F250 Ford pickup pulling a 24 ft. Barrett livestock trailer and delivers Nichols Bulls all over the Midwest...and then some!

After he finishes bull deliveries he is in the hay-making mode with Nichols 1st cutting before he takes off for the summer to work on his wife's "Honey do list" and attend his grand-daughters summer beef projects and shows.



Roger, Emma, and Maggie

Come September... Roger returns to Nichols Farm to help with the fall harvest, preconditioning, and weaning the calf crop. Then after calving first calf heifers— Roger starts all over again.



by Brian Fieser Ph.D.
Beef Field Nutritionist, ADM Animal Nutrition™

UNSEEN VALUE!

Calving season is often the time when many producers have a particular focus on their mineral nutrition. There are many reasons for this, the more important of which are improved colostrum quality, proper fetal development, and improvement in economically important traits like fertility and marbling based on generational nutrition.

But for lots of producers it comes down to one thing – cows that do or do not “clean” after calving. It has been said in many settings that the job is done when the paperwork is done. This is similar to parturition in cows, until the last step is completed the job isn’t done.

There are 3 stages of parturition: Stage 1) dilation of the cervix; Stage 2) actual birthing of the calf and Stage 3) shedding of the placenta or fetal membranes. There is little more frustrating to a cow/calf producer than having a cow do all we ask of her in having and mothering a calf, only to not “clean” afterwards. Meaning she will have to be caught and handled by a veterinarian and/or given antibiotics to prevent infection. It is a drain on time and money when a process that has otherwise gone off without a hitch becomes a literal stinking problem.

The actual cause of a retained placenta is very difficult to pinpoint, but deficiencies of vitamins A and E have been implicated, as well as insufficient consumption of dietary copper and selenium. All of these vitamins and mineral have a role as antioxidants.

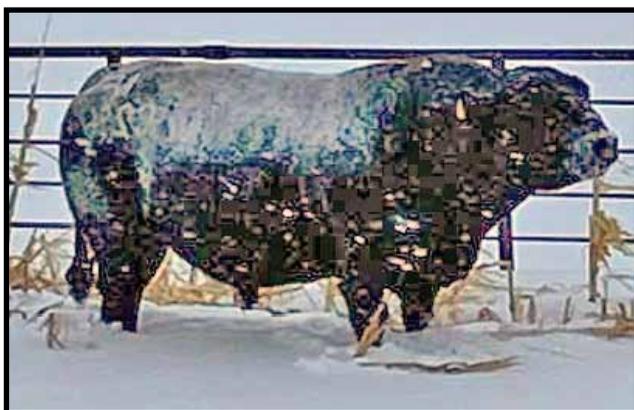
As the name implies, antioxidants are critical in the prevention of oxidation, which has a negative impact on tissue health and function. It is important to note that the supplementation of these vitamins and minerals is no guarantee to prevent retained placentas or fetal membranes. It is, however, a simple and effective step in ensuring cows have the best opportunity clean when the time comes.

I am reminded of a story I was told once by a dealer regarding this, they said that they could always tell when a prominent rancher started calving. The rancher believed that the best time to make their annual mineral purchase was at calving time, specifically to make sure cows “cleaned”.

They used a simple but effective mineral program to help minimize potential problems. Whatever your motivations, you can be assured that all of ADM’s branded mineral lines (AMPT, MasterGain, MoorMan’s, and ADM Seasonal Minerals) are formulated to meet or exceed National Research Council (NRC) minimum requirements for minerals and vitamins.

Something I often tell our customers and sales representatives— is that when it comes to proper mineral nutrition, the value of mineral can be seen not in what you have to do, but what you don’t have to do!

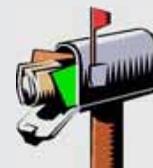
www.admanimalnutrition.com



from: Christy Gunderson Hibbs
Owner of “The Market Off Main”
Albion, Iowa

Ross and Dave,
Thank You for this bull!

LETTERS from you



from Richard Halstad, Evanston IL

Dear Dave and Phyllis, I guess this can be called a late winter card. But its heartfelt non-the-less.

I saw Dave in the video of Everett Forkner’s unveiling of his portrait that was hung into the Saddle and Sirloin Portrait Gallery. It was old home week, but Virtual like everything else these days.

I hope you’re all well and staying safe. I sure would like to see you sometime soon. Maybe the next unveiling will be in Kentucky and at a better time to travel. Looking forward to that time, whenever it is.



All the best to you Two and all the other good people there. Your portrait is still a favorite of mine— You gave me lots of freedom painting it. Thanks for that.

from James S. Coffey Hustonville, KY

Thank you for your nice comments about our Angus Bulletin ad. That was my mother at the halter, my aunt and my grandfather were standing behind her in the early 1960’s.

I thought your Bulletin ad turned out well. It conveyed the message of Nichols Farms. Really liked your handout for the Iowa Angus Association’s tour. It is amazing what some people can accomplish while others struggle to even hold a job. I’ve always admired Nichols Farms— Looking forward to visiting!

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