



NICHOLS

NEWSLETTER

A few THOUGHTS



To Whom It May Concern;

j. David Nichols

When my TV focused in on a mother carrying her bloody new born baby from the bombed hospital my thoughts turned to the ten weeks I spent in Hungary for the Cooperative International Development Program to convert state owned Cooperative properties to local Hungarian farmers. They have boomed since they traded the Russian Communists for local farmers .Let that be a lesson to USA.

From my Mentor “Greg Henderson” Dave: I’m watching a webinar by the Angus Association’s Angus Link ear tag. I was reminded of the first time I met you – now 40 years ago! Wow. Where has the time gone? I think our second meeting was in 1982 if I remember.

I know I have told you that first meeting (and other subsequent visits) had an influence on my career. I remember you telling me that “we found a lot of information on a bag of seed corn, but we didn’t have that for our bulls. We need to change that.” In those days we were talking about EBVs. Eventually we saw EPDs replace those. Now we are tracking the genetics of feeder cattle, through Angus Link. We need to catch up. And we need to talk about the last 40 years and where this industry is going in the next 40 years.



Ross Havens Participated in a Commodity Trip to Mexico

Wiotra resident Ross Havens got a pleasant surprise when saw the meat counter in a Mexican grocery store. He was part of a group of 20 people traveling to Mexico for a trip organized by the Iowa Economic Development Group and the U.S. Meat Export Federation.

Members of the state pork producers, corn growers, soybean association Iowa Beef Industry Council , and Iowa Secretary Mike Naig traveled to Mexico earlier this month to discuss the successful relationship both counties have when it comes to trading commodities.

The group made stops in Mexico City and Guadalajara, and included tours of packing plants and grocery stores.

In one grocery store, Havens discovered a familiar logo- from Upper Iowa Packing- on one package of meat there. Havens happens to know the owner of the packing plant from Iowa’s own Lime Springs.

“It was his first shipment of meat to Mexico from an Iowa plant,” Havens said. Havens said the group met with their Mexican commodity association from Mexico and other dignitaries- and said both sides feel the relationship between them is very good.

“Both sides were complimentary about each other,” Havens said. “The trip was to continue the conversation and strengthen our relationship. Both sides want free trade to continue.”

“We do major exporting (to Mexico),”

Havens continued. “80% of the corn that Mexico uses comes from the United States, which a large portion of that comes from the Midwest and Iowa.”

And he said that’s also the same percentage for soybean meal and distiller’s byproducts. One big reason for the exports Havens said is because of the egg market in Mexico. There are approximately 130 million people living in Mexico, and each person eats at least one egg a day.

Havens said the group visited one plant named Proan, and part of their operation includes raising chicken and selling millions of eggs. While they grow some of their own sorghum, they import most of their feed. That takes a lot of corn,”

Havens is pictured with Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Naig.

by Jennifer Nichols





Usually when people think of Nichols Farms, they think of the cattle first. No doubt Nichols has great cattle, but ultimately, it's the people that makes Nichols special. Nichols is proud of all their employees, but they take particular pride in the interns they've trained over the years. Dave will tell you, "We love teaching them, as well as learning from them with their tremendous enthusiasm and fresh ideas. We may age each year, but our interns never do arriving young and ready to learn. They represent what makes America special, because in the U.S. more than any other place in

A few THOUGHTS

the world, people are given greater opportunity to succeed based on their abilities, values and initiative. We are proud to have been at least a part of so many successes that our interns have had in their careers." He'll also always point out that one of their earliest interns, Bart, from 40+ years ago, still works for them. Nichols Farms is also proud of the international interns they've hosted, and the impact they've had on the cattle industry when they returned to their countries. In the end, its people that make great cattle, not the other way around.

By Bob Hough



Bart Mostaert, Foreman, Jill and RIP the dog



Kinsey Terrel has started her South East Community College internship at Nichols Farms. She is working with Bart Mostaert calving the Simmental and Composite mature cows.

Nichols Performa D162 sired "Barsa", plus four other Supreme Champion Angus Bulls and one Grand Champion Heifer at the worlds largest Livestock Show held in Palermo, Argentina, South America. Barsa is owned by Ariel Barcelona family and Senor Dario Palumbo.



Margo, and Dr. Cliff Lamb Director of Texas A&M Agrilife Research During Cliff's year at Nichols Farms as an intern his love for research was apparent.

For over 40 years Nichols Farms Saturdays are Dad Days for "Team Nichols" to bring their children to work with them. Alex Antisdels is the fourth generation of Antisdels to intern with Nichols Farms and Myles is sure to follow.

Alex also calves first calf heifers He is pictured with son Myles helping him record the data. Alex told me he had put Myles in charge of the bucket calves





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Innovative Livestock Auction Markets, are adding real dollars to their customers calves that are preconditioned, vaccinated, and have source verified genetics.

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- Guthrie Livestock Auction
- Humeston Livestock Auction
- Joplin Stockyards
- Keoco Auction Company,
- Knoxville Regional Market
- Lamoni Livestock Auction
- Lolli Bros. Livestock Mkt.
- Madison County Calf Auction
- Massena Russell Market
- Sioux Falls Calf Auction

Cowboys You Can Count On 



Lillian Nichols is a Nichols Farms partner and office manager and the “go to person” for technical information on computers, printers, fax machines and other office equipment.

In addition to registering, transferring and submitting performance data to breed associations, the advent of DNA tests requires cataloging and submitting blood cards to GeneSeek’s genomics laboratory..

Lillian provides the pasture locations of cows, calves, and herd sires at a moments notice. She also arranges the trucking, health papers, semen evaluation certificates and gets the right bull to the right person.

Lillian’s pleasant voice is usually the first one you hear on the phone. If she can’t answer your questions, she will get someone on the phone who can.

Lillian is past President of The University of Northern Iowa Alumni Association and former board member of Bridgewater/Fontanelle School Board. She currently serves on the Fontanelle Public Library Board of Trustees.

Lillian adores her five grandchildren, who reside in Wichita, Kansas and Des Moines, Iowa.

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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!

www.admanimalnutrition.com



LETTERS from you



Ed Oilar, Monticello, Indiana
Of all my years of raising cattle, I have never been this excited about using my new DAX2 Nichols Bulls.

Merlyn Nielsen, Seward, NB
Dear Lillian and Dave, Thank you for spending time with me yesterday. Your office is always a very welcoming place, and the stories we shared were very special to me. There are few seed stock operations (note I said few, no the only one?) who have such a lasting, strong history of innovation in developing and then using better selection tools to improve our national cattle herd. I was so delighted to listen to Dave tell about and show me the C-lock system and how the cattle behave in it. This effort warms my heart.

-Tom Burke, Smithville, MO
Dear Dave, I have just returned from the Palermo show in Buenos Aires, Argentina. You would be absolutely overwhelmed with the positive influence that Nichols Angus genetics has had in the purebred and commercial programs of Argentina, it is monumental—Congratulations!

Mark Boggess, USMARC
Clay Center, NE
Hi Dave, Thanks for the note. I did also see this early today and thought it an interesting read. However, based on this discussion, it looks to me like “genetics” actually ARE fixed, more or less. It’s the gene expression/epigenetic cascade (or lack thereof) that is not fixed. It is

-Bill Northey, , Urbandale, IA
I would like to receive the Nichols newsletter by email. I am not a bull buyer, but just a big fan of Nichols Farms! Thank you.



NICHOLS FARMS
“and I’m going to stay around to see it happen.”

BRIDGEWATER — Farmers usually see informed decisions as good decisions. Nichols Farm installs state-of-the-art feed intake. Dave Nichols, a staple in the beef industry for many decades, is no different. Nichols Farms and its staff, at their operation at 2188 Clay Avenue, Bridgewater, examine countless fields of information on each of their bulls daily so that they can better manage each animal and the utmost quality can be passed along to the customer.

To enhance that process, Nichols Farms took a new step in feed efficiency by recently purchasing and installing what Nichols says is a “game changer” of a feed distribution system.

Brian Fieser, a beef field nutritionist with ADM Animal Nutrition, Inc., says that feed efficiency, which is the amount of feed consumed divided by the amount of feed grain produced, expressed as a ratio, is paramount to success in determining value in a set of calves.

“Knowing the supremacy of a set of calves in converting feed to beef can make them more valuable,” Fieser said. “This knowledge can come from records of feed efficiency of previous calf crops or even knowing the genetic merit of a set of calves via DNA testing.”

Fieser explained that one hindrance to assigning feed efficiency on genetics is that not all of the cattle in the same pen will eat the same amount. That’s where the system that Nichols Farms has installed comes in handy.

“The maintenance of the producing cow herd also accounts for 65% of the feed energy required for the beef production

cycle. Additionally, assessment of feed efficiency in beef cows is difficult as they are largely maintained on pasture, where measurement of feed intake is challenging,” Fieser said.

By installing this C-Lock system that assists in feeding the bulls, Nichols is able to quantify feed efficiency even more. The C-Lock system is designed as a SmartFeed and SmartScale system that brings individual animal feed intake measurement and control as well as real-time animal performance and management to progressive livestock producers around the world.

“Since our first bulls were put on test in 1958, we have measured the average daily gain and the cost of gain for the entire group,” Nichols said.

A decade later, Nichols first saw a farmer using an invention that was measuring exactly what each bull was eating. “I knew that ultimately we would have to measure the inputs and the outputs to determine real dollar values,” Nichols said.

The C-Lock, installed in Nichols Farms’ barns last month, weighs the feed each individual bull eats every feeding. It weighs him each time he drinks water. That data is then fed into an online portal that Nichols Farms staff can then use in decision-making down the road. “We’re looking to improve the efficiency, but in doing so, we’re using less feed per pound of gain,” said Ross.



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