



# NICHOLS

NEWSLETTER

## A few THOUGHTS



*j. david nichols*

### BEEF MAKES AMERICA GREAT

*I am going to share some boring facts with you. I did NOT get them from the Iowans who couldn't count the number of votes in our recent presidential primary for President. I asked a friend who is a Bernie Sanders fan, "if you can't even count votes, how in the hell are you going to figure out to whom and when you're going to hand out all the free stuff that he is promising? Her silence was deafening.*

**Fact # 1.** *The fresh retail beef demand index value for 2019 was a 2.3% increase from last year and the highest since 2015. The most recent high in per capita beef consumption was in 2010. While beef consumption grew, so did prices! In 2020 available beef supplies will be lower which will push cattle prices higher.*

*Agriculture Chief Economist Robert Johansson projected a increase in agriculture exports at \$139 billion with \$40 billion to China.*

*Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue expects exports to be much greater because the Japan free trade agreement should raise demand for U.S. meat.*

— Continued on page two

## Roberta Tarochione Is Living Her Dream

*Roberta is quick to point out that farming is in her blood, and she feels honored to be able to do what she loves full time, which is to raise kids, cows, and corn.*

by Bob Hough



Lance, Audrey, Roberta, Ashley. Their son, Cole, was at college.

**R**oberta and her family's central Illinois L&R Cattle Company runs just under 100 cows and farms approximately 1,400 acres of crop ground.

Although her husband Lance works off the farm fulltime, he helps run the operation. Roberta is particularly proud of their three children who all have the same love of agriculture as she and Lance. In fact, each of their three children wanted to have their own chores and enterprises, which they were glad to accommodate. This includes their oldest son, 18 year old Cole, whose interest lies with the crops and is studying to be a diesel mechanic. Seventeen year old Audrey has started a swine operation, and the youngest, 14 year old Ashley, has a sheep enterprise. Roberta is quick to point out that they are all self-motivated, and are all out doing chores at 5:30 in the morning.

They also trade labor with their father Randy and brother Rodney who run their own operation. Roberta says that both help get the crop in and harvested, and on big days working cattle, they also help each other out. She also points that her mother Judy is always there when someone needs to run to town for parts. In fact, it was Roberta's father who started buying bulls from Nichols Farms 27 years ago. She and Lance followed suit 20 years ago. She also has a brother who manages the cow herd for the Historic Amana Colonies in Iowa.

In terms of L&R Cattle Company, pasture is at a premium, so every cow must pull her weight. This includes zero toler-

ance for a cow that doesn't raise a live calf until weaning or comes up open. Roberta also tracks the performance of each cow's progeny, and if they start to trend in the wrong direction, they are culled. Lastly, problem cattle for traits like disposition are also not tolerated. This strict criteria gives them a high performing trouble free herd as possible, and although they are working to expand the herd, it is a slow process because their standards are so high.

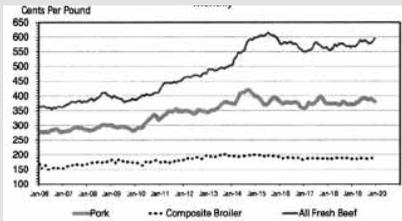
For L&R Cattle Company, Simmental/Angus hybrids make their most productive cattle, and appreciate the large selection of seedstock that Nichols has to offer. They also appreciate the help that Nichols' Ross Havens provides them in helping choose the right bulls for their operation. Important selection criteria for their herdsires, as well as their replacement heifers, includes weaning performance, phenotype, disposition, and production of the dam. They also want cattle that will go on and perform in the feedlot and on the rail for the feeder that they have been selling their calves to private treaty to for close to 20 years. To sum it up, Roberta wants and demands that her herd bulls and cow herd can "do it all."

They start calving heifers in February and cows in March, but early wean in August because their small pastures have usually given out by then. The calves are given a full round of preweaning and weaning shots, so the health is excellent.

— Continued on page three



## A few THOUGHTS



South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem challenged Mayor Mike Bloomberg to spend a day with a farmer, ride a horse, rope steers, drive GPS controlled tractors, program computer grain handling systems, and then internationally market their commodities, pay their bills, and then continue to do what they do best— incredibly difficult work!

**Fact #2** America's cowpokes and cattle feeders are producing more pounds of good tasting beef with bigger cows, on fewer acres at lower retail \*prices. \*adjusted for inflation

Pasture management and environmental stewardship have blossomed the past half century while seedstock breeders genetic inputs have contributed a great deal by increasing weaning, harvest and retail weights at younger ages. In other words— Doing more with less!

**Fact #3** Perhaps the best kept secret are the rural family's children have flourished and have become some of the best citizens in the land. They won our nation's wars, are our teachers, our 4-H leaders, our little league coaches, and our university professors.

**Fact #4** Mere words fail me to describe the good neighbors who knew when help was really needed, both physical chores and/or when a hug or prayer made all the difference.

I'd like to personally invite you to come and meet Team Nichols and their kids. Our Power bulls are a sight for sore eyes. Their dams are among the best cows that ever ate grass.

## BIVI Beef Bulletin

### Gain the Upper Hand Against BVDV Type 1b



Richard Linhart, DVM, DACT  
Senior Beef Professional  
Services Veterinarian  
Boehringer Ingelheim  
[www.bicattlefirst.com](http://www.bicattlefirst.com)

Up to 90% of bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV) infections are subclinical and go unnoticed. However, the most common indication of disease prevalence is poor reproductive performance, including decreased conception rates, abortions, still births and weak calves.

#### Cattle can become infected with BVDV in one of two ways

**Persistent infections** are acquired from the dam while in uterus. The virus is spread through the bloodstream to the fetus. Calves that survive may have birth defects or become persistently infected (PI). PI calves can look very normal, just like any other calf in the pen. However, PI calves are born shedding tremendous amounts of the virus, and will continue to shed the virus for their entire life.

**Transient infections** are acquired from other animals after birth. Infected cattle can shed the virus in saliva, nasal and eye discharge, urine, feces, milk and semen. These infections typically last a few weeks and are a minor source of viral shedding.

#### Gain the upper hand with a sound prevention plan

BVDV has been around pastures and feedlots a long time, and it continues to challenge herd management. Not only does it spread easily and show very few clinical signs, this complex virus continues to evolve, presenting new threats with shifting viral subtypes.

Vaccinating is one of the best ways to ensure cattle are protected against BVDV. We know there are several strains of BVDV that affect cattle, and most vaccines on the market provide good protection against Type 1A and Type 2. However, not all vaccines are able to provide adequate protection against Type 1b, the most predominant subtype in cattle.

Your local veterinarian can help you design a BVDV prevention program that's tailored to the risks of your operation. Most programs will include identifying and eliminating PI calves, preventing exposure with good biosecurity and enhancing immunity through vaccination.

BVDV Type 1b presents a significant threat to herd health, as it accounts for nearly 69% of all BVDV-positive cattle.<sup>1</sup> To provide optimal disease protection, I encourage producers to select a vaccine specifically labeled to protect against the most common subtypes, including BVDV Type 1b.

**Reference:** Fulton RW, Ridpath JF, Saliki JT, et al. Bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV) 1b: predominant BVDV subtype in calves with respiratory disease. *Can J Vet Res* 2002;66(3):181-190.  
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photo by Jennifer Nichols,  
Courtesy of Atlantic News Telegraph

## Cass County Cattlemen Place Wessels Into Their Hall of Fame

We were one of Dr Wessel's very first clients. He has kept our cattle healthy and fit for over five decades. He truly believes— "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

Dr. Wessel is a GOOD veterinarian... But he is a GREAT Citizen! He's in the front row of most worth while projects in Anita, Iowa with his check book open, his sleeves rolled up, and ready to make it happen. He loves kids, and does every thing he can to help them become as good a citizen as he is.—by Dave Nichols

**Roberta continued from page one**

The calves are put on a ration that will have them gaining over three pounds a day until they are marketed to the feedlot in December weighing approximately 900 pounds. Roberta and Lance have done a variety of management practices to optimize performance while their calves are being backgrounded. Through experimentation they have found that having water in tanks and providing shade in the backgrounding lot both increase dry matter intake.

The customer for their calves is Jamie Willrett in Northern Illinois. He runs a confinement feedlot with 4,000 head capacity on slats. They also have been using an ultrasound system for 23 years that was pioneered by Kansas State's John Brethour to sort cattle into outcome groups to assure that all cattle are marketed at the most profitable time for both the feedyard and the packer. His two primary markets are Tyson and Aurora Angus Beef®. Aurora is a very high value packer and likes the quality grades and the consistency of their cattle. Most of their cattle are sold on the cash market in



Audrey, Ashley, Cole

the meat, i.e. hot carcass weight.

Jamie particularly likes the health, performance and structure of the Tarochione's cattle. He says they arrive healthy, and he has them up on the finishing ration within two weeks of their arrival at the lot. Structure is also vitally important for cattle fed on slats, and he is very pleased with the L&R Cattle Company's calves in this regard. In terms of structure, Nichols Simmental's superiority traces back to the early days of the breed in the U.S. when Nichols pioneered black, polled cattle that were more moderate framed and structurally correct than the post legged, flower colored cattle that were popular at the time.

Roberta and her family are definitely living their dream of raising kids, cows and corn. They do things right, which includes a long term relationship with Nichols Farms as their seedstock supplier and Jamie Willrett as the buyer of their calves. She is proud that everyone in the family has a love of agriculture, and they are proud to be making a living doing what they enjoy.

*\*Nichols impact is detailed in the book, Simmental's American Journey.*

## They Journeyed From the Finger Lakes of New York and the Hallowed Halls of Learning at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln to Visit Nichols Farms

ERWINDALE LLC is owned by Jason (right) and his Mom. They own 90 beef cows, and finish all the steers. Ralph (left) has cattle in their feedlot that he has retained ownership on.

Jason and his Mom also raise dairy heifers for dairy farms in their area. Ervindale LLC has a total of 500 head of cattle. They are located half way between Rochester and Syracuse in the Finger lakes area of New York.



At age fourteen, Dave's Champion 4-H heifer had a snorter dwarf calf. The local Extension Director introduced Dave Nichols to the renowned genetic scientist Dr. Jay Lush, who ignited a passion in Dave for research that he and his brother Lee embraced. Nichols Farms has collected data and phenotypes for about 20 universities the past 60 years. Dave was a key person in the adoption of genomic enhanced EPDs in beef cattle. **left to right:** UNL Vice Chancellor Mike Boehm, UNL Chancellor of Research Nebraska Integrated Beef Systems, Archie Clutter, Bob Wilhelm, UNL Vice Chancellor Research IT, Dave Nichols and Grant Gregory, Chairman Gregory & Hoenemeyer Inc, Arbor Banks.



## Buying or Selling Your Calves?

**We Can Help!**  
**Nothing Succeeds like a Team Effort**



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

Livestock Auction Markets' role in price discovery is the key to profitable cow/calf producers— especially in uncertain markets.

These Auction Markets advertise Nichols Superior Beef Genetics and the role that they play in producing cattle that gain efficiently and grade mostly choice.

These feeder cattle and replacement females are the ones that bring order buyers to the sale barns that team up with Nichols Farms.

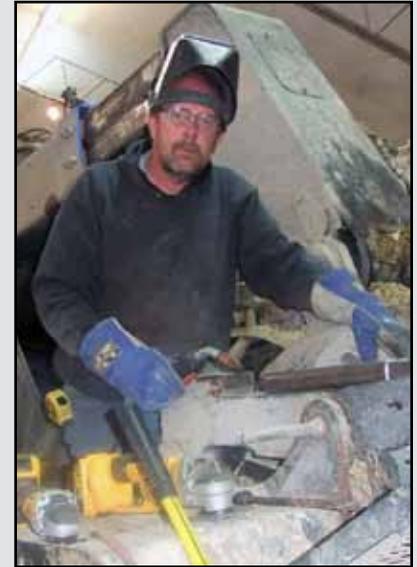
**Anita Livestock Auction**  
**Bloomfield Livestock Auction**  
**Clarinda Livestock Auction**  
**Colfax Livestock Sales**  
**Creston Livestock Auctions**  
**Denison Livestock Auction**  
**Dunlap Livestock**  
**Farmers Livestock Auction**  
**Fort Scott Livestock Auction**  
**Green City Livestock**  
**Guthrie Livestock Auction**  
**Humeston Livestock Auction**  
**Joplin Regional Stockyards**

**Keoco Auction Company, LLC**  
**Knoxville Regional Market**  
**Lamoni Livestock Auction**  
**Lolli Bros. Livestock Mkt. inc**  
**Madison County Livestock Auction**  
**Massena Livestock Auction**  
**Russell Livestock Market**  
**Sioux Falls Regional Livestock**  
**Valentine Livestock Auction**

**Call-- Ross Havens**  
**Office: 641-369-2829**  
**Cell: 641-745-5241**  
**rossh@nicholsfarms.biz**



## Cowboys You Can Count On



**J**eff Schaaf grew up on a hog and cattle farm near Wiota, Iowa. So he knew what hard work and taking responsibility was all about.

After finishing Anita High School he took a position as a full time assistant to Dr.Schmitt, a successful veterinarian with a sizeable cattle practice.

After working for Dr. Schmitt, Jeff took a job mining limestone. And then he worked for Wright Trucking for eight years.

Like most farmers with livestock, the cost of machinery and repairs have become a major headache so we hired Jeff as Maintenance Manager.

He's responsible for the shop AND its tools. He maintains and repairs our tractors, trucks, and farming equipment. In addition to the equipment, he maintains the bull pens, fence line bunks, fences, and cattle waters. He also mows, sprays and scrapes the dirt lots and driveways for fence line bunks. Plus he takes his turn feeding on weekends.

Jeff and his wife, Amy, have nine children— so his hobbies are centered around keeping the kids fed, dealing with frozen pipes, and keeping the home fires burning. Jeff admits he still likes to tinker around in his own shop in his spare time.

## For Sale: Superior Beef Genetics

**from : Nichols Farms - Iowa**

Angus - Simmental - South Devon - Hybrids - Composites

- ◆ 8 coming two/year old and 18 month old fall yearling bulls .....
- ◆ 25 spring Nichols Sired Heifers
- ◆ 150 Born and Bred Nichols Yearling Bulls to pick from..... see page 6

**from : Nichols Genetic Source Partners**

- ◆ *Check out the full listing at— [www.nicholsfarms.biz](http://www.nicholsfarms.biz)*



## MARCH MADNESS!

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

It's that time of year again, March Madness! It is the pinnacle of the college basketball season where teams all around the country are "on the bubble", and then the "Davids" slay the "Goliaths" en route to the National Championship. If you are reading this article you are probably heavily invested in a different kind of March Madness...calving season (either wrapping up, kicking off or both), bull sale season, grass fever season, hay fever season, early breeding season, fall calf weaning, herd bull testing, tornado season, market (both stock and livestock) peaks and valleys, and certainly mud season (unless of course you are experiencing drought conditions!). Oh, and it is a presidential election year, which is like adding dynamite to a dumpster fire! To paraphrase Charles Dickens, "it is the best of times, and it is the worst of times."

With all of that contributing to the chaos of raising cattle, how do we find calm waters in this stormy season? We can only seek to control what is within our control, and to do the best we can for our cattle. No matter what is going on around us, bulls that don't breed, cows that don't conceive, and calves that don't grow, aren't going to take us where we want to go! A quality mineral program can go a long way to preventing some of the pitfalls listed above, but it won't help with itchy eyes and sneezing!

Our AMPT® offering was designed to promote health and performance in our cattle operations. AMPT-A is our "A"ll purpose mineral, suited for wet cows and dry cows, bulls and replacement females.

AMPT-M is our Hi "M"ag product, fortified with higher levels of magnesium. Elevated levels on magnesium is nutritionally required to prevent grass tetany and milk fever for this time of year when our cool season grasses and clovers start growing. AMPT-P is our high "P"erformance and high "P"hosporus mineral for cattle with exceptional needs and goals, fortified with natural-sourced vitamin E and CitriStim®.

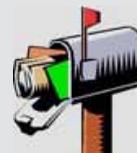
Last, but not least, is AMPT-T, our go-to cow mineral for when "T"emperatures soar in the heat of the summer. AMPT-T comes standard with plant extracts to help cope with summer conditions. Not to be left out is AMPT-T EF/Breeder, the summer mineral of choice at Nichols Farms.

This product, which contains EndoFighter®, is ideal for those desiring a higher level of fortification in a "Breeder" mineral or for parts of the country with fescue. This mineral comes standard with CitriStim, natural-sourced vitamin E, and RumeNext®.

Any core AMPT products can be enhanced with added solutions such as RumeNext for heat conditions and improved rumen function; CitriStim to support gut function, gut integrity, and body defense responses; and Garlium® which provides 10x the efficacy of garlic. So no matter how much Madness is going on around us, and how many political ads are creating noise pollution, AMPT minerals are available to help stabilize the chaos!



## LETTERS from you



**From Tom Burke, Smithville MO**

Dear Dave, I am so pleased that you are bringing back the Bell Boys! As you know, you can only have 28 characters in a name. I think you should consider this: Name them all Nichols BELL BOY so basically I think you need to drop the s, make bell boy two words and capitalize the words BELL BOY.

I think this would really accent the Bell Boy influence. After all you are the one and only source of it in the Angus breed today! If you think it's a good idea, fine, if not that is good too.

*editor's note:* We recently received a stack of Pathfinder Cow and Herd Sire certificates. I was stunned by how many had line bred Nichols Bell Boy sires and dams in their pedigrees. Several of the out-side bulls we've used since then were—"conspicuous by their absence".

**From Bob Menefee, Heartland WI**

I enjoy Dave's pragmatic way of resolving issues. I've likened him to a cross between Mark Twain and Will Rogers. I enjoyed his focus on Roger Tanner.

I know it's personal to me, but I enjoy reading about the successes around the Avondale/Richland community.

**From Jay Carlson, Kansas City MO**

Dave, I saw Ross at NCBA. I heard two quotes while at NCBA from an Iowa friend whose son recently attended an agriculture business meeting. I thought you would like to see them.

*"Agriculture will change more in the next 10 years than it has the past 70."*

*"A cattleman under 60 years of age is now considered a "Young Cattleman!"*

**From Gregory Price, Rockbridge, IL**

Dave, The bull you picked sure looks good to me. I enjoyed our phone conversation yesterday and look forward to doing business with you!

**From Professor Elizabeth Lee, University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada**

I look forward to seeing you all in September with a new crop of students...

*"We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology. This is a clear prescription for disaster." - Carl Sagan*



## Better Late Than Never

Iowa State University college roommates reunite 32 years later at a very informative NCBA Convention and Cattlemen's College in San Antonio, TX.

Rex Hoppes, partner in Advantage Beef Genetics, Bret Julian, Director of Sales Forage Solutions, Vermeer, and Ross Havens, Marketing Coordinator Nichols Farms.

# Nichols Farms

*Superior Beef Genetics*

2188 Clay Avenue  
Bridgewater, Iowa 50837-8047  
Nichols Bull Barn: 641-369-2829  
www.nicholsfarms.biz

## Nichols Farms

*Superior Beef Genetics*

## 150 BULLS FOR SALE

**Good - \$3500    Better - \$4000    Best - \$4500**

**PB Angus - PB Simmental - PB South Devon - SX-1 & DX1 Hybrids - DAX-2 Composite**

## Top Ten Reasons to Buy a Nichols Bull

- 1.** Maximize heterosis to take your calf crop and cows to next level.
- 2.** Early adopter (1987) of ultrasound and genomic profiles.
- 3.** Can't attend? Take advantage of our sight-unseen guarantee.
- 4.** We will notify our network of feedlots when you sell your calves.
- 5.** Whether buyers or sellers we will help you buy or sell Nichols sired bred heifers or heifer calves at no cost to either buyer or seller.
- 6.** Buy sons from the same hard working cows that have had 40 AI sires the past 60 years.
- 7.** Health, Loss of use and Death Warranty available.
- 8.** Volume discount and free delivery in continental United States.
- 9.** \$100 discount if you pick up and pay for your bulls WHEN YOU ARE READY for them.
- 10.** For 69 years we've been open every day except Sunday