



NICHOLS

NEWSLETTER

A few THOUGHTS



j. david nichols

Three years ago I was elected to the American Angus Association Board of Directors. Our new CEO, Allen Moczygemba recommended the board adopt a Long Range Strategic Plan, which we did.

The first step was contacting cow/calf producers that used Angus bulls. Each board member nominated one of their bull customers. The results of the face to face sessions were clear.

They wanted a verified program that would differentiate their black feeder cattle with superior genetic inputs and herd health from the commodity cattle that in most cases, have neither.

This led the AAA Board to an in depth fact finding mission to Cactus' Wrangler Feedlot and a Cargill Packing plant near Amarillo, Texas.

Cactus feed yards have a capacity of 600,000 head that are turned twice a year. Their Director of Value Management, Justin Cleghorn, demonstrated how Cactus sorts their incoming cattle into out-come groups.

Each individual animal is vaccinated and treated for parasites. Current weight, hip height and length of rump is gathered on each animal. This data is processed in real time and estimates end points for final weight, fat depth, percent muscle, and quality grade.

Cargill and Cactus both agreed—900-1000 lbs plus carcasses are the

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KEYS TO PROFITABILITY FOR GIBBS FARMS

Top Genetics, Market Flexibility, & Customer Service, top, Foreman Adam Breheny left and Lans Gibbs' right "To Do List"

by Bob Hough



Each Nichols Farms Newsletter features a customer profile from different parts of the country. This edition finds customers, George Alanson (Lans) and Evelyn Gibbs, who hail from the same Southwest Iowa County as Nichols. Adair County is excellent for forage production, so raising beef cattle is an ideal use for the land, which the Gibbs family has been doing for seven generations.

Lans finds the keys to profitability for his beef operation are diversification and market flexibility. The two major enterprises for the Gibbs' farm are a commercial cow/calf herd and developing bred commercial replacement heifers. Lans stays nimble in how he markets his cattle, so as not to miss an opportunity to maximize profitability in a given year. On the commercial cow/calf operation, this can involve everything from marketing feeder calves on through retained ownership through the rail. He markets his commercial replacements heifers mainly in the fall after ultrasound pregnancy checking, but has been known to calve some of them out for his customers and send them cow/calf pairs. The key is to take advantage of whatever gives him the most return in a given year.

Lans' farm has been developing and marketing commercial replacement heifers since the 1990's. This is a result of being a continuous customer of Nichols Farms for his seedstock needs for over 50 years, so his cattle have the genetics behind them

to make outstanding replacements. In addition to the replacements from his own herd, he also will buy replacement quality composite heifers from some of Nichols customers, so that he can offer two to three hundred bred heifers a year.

Over the last fifty years, the genetics of Lans' commercial cow herd and replacement heifers have followed the Nichols program, and today, Lans ideal animal is Nichols' Angus/Simmental/South Devon composite. Lans really likes maintaining a crossbred cow herd to take maximum advantage of maternal heterosis. These benefits include higher reproductive rates, calf survivability and percent calf crop weaned. He also likes that his composite cattle will outperform straightbred ones. Lans has been very pleased since adding South Devon into the mix because of their excellent disposition.

Disposition is one of the most important traits for Lans when selecting cattle. After decades of selective breeding of Nichols genetics, Lans has developed as fault free herd as you can, so the major culling criteria on the replacement heifers are reaching optimum weight on a high roughage ration, pelvic score, and disposition. He provides his customers fault free replacements, and that all starts with good temperament females that will lay down and have a live calf. He then wants the calves to perform well and be as uniform as possible.

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A few THOUGHTS

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new normal. They buy steers that finish at 1400 lbs and heifers that finish at 1200 lbs. Both grade Choice and High Select with few yield grade fours.

After the Cactus Feeders tour I was estatic because it was a blue-print for buying Nichols sired feeder calves.

I got a early Christmas present when the Creston Livestock Auction annual green tag sale of over 2,000 head was over. About a third of the calves were sired by Nichols Bulls.

When the last hammer fell, the Nichols sired steer calves weighed 60 lbs more and fetched their owners \$99⁶⁰ more cold cash per head. Their heifer mates were 61 lbs heavier and earned \$91²⁰ more than the cattle sired by brand X bulls.

The frosting on the cake came a day later when Gordon Phillips' 647 lbs steers calves topped the Dunlap Iowa Auction at \$171⁰⁰ cwt. Then Bob and Scott Linville called that their 773 lbs calves sold for \$164⁰⁰ cwt at Clarinda Iowa Sale. Needless to say, Happy days are here again.

The official Angus Feeder Calf Program will be available to commercial producers this summer. The Simmental Association has one available now.

Be sure and mark Saturday, January 27th on your calender for our Open House and opening day to pick out your yearling bulls. At noon we will be treated to Phyllis' Famous Chili soup.

In mid January the catalog will be available on our web site or you can call and we will mail you one. Best of all, pay us a visit and look at the bulls.



BIVI Beef Bulletin

Proactive Steps to Prevent Persistently Infected Animals

A herd infected with bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV) via the presence of persistently infected (PI) animals will never be as productive as it could be. BVDV exposure can drag down performance, reduce reproductive efficiency and suppress herd immunity making animals more susceptible to other diseases. There's a time during pregnancy when a dam can become infected with BVDV that can produce PI offspring. If the unborn fetus is exposed to the BVDV between 40 and 120 days of gestation, her calf may be persistently infected with BVDV.

If the pregnant cow doesn't have adequate protection, BVDV can reach the fetus. The immune system of the fetus is developing during this period and recognizes the virus as 'self' or part of its own body, so it doesn't eliminate the virus. These PI animals generate and shed enormous amounts of BVDV, which can infect unprotected herd mates. A three-part approach to controlling BVDV can help prevent and eliminate persistently infected (PI) animals in the herd.

Biosecurity: It is crucial to minimize the possibility of pregnant cows encountering the virus by increasing biosecurity. PI cattle are shedding the virus all day, every day, so they must be identified and removed from

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by Dr. Mark van der List

the herd. Avoid mixing cows together from outside the herd for at least 30 days in case they have a transient infection of BVDV.

Removal of PI Animals and Continuous Monitoring: While it can be a daunting task, record keeping is your friend. Ear tags and other identification systems are helpful to keep track of the location of bulls and cows that may be in multiple pastures.

Vaccination: Proper vaccine handling and administration is critical for effective immunization. Make sure the vaccine doesn't get overheated or exposed to sunlight. Be sure to store it in a refrigerator that maintains the desired temperature. Generally, vaccination right before breeding maximizes the protection against PI calf development. The spread of BVDV depends on the underlying immunity of the herd. Work with your veterinarian to develop a BVDV control plan. If a good vaccine and biosecurity program are in place, PI animals have been removed, and the herd is being monitored, there will be minimal risk of BVDV.



2017 Palermo Dominated by Champion Paternal Siblings

An unprecedented feat in the long history of the prestigious Palermo Show in Argentina, four paternal siblings dominated top honors as the Grand Champion (pictured) and Reserve Grand Champion Bulls, plus the Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Females, at the 2017 Palermo Show in Buenos Aires. The four popular champions are sired by Erre TE 383 Concor EuroT/E, the 2014 Palermo Reserve Grand Champion Bull. He carries forward the championship paternal lineage that traces six generations on the top side of his pedigree to the famous Pathfinder Sire Nichols Black Ink Y118.

Another prominent Nichols bull, Nichols Performa D162, sired an impressive array of Palermo champions the past two decades and he also continues to be a prevalent factor in Argentine genetics.



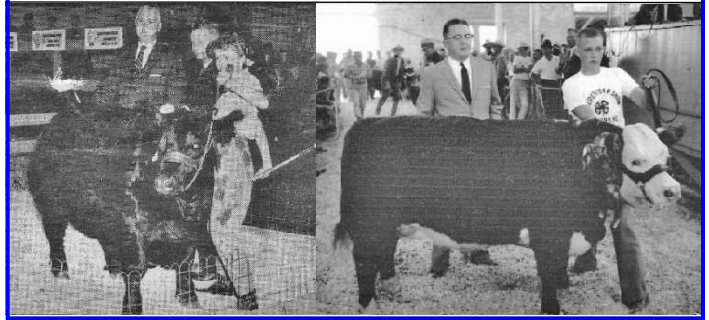
Gibbs Farms, from page one

Although Lans is completely sold on maintaining a composite cow herd, he breeds his first calf heifers with straight Angus. This includes timed A.I. followed by cleanup bulls that are sons of bulls used A.I. When it comes to calving ease, he feels Angus is the leading breed, and with the size of the Angus' database, it has the most reliable calving ease genetic predictions. When selecting sires for A.I. and natural service, Lans relies on the recommendations of Ross Havens and Dave Nichols. Lans has complete trust that they will provide him with the proper genetics, which time has proven to be true over the past 50 years.

Lans has a long list of buyers from six states wanting to purchase his replacement heifers. This is because his heifers not only have the genetics, but are complete in terms of their health program. Lans goes as far as to DNA test them to eliminate any persistently infected cattle for BVD. The heifers are kept in their working clothes in terms of condition as Lans finds that cattle marketed this way will have more longevity and are more fault free compared to over-conditioned heifers.

He markets the heifers' private treaty from one to a pot load. Lans is very flexible on how he markets the heifers with some customers picking out their own, some having Lans pick them out, and some customers having Ross Havens from Nichols Farms pick them out. He tries to market as many heifers as he can right after Labor Day, but will keep some customer's heifers through calving to provide them with pairs if that works best for them.

St. Joseph, Missouri Interstate 4-H Livestock Show, 1961. Evelyn Nichols - Reserve Grand Champion. George Alanson Gibbs - Reserve Champion Hereford. Dr. Don Good from Kansas State University judged the event.



Lans Gibbs and his wife Evelyn are proof positive that you can make a good living in the commercial cattle business. The keys for them are taking advantage of inexpensive feedstuffs and having top Nichols genetic inputs. Diversification and flexibility allows him to leverage the best market opportunities available each year. By maintaining a top genetic crossbred herd, Lans has also been able to develop an excellent market for commercial replacements.

It is also a testament of what can be accomplished by maintaining a long-term relationship with a seedstock supplier like Gibbs and Nichols have done.

Dear Dave,

Thank you so very much for hosting the NJAA Raising the BAR Conference. A few years ago, I toured your place with the Iowa Cattlemen Association's Beef Bash!

It's was really nice to be back again. Ross gave a great demonstration on what new technology your guys are doing. We also got into your lots to see some of your bulls.

I really enjoyed your ultra-sound demonstration. It's amazing to see what you and your employees are creating and the impact it has had on the beef industry.

And thanks again for your dedication to the American Angus Association— *Leah Mosher*



Chinese Cattlemen Come Calling

Rui Fenz, Dave Nichols, Dong Wang, Ross Havens, and Ran Wang celebrate Nichols Farms collaborating with their beef genetics company, Horizon Genetics.

They're pictured in a pasture full of Nichols Angus cows and calves. "All of the above" are enthused about former Iowa governor, Terry Branstad's appointment as United States Ambassador to China.



Toby Muller and Bart Mostaert, Demonstrating Ultra-Sound



Five Fair - Fast - Easy Steps To Buy Nichols Bulls

1 As soon as you arrive at Nichols Farms (Iowa) register for your buyer's # and get the bulls' performance records, genomically enhanced Epds, and ultra-sound data.

2 Bulls will be penned by breed, by performance, and by price. A selector board will be posted by each pen with the tag/brand # of each bull in that pen.

3 At 1:30 PM the first selections will be made in buyer number order. Take the card that matches the bull(s) tag # you wish to buy.

4 In case another person selects a bull that you want to buy — you (and others) have the opportunity to bid on that bull. You will bid in \$100 increments against the person who initially pulled that card. If the person who pulled the card does not want to raise your (and others') bids, he or she has the opportunity to make another selection before any other bulls are selected from that pen. Nichols Farms representatives will be at each Selector Board to answer questions and conduct the bidding. The only bidding will be between the people who want to buy the same bull on which a card has been pulled from the Selector Board.

5 When you make your bull(s) selection, write your name, address, and phone # on the card and give it to Lillian or Phyllis Nichols at the office.



Dave Nichols - Selector Board

Cowboys You Can Count On



Ross joined the Nichols Farms team in 1994 with a wealth of experience in the integrated swine business.

Ross Havens While a student at Iowa State University, Ross worked for the Iowa Swine Testing Station. Upon graduation, he joined IBP and later managed one of their swine buying stations. In 1990, he started at Crestland Coop consulting with Farmland's integrated swine producers.

As Nichols' Marketing Coordinator, much of his time is spent selling bulls and females. Ross is also responsible for customer service and adding value to their cattle through Nichols Farms' marketing programs, which include Nichols Genetic Source Feeder Calves, and Nichols Genetic Source Replacement Heifers.

Ross is active in community affairs and was a 4-H leader for 15 years. He was mayor of Wiota and a "first responder" on the Wiota Fire Department.

Ross served as President of the Cass County Cattlemen's Association, Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the Iowa Cattlemen's Association. Plus he served as its President. Currently he's a member of the Iowa Cattlemen's Foundation's Board of Directors.

For Sale: Superior Beef Genetics

from: Nichols Farms - Iowa

Angus - Simmental - Composites

- ◆ 200 open spring heifer calves (Purebreds, SX-1, DA-2) \$1250-\$1500
- ◆ 20 coming two/year old Bulls and long yearling fall bulls.....CALL
- ◆ 400 Nichols yearling bulls.....see page six

from: Nichols Genetic Source Partners

- ◆ 80 Angus and X bred heifers - A.I Nichols CE bulls ultra-sound calving date - Iowa
- ◆ 150 - 1st calf bred to Nichols Angus Bulls - get after calving - Iowa
- ◆ *Check out the full listing at— www.nicholsfarms.biz*

Buying or Selling Your Calves?

Give Ross a call when you sell your Nichols sired feeder cattle, cows, or bred heifers.

If selling at a Livestock Auction give him the wt. and description of your feeder calves and date of sale. He will contact feedlots who buy Nichols sired calves.

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



A wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned— Thomas Jefferson



Something New for the New Year

Weaned Calf Nutritional Protocol

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

As impossible as it seems the calendar now says 2018; can't believe it's already a new year! Many of you have probably set New Year's resolutions, and, if you're like me, they have probably already been broken! What if our resolution is to enhance calf health?

One of the greatest challenges we face with a new calf crop is scours. While there are many causes of scours the most common is associated with gram-negative bacteria such as *E. coli* and *Salmonella*¹. These organisms naturally exist in the environment and animals' digestive tracks. Solid management practices and good nutrition are the first areas that are needed to help keep calves healthy.

Supplements, such as AMPT™ mineral and Mintrate® protein, provide critical nutrients that may be lacking in most forages. These minerals and protein building blocks are required to support immune system function.

Our recommendation is to enhance your supplementation program with CitriStim® about 30 days before calving and continue it through the end of calving season. CitriStim is an

ADM proprietary, multi-component, whole-cell, inactivated yeast (*Pichia guilliermondii*) supplement that may help the animal fortify its defense against health challenges. Along with exhibiting immune modulating characteristics and exerting a beneficial shift in bacterial populations, research has shown CitriStim adheres to gram-negative, fimbriated bacteria. Once bound, pathogenic bacteria pass through the animal's gastrointestinal system. CitriStim is very easy to deliver, being a key component of certain products in our AMPT™ mineral and Mintrate® protein supplement lines, as well as being available as a stand-alone product. Using CitriStim costs about a \$1 per cow per month, less than the cost of most vaccines.

Keeping at least this one resolution may help lead to a healthier calf crop, and the benefits will be a welcome addition to the New Year!

For more information about CitriStim, go to www.ADMAnimalNutrition.com/CitriStim.

ADM Animal Nutrition, CitriStim, AMPT, and Mintrate are trademarks of Archer Daniels Midland Company.¹ Calf Scours 101: Basics of Calf Diarrhea for the Beef Producer; Colorado State Veterinary



LETTERS from you



From Ronald L. Russell, University of Wisconsin, Madison WS

Thank You for taking the time to let us stop by for a visit. The conversation we had at Nichols Farms contributed nicely to additional conversations on the way home. As always, I appreciate the shared view that cattle of merit work for their owners and in return are well cared for.

As usual, my students were impressed (not necessarily surprised given what I had told them) by your commitment to customer service. Thanks Again and all the best!!

From Gordon & Anne Schubert Taylorsville, KY

I wish you would print your newsletter every month! It's cow sense from a real cow outfit.

From Jayne Bannister, Kent NY

Dear Mr. Nichols, Your kind sponsorship of the Junior Angus Stockman Award is much appreciated. I believe knowledge of the Angus Breed and the beef industry is of utmost importance for juniors.

Quiz Bowl has always been one of my favorite contests and now Skill-A-Thon as well. Showing cattle is amazing and I love it, but these two contests allow juniors to really dive into our industry and understand how to take care of those show heifers when they are momma's out on pasture.

Cattle judging is also important because as cattle markets fluctuate, producers will need to tighten their belts. My favorite class to judge is the scenario classes with EPDs. They provide the most real world application of conformation, performance, and genetic merit!

National Junior Angus Members Win First Overall Stockman Award

More than 700 Angus juniors and their families traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, to compete in the 2017 National Junior Angus Show. It was much more than just a cattle show.

The juniors competed on many levels. Nichols Farms sponsored The Overall Angus Stockman Awards. It was awarded to the highest combined scores of three contests. The quiz bowl written exam, the judging contest, and the skill-a-thon. *left to right...* Senior Division: Jayne Bannister NY, Intermediate Division: Eva Hinrichsen KS, Junior Division: Ryan Borer VA, and Dave Nichols.



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Superior Beef Genetics

2188 Clay Avenue
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www.nicholsfarms.biz

Nichols Farms

Private Treaty Bull Sales Starting—
Saturday - January 27 ♦ Noon Lunch - Sale at 1 pm

400 Nichols Bulls to pick from

PB Angus ♦ PB Simmental ♦ PB South Devon ♦ SX-1 Hybrid ♦ DX-1 Hybrid ♦ DAX-2 Composite



Nichols Upgrade B31 is a Pure Bred Simmental POWER BULL. His Epds rank in the top 1% for Wean, Year, Maternal Wean wt. Carcass wt and \$TI



Nichols Final Answer Y34 is a frame 5.8 meat wagon - CE Angus Bull. His Epds rank him in the top 2% for Wean wt, Doc, and \$W.

Volume discounts
Health & Death Warranty
\$100 off each bull if you pick them up

Pick up your Bull(s) when You're ready for them

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

**Genomic (DNA) Enhanced EPDs
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This sale will be broadcast live on the internet.
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Bull Sale Catalog - www.nicholsfarms.biz

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