



NICHOLS

NEWSLETTER

A few THOUGHTS



J. David Nichols

Another chapter in the book

I had a couple falls about two months ago and ended up in a skilled care rehab facility. They are working me hard getting me back in shape so I can get back to doing what I love, which is being back to the farm with Team Nichols. I am progressing well, and it looks like I'll be going home soon and will be able to be at the Nichols Farms office to help **Sell Bulls**.

Mark your calendar for the December 6 calf sale at Creston Livestock Auction and put a big red circle around January 27, Opening Day for Proven Performers, Fall Yearlings and what looks to be the best Yearling Bulls we've ever raised. This journey of being old is not so much fun, but Ronnie Reagan said it best, "Thank you for giving me the great honor..." of knowing you as customers and friends.

continued on page 4

Harve Rhodes and Nichols Cattle are a good fit for North Central Missouri

It is hard to pigeonhole Harve Rhodes because there are a lot of aspects to him. He certainly qualifies as an innovative cattle producer who uses all the management tools available in a low overhead operation. He is also devoted to his family and his community, the kind of person you would want as a neighbor.

Outside of cattle ranching, he is a busy community leader who has been active in Farm Bureau for years, and spends a lot of time volunteering on the Rural Water District Board and the Water Commission. Well water in their county is unfit to drink, so everyone has piped water. That is a big job in a hilly, rural county. A lot of his free time lately has been spent with the Commission building a 2,300-acre reservoir, not only for their county but also the surrounding counties. When you hear Harve speak, you can tell the joy that public service brings him.

However, his main priorities are his family, being a steward of the land, and affordable things he can do to make his beef cattle operation more efficient and sustainable. He has been married to his wife Rosie for 53 years with 52 of those years spent on the farm they are on now. For many years, he had to work off the farm to supplement their income, but he said tongue in cheek that Rosie was always there to keep him on task and keep the books straight.

He and Rosie have three children they're rightly proud of. Their daughter Kristen works for the USDA in North Dakota, while their sons Kenny and Kevin have chosen to stay closer to home. Harve sure appreciates that when he needs an extra hand he can call them in to help. Although both sons assist their father when needed, Kevin has built a farm operation of his own that includes row crops and beef cattle.

continued on page 3

Harve Rhodes uses Nichols Composite Bulls and rotational grazing to get the most from his beef genetics.

photos by Rick Ayers





ROSS' THOUGHTS



Ross Havens
Nichols Farms
Marketing
Coordinator

Office: 641-369-2829
Cell: 641-745-5241
ross@nicholsfarms.biz

Get ready to buy bulls

Wow, where did the summer go? However, it was a good one as Nichols Farms finished off a great bull sales season and we got those timely rains to keep our pastures and crops growing. So thank you again to all of you that continue to have confidence in the Nichols Program and purchase bulls. As many of you have already read Dave Nichols unfortunately had a couple of falls and has ended up in a skilled care rehab toward the end of the summer. As stated, he is getting better, stronger, and no worries we are still getting our marching orders. Lillian and the Nichols Crew have kept the operation and cattle production moving ahead as normal.

Well, I say normal, but we just wanted to let everyone know that we are going to change things up a little. We will be moving the sale of our Proven Performer Bulls (best yearling bulls we used to breed our cows this summer) and the Fall Yearling Bulls to our January 27, 2024, sale along with our usual Spring Yearling Bull Sale. This will give you a wider range of ages to select from to meet your bull selection criteria along with growth, carcass traits, mothering ability, soundness, good disposition, and feed efficiency.

With fall arriving, which I have a love-hate relationship with as we all know what follows fall, please feel free to give us a call and let us service you in the following ways:

--Order your Igenity Beef Profiles to select your replacement females and certify your steers.

--Let us know where and when you will be marketing your feeder calves, bred heifers, and cows so we can notify interested buyers.

--Give us a call to discuss your current and future bull needs.

IGENITY® BEEF

Supported by NEOGEN

IGENITY® BRANDED



Nick Hammett
Key Account Manager
Commercial Cattle Genomics

In previous newsletters we've shared that Nichols Farms has partnered with NEOGEN to offer their customers Igenity Beef and Igenity Feeder genomic testing. As a reminder, Igenity Beef is the industry's premier tool for evaluating commercial replacement females to assist in selection and breeding decisions. It can also be used to generally characterize the strengths and weaknesses of your cow herd and aid in making bull purchasing decisions that better match your needs. Igenity Feeder is the industry's only tool for genomically verifying the value of feeder calves and provides great insight for retained ownership decisions and management grouping using a terminal index, optimal days on feed index and risk factor of Bovine Congestive Heart Failure (BCHF).

What we have yet to share is that both tests can qualify your calves for the Igenity Branded marketing program. Igenity Branded is designed to verify the genetic value of your herd, allowing buyers to manage risk, sellers to realize premiums on superior cattle, and feeders to optimize sorting to achieve greater efficiency. NEOGEN has worked closely with Superior Livestock Auction representatives and their buyers to understand the value of the Igenity Branded program. However, the program has proven to add value across a wide variety of marketing avenues.

When marketing a group of home-raised calves, you simply must test at least 35% of the calf crop to accurately describe the genetic value of the entire group. Many commercial cattlemen are testing 80% of their heifer calves on Igenity Beef and obtaining the results to be used in profitable replacement heifer selection decisions while also qualifying the steer-mates and cull heifers for the Igenity Branded program.

The average Igenity Terminal Index (ITI) of the tested calves is assigned to the entire group and the group is assigned a tier (Elite, Premier, Choice or Tested), by quartile within our database. Other producers are opting to test 100% of their calf crop or purchased cattle and using the results to sell and market calves in uniform load lots.

The Igenity Branded program comes free with testing your cattle with NEOGEN and is the only program that is not just a claim or a badge, but actual proof that your calves possess the desirable genes to make feeders and packers more money. If you would like to discuss how genomic testing can lead to more profitable management decisions and additional marketing opportunities, give Ross a call.



**Nichols Farms is a NEOGEN Genomics
Distribution Partner for Igenity® Beef and Feeder.**
Contact Ross Havens for more information.

For Sale: Superior Beef Genetics

Gibbs Cow Herd Dispersion - 350 Cows

- 170 2nd, 3rd, and 4th calvers
- 180 6th, 7th, and solid mouth cows
- 100% Nichols Breeding

Gibbs Heifer Development

- 185 Bred heifers
- 90 AI Bred to Nichols New Standard D30 for March 1 calves.
- 95 Nichols Calving Ease Bull Bred with projected calving dates

Travis Heifer Development

- 150 Nichols Calving Ease Bull Bred with projected calving dates

Harve Rhodes continued from page 1

Kenny runs beef cattle part time, but has built a successful honeybee business that has really done well. He sells honey, queen bees for existing hives and starter hives.

Now to the topic at hand, Harve's cattle operation.

He primarily calves in the fall feeding hay and stockpiled fescue. He is working with the new varieties of novel endophyte fescue, which provides the desirable things about fescue without the toxicity. He also frost seeds clover to improve forage quality and add nitrogen to the soil.

Harve utilizes intensive rotational grazing to get more out of his land. The land is divided into paddocks with high tensile electric fence, and he then uses temporary electric fence to move the cattle as the season dictates. This may mean moving them every day in the spring or every four to six days in the heat of the summer. They primarily fall calve, and a rotational grazing system gives them the extra grass to background the calves by grazing them the next summer. He then generally retains ownership at a feedlot in Nebraska to take full advantage of the top genetics he buys at Nichols Farms.

As a customer for more than a decade, Harve really enjoys doing business with Nichols Farms. He uses Nichols' three-way composite bulls to get more heterosis, which he feels makes a big difference on his bottom line, particularly when it comes to maternal traits and cow longevity. This is important because for the last 40 years, all replacement heifers have come out of his herd. He also likes the low-pressure way Nichols sells bulls, and all the data and assistance they provide to make sure he gets the bulls he needs.

Harve's priority now is to transition the farm to the next generation and spend time with his grandchildren teaching them about agriculture.



Joanna, Kenny and Ben Rhodes live nearby and are always willing to give Harve and Rosie a hand on the farm.

by Bob Hough



Audrey Tarochione interned with the farm this past summer and brought her camera along. She currently attends Kansas State University as a senior in Animal Science and plans to pursue a graduate degree in Breeding & Genetics. Her career goals include growing her commercial cow herd and working in the field of beef genetics. You can see more of Audrey's photos on our newly updated website www.nicholsfarms.biz





by Brian Fieser Ph.D.

Beef Field Nutritionist, ADM Animal Nutrition™

Continuing Education

Ronald Regan famously said: “The nine most terrifying words in the English language are ‘I’m from the government and I’m here to help.’” I’m not here to debate political views, but I was reminded of that quote when at a recent convention I attended an educational session. One of the ranchers on the producer panel was asked a question and responded with the 8 worst words to use on a cattle operation: “Because we have always done it that way.” A couple weeks later, I was talking to a friend when I asked if he had any weekend plans, he said he had to go to a 3-day seminar to get some continuing education credits completed for the year. Afterwards, it got me to thinking about different professions and how the knowledge we have gained over time blends with new ideas of today.

There are certainly valuable lessons learned by our ancestors which are passed down to us, but the challenges and opportunities presented to us today were unimaginable to them. Teachers, nurses, chiropractors and veterinarians, to name a few, all require continuing education. Even as a cattle nutritionist, there isn’t a formal crediting process, but there are annual regional and national meetings where current research findings are presented. What profession isn’t on the list? Farmers and ranchers. They are hardly exempt from continuing education, there just isn’t a governing body to require such a thing.

What would a cattleman do for continuing education? Genetics, crop and cattle? Fertility? Herd health? Agronomy, both cultivated and native range? Accounting? Banking? Mechanic? Welder? Environmental stewardship? Drone Pilot? Human resources? This list could

go on and on. Not to mention that many producers have an off-farm job to master as well. Without a doubt, few professions require the robust education of a farmer or rancher.

Because no one person can be expected to be master of all knowledge, it is essential that they surround themselves with people who are experts in their field who can be trusted to provide the information that will help move their operation forward. The question becomes, where can one find the information they need and who can they trust? In many places, the county or state extension service is a valid starting point. Additionally, county, state and national cattlemen’s associations always include educational seminars in their meetings.

Many areas will have frequent producer meetings hosted by the local feed store and a feed company. These meetings often get characterized as just a way to sell feed, and feed companies and feed stores are certainly in the business of selling feed, but if you are working with trusted, quality people, then this can also be an exceptional place for information. While all the other sources of information listed can be great resources, they are far removed from where the rubber meets the road in the process of selecting the right nutritional product to meet your needs. At ADM, we strive to have well-educated sales representatives who are solution-oriented to help cattlemen continue their education when it comes to feeding their cattle and ultimately, be more efficient and profitable. We strive to work with producers, utilize their available feed resources, and pair that with the nutritional expertise to select the right supplement as the last piece to complete an extremely complex puzzle.

Likewise, the Nichols Farms crew are trusted experts when it comes to genetics and seed-stock sourcing. In 2022, ADM and Nichols Farms made a video detailing the relationship they have and how that maximizes the productivity and efficiency of the exceptional genetic pieces they are producing. The video can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YN_IXc0RJw



A Few Thoughts

...continued from page 1

I have taken account of the great friends I have had over the years, and in particular the many ideas and progress that have come out of the conversations with them. I think back to my regular correspondence with George Chiga, one the true pioneers of performance. If you have Bob de Baca’s book “Courageous Cattlemen” check out the chapter on George.

The idea of ultrasounding for intramuscular fat was hatched on a plane ride sitting with Doyle Wilson coming home from a Beef Improvement Federation meeting.

One of my oldest friends is Glen Klippenstein, and our regular conversations made both our operations better. What he did with progeny testing inspired me, and our trip to Australia along with Charley Litton to promote performance was a once in a lifetime adventure.

Working with Jim Leachman and Bob Dickinson, we convinced Simmental to keep pedigree information on other breeds in their herdbook, which was the foundation for across breed EPDs.

Many ideas have come from conversations with John Pollak, and for years I have talked on the phone with Bob Hough several times a week discussing the future of the beef industry.

I could go on and on, but the point is this is a people business, and I have been blessed to have been around the best, which includes my family, the crew at Nichols Farms and all our great customers.



Nichols Farms welcomed the annual University of Guelph tour on the morning of September 6. The students walked through a pasture of Simmental cows, watched the Nichols Farms and Cory Hoakison’s crews chop silage, and viewed the C-lock feed efficiency system.



For Sale: Superior Beef Genetics

- Cattle Feeders -

Nichols Genetic Source Calves

- ◆ Preconditioned
- ◆ Sired by Nichols Bulls
- ◆ Mostly Weaned

Wednesday, December 6

Approximately 2000 Head

LIVE at Creston Livestock Auction

ONLINE at www.cattleusa.com

Bidder application required 24 hours in advance to bid online

Cody Frey
Creston Livestock Auction
 Sale Barn: 641-782-7025
 Cell: 641-344-6112
claauction@iowatelecom.net



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



More Nichols Genetics For Sale
www.nicholsfarms.biz

LETTERS

from you

Brad Skaar, ISU Ames, IA

Ross, It was a great day in my mind. Thank you much for meeting with us. Looking forward to some great things. Please tell Dave thank you for the visit. I really did enjoy the chance to visit with him today. See you soon.

Kelsey Steckly, Parnell, IA

Hello, Are you able to provide your calving ease scale for the Sim/Angus Cross bulls? My husband and I bought a bull from you guys last year and we are

excited to come back to get another one! Thank you!

Jay Reynolds, Demopolis, AL

Can you add Jim Ware to the newsletter mailing list? His info is below. He is buying 15-bred heifers from me out of your bulls and bred to those 2 young bulls I just got. I'm trying to get him to try the Sim/Angus or South Devon cross bulls next year. Thanks - J

Minnie Lou Bradley, Memphis, TX

Dave, how nice of you to add to the Gold Spur Scholarship. There are not many or any more Dave Nichols and I always appreciated you for standing your ground. Take care, Minnie Lou.

Cowboys You Can Count On



Ben Dwerlkotte is the newest member of the Nichols Farms team. He came to Iowa from Marysville, Kansas, this summer as an intern and stayed for more experience.

"I decided to stay and get a few more years experience," says Ben. "This is a great place to learn."

Ben is finishing his coursework online and will complete his degree in Livestock Production and Management from Southeast Community College in December. He currently lives in Adair, Iowa.

His duties at Nichols Farms range from working cattle to making hay to helping AI, and he enjoys making the transition to a large herd from his small family herd. "Just checking cows is almost a full time job," he says.

Working with the Nichols crew is the highlight, and learning from their experience.

"You can't do better than learning what guys like Bart know. His 40 years of knowledge and experience is invaluable," says Ben. "Even the newer guys, they're all willing to teach me what they know. And I'm more than willing to learn. They help me do my job correctly, and I do what I can to help them."

Between his online classes and trips home to help his dad, Ben finds time for little else besides cheering on the Kansas State Wildcats. He's settling in and looking forward to finding his way around the community.

"Everyone here is extremely welcoming," says Ben. "I enjoy it here. It's a good place to be."

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

Opening Day Private Treaty Bull Season

Saturday - January 27, 2024 - Nichols Farms Bull Barn

Noon Lunch - Bidding starts at 1 PM

Proven Performers ~ Fall Yearling Bulls ~ Yearling Bulls

6 Genetic Lines of Hard-working Bulls

Angus • Simmental • SX (Sim Angus) • South Devon
Nichols Composites (DA) • Nichols Hybrids (DX)

This sale will be broadcast live on the internet.

DVAuction
Broadcasting Real-Time Auctions
Real time bidding & proxy bidding available.

New for 2024 Two Additional Groups of Bulls

“Best of the Best” Proven Performers Nichols Bulls selected for our own in-herd use. Impressive numbers, outstanding phenotype, and the ability to work anywhere.

Big, stout, virgin Fall Yearling Bulls, Angus and SX (Sim-Angus), ready to turn out. Fertility tested, trich tested, FE tested and 50K genomic profiled.

PLUS our greatest set of YEARLING BULLS...EVER!

All Nichols Farms bulls are backed by a cowherd of 71 years of selection pressure. We breed for growth, carcass traits, mothering ability, sound feet and good disposition.

Our investment in a C-lock SMART-Feed intake system ensures you have the information you need for optimal feed efficiency.

We've earned the trust of cowmen because these bulls will go out and get cows bred and sire calves that top local feeder calf sales. Our bull buyers expect success and year after year we deliver.

Nichols Farms is an Industry Pioneer for “Opening Day Private Treaty” bull sales. We sell private treaty because it works for our customers. Come see us, or give us a call to make a sight unseen satisfaction guaranteed purchase.



www.nicholsfarms.biz

Bull Barn: 641-369-2829

Ross Havens cell: 641-745-5241

2188 Clay Ave. Bridgewater, Iowa 50837