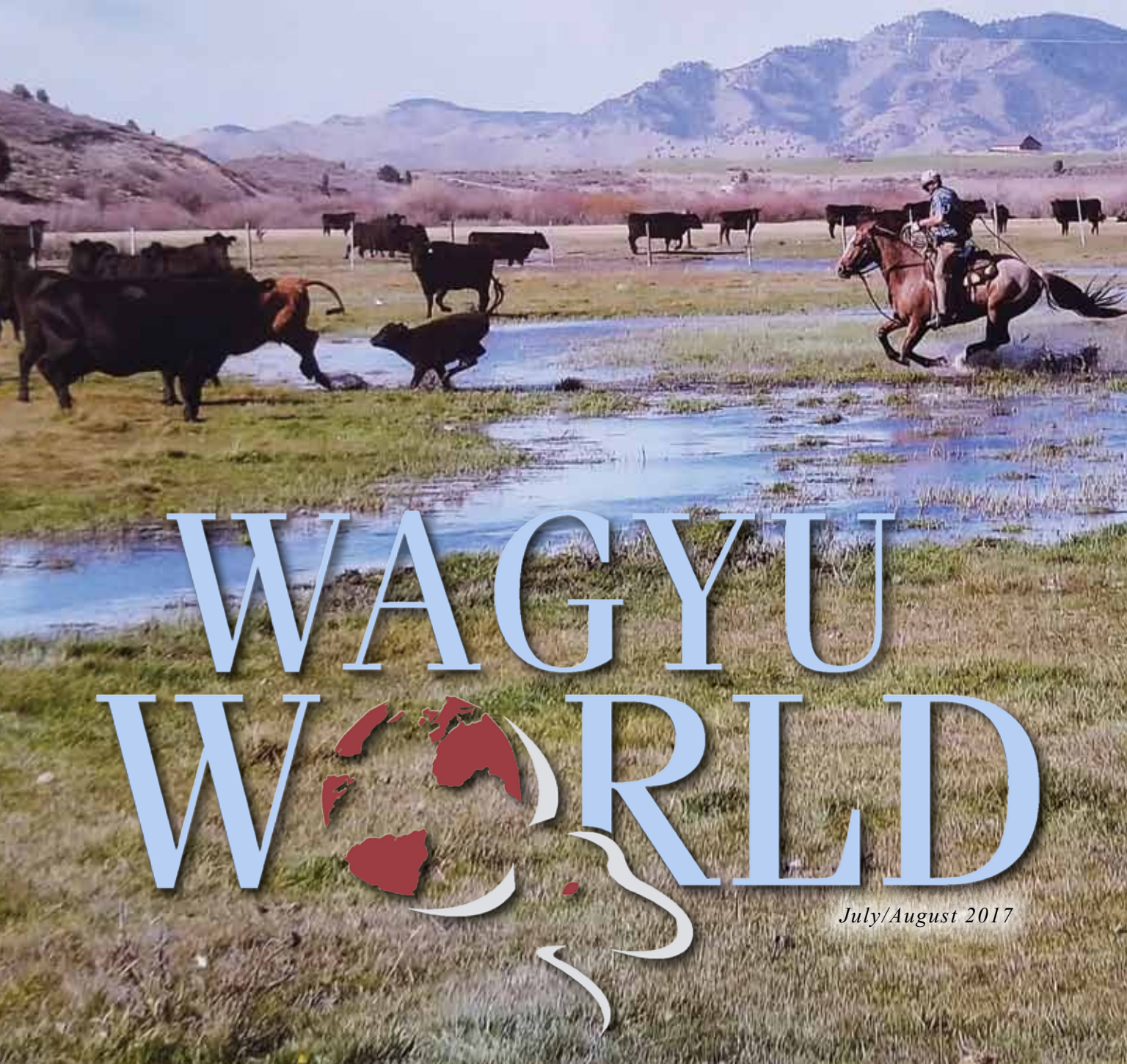




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July/August 2017



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July/August 2017

Volume 3, Number 5

9 2017 WAGYU WORLD PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Take a look at all the winners and honorable mentions in this year's photo contest.



9

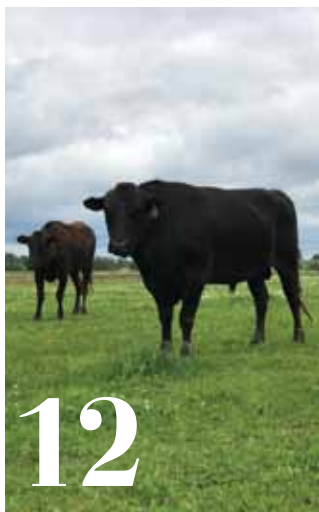
1

12 RANCH REACH

Muddy Flats

Meet Michael Goodell, the man behind this very influential program. Learn about how he creates highly sought after matings.

>> *By Heather Smith-Thomas*



12

22 MARKET MATTERS

Mashima Reserve

We catch up with Shane Lindsay and learn more about the extraordinary product they produce and the luxurious experience it creates.

>> *Kindra Gordon*



22

18 CULINARY PERSPECTIVE

Identity Crisis

In the market place, Wagyu is presented in every way, shape and form. We look into how it should be presented to consumers.

>> *By Pete Eschelman*



18

COVER>>

2017 Photo Contest Winner

Location: Grace, ID

Courtesy of: Kara Harris

26 RANCH REACH

Bar V

This up and coming program is making a name for itself and the folks behind it are the reason why; they're a great family making even better Wagyu.

>> *By Heather Smith-Thomas*



32 OUT & ABOUT

The results from both the Lone Mountain Cattle Company Production Sale in New Mexico and the Passion For Prime Sale in Missouri. Also, all upcoming Wagyu events and some very exciting news regarding one of our very own younger Wagyu breeders and a whole new opportunity for juniors involved in Wagyu.



32

40 HEALTH & HUSBANDRY

The Finish

The vital steps required to achieve that "perfect" finish and it all starts with the calf.

>> *By Dr. Jimmy Horner*

40



44 MARKET MATTERS

The Power of Meat

The Food Marketing Institute performed a study to gain a better understanding of consumers in the marketplace. Take a look at how this relates to Wagyu.

>> *By Jeri Tulley*

6 EDITOR'S LETTER

7 PUBLISHER'S POST

8 CONTRIBUTORS

48 INDEX

THE BURN

Now I know I'm not alone when I say that it's been a hot summer. Everyone who I spoke to throughout the United States these last few months would always have the same reply when asked how things were going; "It's Hot!". Here in California, we have had more days over 100 degrees than we've ever had. It's pretty sad when it's 97 outside and that's considered to be comfortable. I can't complain too much as we have what many people call a "dry heat". Many of you have to experience these temperatures coupled with extreme humidity and to you, I'm sorry. That's miserable but at least your plants don't look like they've been placed in an oven for a few hours by the end of the day. Now on the far side of the spectrum, many of you have had nothing but rain all summer long. I feel for you and pray that your crops have survived and flooding wasn't an issue. All in all, it has been a tough summer.

For all of us in the dry heat, we have experienced multiple wildfires and for those of us who farm crops, the summer has taken its toll on our pumps. And when you live in an old farmhouse that could have better air conditioning ducts and vents, these temps can make a mountain out of a mole hill when two people in the house can't come to terms on whether or not it's "cool" enough outside in the evening hours to open windows and let the "cool" air in, and the only determination is what the iPhone says on the weather app. Let's just say no matter if it is cooler outside or not, the air in the house amongst us all doesn't "cool" down. #familydrama

No matter what summer has brought, it is summer and with every season comes the good and the bad. This summer for instance, brought us an amazing garden that has produced an abundance of goodies. Also, the hot summer days has made a dip in the pool beyond refreshing and when you're 7 months old on your first swimming adventure/lesson, it makes the pool much less scary. Sutter has taken to swimming but I'm not sure if it's because he's having fun or just trying to stay cool. Also, summer always brings us into fall, my favorite season and I'm ready for it as our garden is already working hard at growing a multitude of pumpkins.

Also as we near the end of summer we get closer to all coming together at this year's convention. I look forward to seeing everyone once again as we are all more enlightened about this industry and how to improve it. I have no doubt that the association has an amazing schedule planned and will keep everyone very busy and excited.

This summer has allowed us to put together some very exciting pieces found in this issue as well and an entirely new segment we call "Culinary Perspective". Grab a cold drink and relax with the book as there is a lot to read or just save it to read on your trip to Kansas City. Don't forget, if you manage not to pack this issue, we will have copies there for you to help you pass the time in between speakers at the convention. Safe travels, stay cool, and see many of you soon.



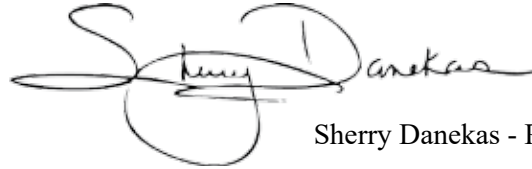
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Sutter".

So the last couple of months have been very interesting, or I suppose that's a nice way of putting it. As some of you know I've been in the process of building a house here on the ranch, and the progress has been painfully slow to times non-existent. As it turns out I have one of those "crooked contractor" stories to share, yup he was a bad guy and from the looks of it with no redeeming qualities at all. The DA, the Contract Labor Board and the County of Yolo are all searching for the scoundrel, and to date there are no sightings. Don't you wish that we could enforce a white hat/black hat law, where you knew who and what you were dealing with at all times.

The hat law would be great, except for the fact that it always seems like the guys with the black hats, own both and know when the right time to wear each. So how do any of us distinguish who is of true character to those of shady credentials. I'm guessing it gets down to intuition and those gut feelings, because just like the "contractor trade" every business will have their fair share of black hats. You just have to get a big sorting stick out and make some cuts, you gotta watch the ones that never stop talking, open the gate for those that truly believe their the second coming of Christ, and send to market the hats who are just plain incompetent, whether it be at their jobs or their dealings with others.

I've finally got some really good guys working with me on my house, but I've also learned some valuable lessons along the way: 1. always trust my hesitations about someone, they are there for a reason, 2. If it sounds like BS, it most likely is. I don't believe this has jaded my belief in folks, it's just taught me a lesson and it's up to me to learn from it. On a more positive note I'm really looking forward to seeing everyone in Kansas City at this year's Convention, there is no better city to have an event, it has always been in my top five. The fall has some very exciting things happening within the Wagyu business and thankfully most of the Wagyu folks I know are most definitely in that "white hat" category.

See you in Kansas City!!!



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DISCOVERY

This Issue's Five Contributors Share Themselves With Us.



KINDRA GORDON
Rancher/Writer



My biggest regret in life so far is... hard to pin down because I truly have a blessed life and don't have a personality that laments past regrets. But if forced to pick one regret, I'd say it would be wishing I spent more time with family members and friends who have now passed away.

A current trend in society that I wish never happened is... the overabundance of tattooing people add to their bodies. I'm not a fan of the purple, pink and blue hair colors either. Guess I'm just too traditional of a ranch girl.

My summer garden includes... several herbs planted among my flowers, it's fun and rewarding to step onto the patio and snip some basil or rosemary to add to our evening meal.



JERI TULLEY
Writer



My biggest regrets in life so far is... always been because I have spoken without thinking first. Proverbs 21:23 says, "Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble." I'm working on that.

A current trend in society that I wish never happened is... digital gaming. I set rules for my boys that are stringent compared to their friends, but I still feel like I have to vie with the device for their attention sometimes. What happened to playing with your friends in real time, face-to-face, outside???

My summer garden includes... two types of squash, basil, dill, red potatoes, watermelon, okra, onions, garlic, and lots of weeds!



HEATHER SMITH-THOMAS
Rancher/Writer



My biggest regret in life so far is... that I didn't get to spend more time with my parents before they passed on.

A current trend in society that I wish never happened is... negative attitude, blaming someone else for problems, and a tendency for advocacy groups (environmental groups, anti-this, anti-that) to be part of the problem rather than trying to work together to be part of the answer to problems.

My summer garden includes... wildflowers, weeds, and all sorts of other interesting plants, since my cow pastures are my only garden.



DR. JIMMY HORNER
*Nutritionist / CEO
Protocol Technologies*



My biggest regret in life so far is... not making more of an effort to have a meaningful relationship with my dad before his death almost 7 years ago. We did get to enjoy each other the final 16 months of his life for which I'll always be grateful, but things could have been far better if I had only forgiven him for old transgressions much earlier.

A current trend in society that I wish never happened is... continued destruction of the family structure resulting in a broad array of issues for generations to come and none of which are positive.

My summer garden includes... 3 different varieties of tomatoes and we've already harvested more than we did all of last summer!



PETE ESHELMAN
*Wagyu Breeder /
Entrepreneur*



My biggest regret in life so far is... that when I started in business I would think millions. In retrospect I should have been thinking about billions.

A current trend in society that I wish never happened is... talking on cellphone and texting at the table in fine dining establishments.

My summer garden includes... 150 varieties of vegetables and herbs. Stuffed squash blossoms are my favorite right now.

Photo Contest WINNERS!



Steak Center Cattle
Kara Harris
Grace, ID



L4 Wagyu
George D. Lyons
Houston, TX



L4 Wagyu
George D. Lyons
Houston, TX



2

1

3

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Mr. Randall
A. Anderson
Erie, CO

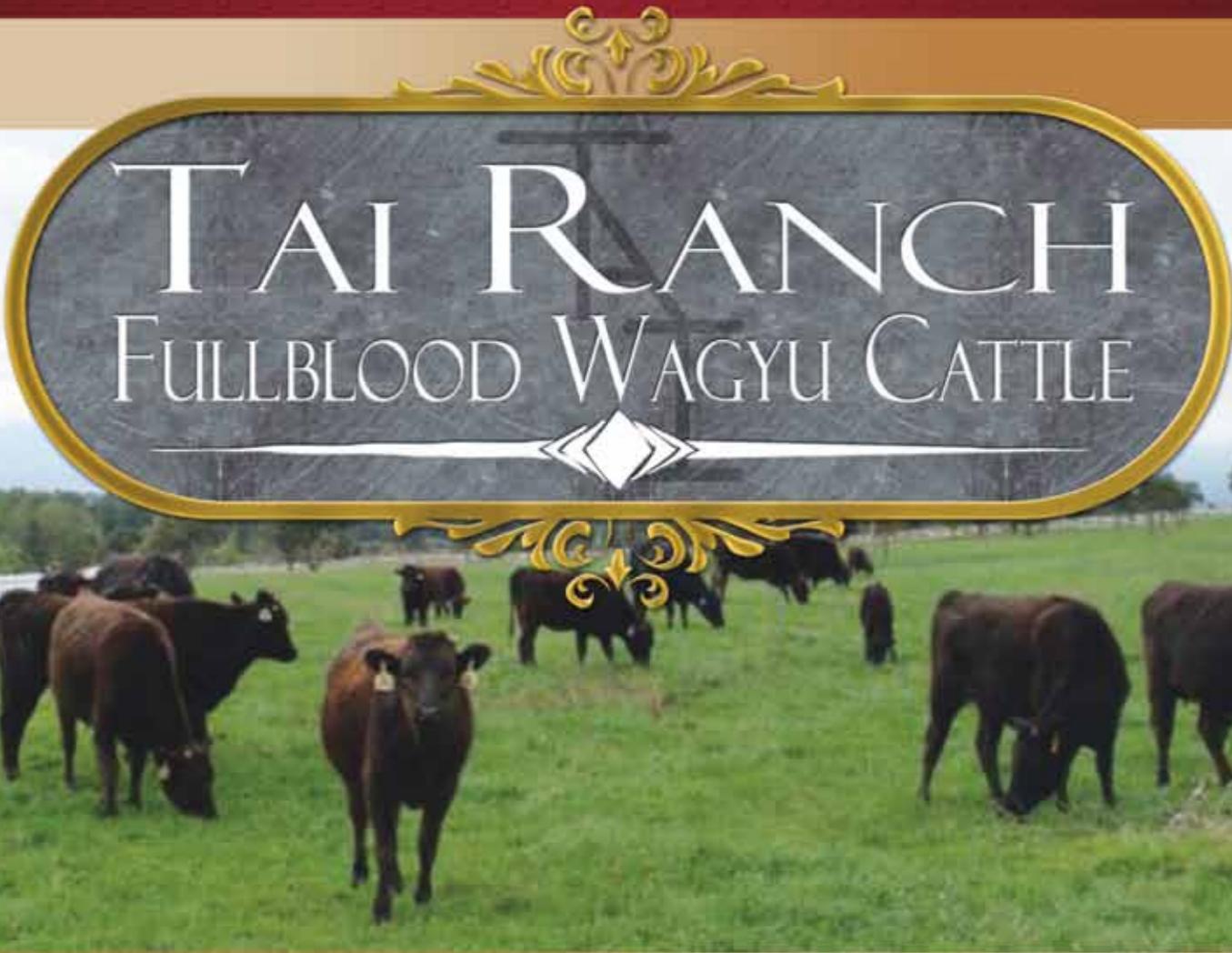


L4 Wagyu
George D. Lyons
Houston, TX



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MUDDY FLATS

By Heather Smith-Thomas



Michael Goodell has been breeding Wagyu cattle for many years in western Wisconsin. “Our decision to disperse is mainly because we don’t own any land—we have been renting or leasing the land for our cattle operation—and now our land base will no longer be available. I am losing the crop land that was used for growing the grain to feed them,” he explains. Goodell plans to continue his involvement with the Wagyu breed, however, but in the role of consultant rather than a breeder/consultant.

BACKGROUND

He graduated from high school on the East Coast and went to college in Rhode Island, though his family roots were in Wisconsin. “My passion for the Wagyu breed began in the mid-1980’s when I was attending the Culinary Arts program at Johnson and Wales University (when it was still just a college) in Providence, Rhode Island. While serving an internship and apprenticeship at the Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston, Massachusetts, I was introduced to Wagyu beef imported from Japan. At that time they didn’t call it Wagyu; it was called Kobe beef. This experience ignited a passion I have held to this day,” says Goodell.

He continued in the restaurant business for several years, then moved back to Wisconsin in 1987. “I lived with my mother’s parents in the southern part of the state. They had owned a small community grocery store their whole lives and my grandfather was a butcher. I was always exposed to good meat, and had a passion for cutting

meat and understanding meat, for as long as I can remember, and this was probably the reason I went to culinary school and into the restaurant business,” he says.

The restaurant business is a tough trade, however, working on weekends and holidays. “While my friends were enjoying themselves, I was working. While I was staying with my grandparents (which was a wonderful opportunity to get to know them better), I decided to go back to school and get another degree. I enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, to get an Agriculture degree.

I realized I really missed that good meat I’d been exposed to in the restaurant business, and decided to try to find some.”

He searched the internet and looked for sources, but this was back in the late 1980’s and there wasn’t much product out there yet, nor very many Wagyu producers. “The internet was just getting started. I searched all over, and by 1996 I finally found a place in Iowa—a butcher shop—that advertised Wagyu beef.

I drove all the way down there, a 6 hour drive, from Wisconsin, and bought some of that meat. The butcher shop really didn’t know what the product was; they just knew it had Wagyu influ-



MFC SANJIROU 3-39

ence. It was probably an F1 product,” says Goodell.

During the next few years he ordered a half a beef at a time from that shop. “It just wasn’t the same, however, as the meat I was exposed to in the early 1980’s, but it was still better than regular beef. Then that butcher shop told me they couldn’t get it anymore so I started searching for a source,” he says.

At this point Goodell had an opportunity to enter a partnership with a young man who wanted to get into the cattle business. “My wife and I were acquainted with a couple whose two daughters babysat for us, in the small town where we lived. They had a brother who was interested in cattle. With my culinary background, I said that if he was really interested I knew the kind of cattle he should raise. I began looking for a place to buy some live animals. This led into our partnership raising Wagyu, but first we had to find some,” explains Goodell.

Page 14 >>



Muddy Flats Full Blood Cows with Herdsire on Pasture

STARTING A WAGYU BREEDING PROGRAM

"I sent e-mails to some big Wagyu producers at that time, but nobody replied to my e-mails. This was the mid-1990's and no one seemed to want to sell any animals. Finally, about 2001, one person replied to me. It was Vic Lunenberg in Hillsboro, Ohio.

I talked to him several times on the phone and he told me he didn't raise meat, just breeding animals. I went down to see him and looked at his herd. I took along the young gentleman who wanted to raise cattle, and we looked over everything Vic had. This young man was into show cattle and when he saw the Wagyu cattle he thought I was crazy! I told him to just stick with me because I knew about the beef side of it," says Goodell.

"I worked out a deal and bought some animals from Vic. He didn't have any fullbloods; he had some purebreds, $\frac{3}{4}$ and half-bloods—a little bit of everything. I didn't know much about the registration process or the differences between the percentages.

I ended up purchasing 3 older purebred cows and some $\frac{3}{4}$ blood heifers, and 2 bull calves (that I ended up cutting) that were $\frac{3}{4}$ Wagyu. The only bull Vic had available for breeding purposes was a $\frac{3}{4}$ bull. I bought that one, not realizing that when you breed a $\frac{3}{4}$ percentage bull to a purebred cow, you are actually decreasing the Wagyu blood and going the wrong direction!" he says.

"That was the first mistake I made, but I owe Vic a lot because he got me started, and encouraged me to join the American Wagyu Association. I am still very good friends with Vic and his wife, and he is still referring people to me.

Vic was very influential because he had been on the board for a number of years and was around in the early days of the Association when the annual meeting was just 5 or 6 people in Reno or Las Vegas. He encouraged me to get involved, and referred me to Charlie Gaskin—who was the Executive Director at the time," says Goodell.

"Charlie was hard to get hold of because he was also a professor at Washington State University, but he was very helpful, and very optimistic. He also encouraged me to get involved and attend the annual meeting—which was in Omaha, Nebraska that year

(2003). After that meeting I was able to connect with more breeders and began to take it all in.

The following year was the first meeting that I really got involved, and that one was at the Thompson River Ranch at Kalispell. In the meantime I was introduced to Ralph Valdez, Ken Tew, and Jerry Reeves and they were all very helpful."

That's when Goodell bought his first Full Blood animals. He purchased a Full Blood female and Full Blood bull from Ken and Julie Tew, in 2004. "I realized that the percentage cattle weren't going to get me where I wanted to go. I also knew I couldn't get enough numbers with just Full Blood animals. I had purchased some really nice registered Angus cows from Angus producers here in Wisconsin—cows that I could either breed to Wagyu or to Angus for my kids to show at the county fair, or to use as recipients." At that time he had a lot more Angus cattle (about 30) than Wagyu.

With the Full Blood Wagyu bull, he started breeding up his own purebred Wagyu herd from the Angus, until he had about 30 percentage cows. "I eventually sold them to Gypsum Valley Wagyu 4 years ago and those became the basis of their high-quality meat production. They've grown those original animals into more than 100 cows now."

In 2004 Muddy Flats Wagyu started buying embryos, to build up their Full Blood numbers. "I bought a lot of embryos from Ralph Valdez at Crescent Harbor Ranch and he guided me along. I also bought a lot of genetics from Jerry Reeves—some embryos but mainly semen. I spent a lot of time with those breeders just talking about genetics."

In 2006 he was encouraged to run for a board position at the AWA. "I served on that board for 6 years, and for a year and a half of that time I served as President of the AWA. I have been off the board now for 2 years but I am still very active in some of the issues and talk to a lot of people. As an association we are going through changes. It has been continually evolving. If you don't stay engaged, you miss out on a lot of things."

The partnership he had with the young man to create Muddy Flats Wagyu was a rough road the first few years. "He was taking care of the animals and I subsidized our program

with money and resources and worked on the genetics, selling the meat, etc. Then he was killed in a snowmobile accident.

His parents took over his equity in our business and we continued on for 9 years. I had some other businesses including multi-family housing units, and was also taking care of all these animals. It got to be too much. I realized that what I really liked to do was deal with the cattle, so I sold off some of my other enterprises," he says.

The Muddy Flats Wagyu venture did well; Goodell created superior genetics that were in demand. With the land base suddenly gone now, however, plans are being made to end the business with a dispersal sale in October. "I could easily go buy a place, but I am in my mid 50's and I don't want to put 20 years into building up another place and by that time be in my mid 70's. My wife and I decided that this is just a good time to disperse the cattle," he says.

THE NEXT PHASE

His herd currently consists of about 66 to 70 Full Blood cows and 5 or 6 Full Blood bulls, and 45 Full Blood steers on feed. He also still has 30 registered Angus cows and another 20 crossbred cows, but these will all be sold in October. "I wish I would have had another year to really get this going, but I am trying to set up this dispersal sale to provide an opportunity for all levels of producers," says Goodell.

Some of the cows are closely related to the first animals that came to this country from Japan. "I also have some that are third and fourth generation. I am also trying to get all my Angus cows settled with Full Blood pregnancies before this sale, to possibly attract some Angus breeders who don't know much about Wagyu yet and don't really want to jump in all at once. This would give them a registered Angus cow with a Full Blood calf." A new breeder can give it a try and decide which way they want to go. There will be opportunities for everyone at this sale.

"As breeders, we need to start looking harder at the sons, grandsons and great grandsons of the imported animals. There is a big push to go back to the original imported genetics, but as a breed we really don't go anywhere unless we move beyond those animals.

They were really good genetics, but if that's all we concentrate on, we don't evolve, as a breed." It's important to keep improving, keep working toward goals.

"Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but this is one place where I disagree with a lot of breeders who just want to highlight the original animals. Some of those animals haven't been used enough and I think we do need to highlight those, but the ones that have been used over and over for 30 years—it's time to move on. The big reason we don't move on is that we have very little and very poor data on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation animals.

As a breed we always emphasize the males instead of the females and in my opinion that's another major oversight," says Goodell.

"You can change/correct a herd and make drastic changes by bringing in one bull and I understand that. As a breed you really make progress, however, if you can also concentrate on the females.

They are the base," he says.

"Many new people have become involved with Wagyu and call themselves breeders, but it is important to not just look at the genetics (the pedigrees) but also the phenotype, and also look at genomic testing including the recessive testing, etc.

Many people don't put much value on some of that testing, but it is another tool in our toolbox. It is important to go at this with a rifle instead of a shotgun. If it turns out that some of the genomic testing is inaccurate, then you can at least make a change, based on that, and can correct yourself, and the direction your herd is going," he explains.

"Genomic testing, phenotype, the genetic package, etc. are all important. Another part that many people don't address is the actual product. I feed out all of my genetics, to know what they actually produce in terms of meat. When I make a new line, I feed some out and know what they do. I also have hands on those carcasses and get to see every one of them," says Goodell.

"Perhaps I am an unusual breeder, but I follow the process all the way through, to know what I really have. There are not very many people who

Michael Goodell



The Muddy Flats Team at Work





Muddy Flats Full
Blood Steer

been very successful and am now in a position to help other breeders. I'm not saying that the guy down the road who has a completely different way of doing things isn't right, because what works for one person geographically may not work for someone else. Every operation is different."

"My philosophy is that there are people who like to ride waves and people who like to create waves. I like to create waves/trends, and excitement within the breed." This breed, like the AWA, is evolving and changing. The Muddy Flats Cattle Company Dispersal sale will be on Saturday October 21, 2017 in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

This sale will be a Live video auction, with online access for bidding. Animals will be available for live inspection before the sale, Thursday through Saturday morning, October 18-20, at the farm in Augusta, Wisconsin, 20 miles from the auction site. The sale will be managed by James Danekas and Associates, Inc.

This sale is a great opportunity to purchase a piece of the Muddy Flats Cattle Company breeding program and philosophy. The sale will include 66 Full Blood females, 5 Full Blood Bulls, and 35 registered Angus and crossbreed cows carrying selective Full Blood Pregnancies, and a few registered Angus Heifers. 🍷

<< Page 15

do that, but I think it is very important," he says.

"Although we will be selling all of our inventory, it is my intention to stay involved with the Wagyu Breed. I plan to begin offering consulting services to fellow Wagyu producers once the cattle are sold. I want to continue being involved with this breed. This will simply be a shift from doing a little bit of both to just doing consulting.

I have learned so much from fellow producers in the past, and I feel it is now my turn, my responsibility to pass that knowledge along. I want to thank Ralph Valdez, from Crescent Harbor Ranch, Jerry Reeves, from Bar R Cattle, and Robert Estrin of Lone Mountain Cattle Company, for their friendships, and their generous sharing of their knowledge and perspectives.

I owe them all a debt of gratitude. I also want to thank the AWA board members that I served with over the years, and the many friends I have made among the AWA membership," says Goodell.

"I want to help the new breeders, and hopefully help them keep from making some of the mistakes that I made. I have learned a lot, on this journey! So this is my goal for the next phase of my work with the Wagyu breed. I have been consulting and helping a lot of breeders for free, all along, because I thought it was my obligation to do that—especially those years I was on the AWA board. I've always tried to pass on a lot of information," he says.

"A lot of bad information was passed on to me when I was first getting started, whether it was special feed formulas or certain genetics you had to use or it wouldn't work, or you had to do this or that to succeed. Over the years I disproved a lot of that early misinformation. People need to back up opinions with actual data." He now has the experience to offer help as a consultant.

"I am not saying that the way I do things is the only way to do things, but I can tell people what I do and how I do it, and why I do it. I feel I have

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IDENTITY CRISIS

By Pete Eshelman



I met Mercedes and her mom Sherry at the recent Lone Mountain Full Blood Sale in Albuquerque, New Mexico (Congrats Bob, Mary & Griff.) I complimented them on the great job they are doing with their magazine, Wagyu World. It is an important platform to help expand the U.S. Wagyu industry.

I noted that while most of the focus on Wagyu has been on the production side, equal attention should be given to the culinary side. In other words, from an economist's perspective, we talk a lot about supply and not enough about demand. I offered to contribute my experience from the perspective of a Restaurateur and Wagyu Farmer. They graciously accepted, so here we go!

My culinary business, Joseph Decuis, started out as a private dining facility for my sports insurance clients, evolved into a fine dining restaurant, and today is an award winning "Culinary Destination." Thirteen years ago, we debuted Wagyu on our menu and Wagyu has become the "star" of our show. My wife Alice and I have entertained thousands of guests at our restaurants and farm.

While our farm tours are an integral part of our business they are also our R&D



Joseph Decuis Full Blood Wagyu

(research and development) and allow us to learn first-hand what consumers are thinking about Wagyu: their understanding, lack of understanding, concerns, and enthusiasm.

At our restaurant in a small Indiana town, Wagyu is the "dining choice." Wagyu represents 80% of our entrée sales (50 head a year harvested from our farm.) If we can capitalize on the potential of Wagyu in our unassuming location:

- Why hasn't the restaurant industry in America embraced Wagyu to the extent we have?
- Why hasn't Wagyu knocked USDA Prime beef out of the game?
- Why isn't Wagyu America's most sought after premium beef?

In my opinion, here's the reason: Wagyu in America has an "identity crisis." This is the elephant in the room.

To fix this we must listen to the consumer and address their needs and concerns.

Since the introduction of Wagyu into the U.S., overall, American consumers remain uninformed about Wagyu and are confused by the brand. They are barraged by a variety of names like Kobe, American Kobe, Kobe-style Wagyu, Cross-Bred Wagyu, Percentage Wagyu, American Wagyu, Full-Blood Wagyu, etc. Read Larry Olmsted's recently published book, *Real Food, Fake Food*. His chapter on "Where's the Kobe Beef?" says it all. Let's face it, U.S. Wagyu is not a widely recognized or trusted brand.

Let's be honest, the Wagyu experience in the U.S. is inconsistent. Here's an example from one of our customers. He told me his Wagyu steak at a Las Vegas casino was inferior to the Wagyu he experiences at Joseph Decuis. It

Page 20 >>

turns out that his Wagyu steak in Las Vegas was Cross-Bred (50% Angus, 50% Wagyu) and the Wagyu steak at Joseph Decuis was Full-Blood.

Even though both were labeled Wagyu they are two entirely different tasting experiences. The quality of each was great but improper labeling for the Cross-Bred created the expectation of a Full-Blood experience and thus the inconsistency and confusion.

From the consumer's perspective, there is a demand for both Cross-Bred and Full-Blood Wagyu. Both products have their unique attributes but are distinctly different experiences and must be labeled appropriately. Consumers (diners, chefs, foodies and food writers) are demanding truth in labeling and the absence of truth in labeling is a barrier for Wagyu's growth in the U.S.

The good news is - the solution is simple. We should create an industry standard for the use of the name "Wagyu" that consumers will respect and trust. The Japanese have masterfully accomplished this. At our restaurant, we have adopted the basic Japanese model and this has paid dividends for us. If it's Full-Blood Wagyu, we call it "Wagyu." If it's Cross-Bred (F-1, F-2, F-3, Purebred), we label it "Cross-Bred Wagyu" with a

disclosure as to the percentage of Full-Blood Wagyu in the Cross.

For us, this approach has enhanced the value of Cross-Bred and Full-Blood Wagyu on our menu as our dining guests know exactly what they are experiencing and enjoy becoming educated in the nuances of Wagyu. We've created a Wagyu experience similar in fashion to how fine wine is enjoyed.

Where do we go from here? I believe we need a "grassroots movement" to adopt Wagyu brand integrity. The AWA and the USDA should support this. It is proven in business that the most successful brands are those that consumers trust and respect, are consistent and have integrity. Wagyu in the U.S. should be a member of this elite group.

My final thought is this. U.S. Wagyu should be the most sought-after beef in America. We have a strong foundational virtue:

- We can produce world-class Wagyu, great tasting and healthy.

Let's add to this virtue what the public demands:

- Truth in labeling.

In my opinion, this branding approach will be our differentiator to "stardom." U.S. Wagyu consumers will have confidence in the integrity of

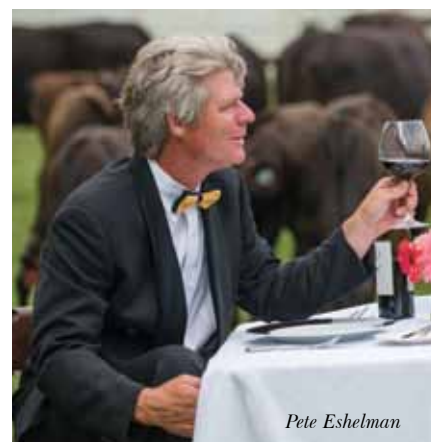
this culinary treasure. Few other beef brands will want to, or be able to, compete at this transparent level. This is how Wagyu knocks the ball out of the park.

Next article:

How our restaurant maximizes the value of the Wagyu carcass turning \$8,000 into \$40,000. 🍷

Pete Eshelman Biography

After graduating from Williams College, Pete began joined the New York Yankees and later founded two sports insurance companies which are now part of publicly held companies. Joseph Decuis, founded in 2000, is the Eshelman family culinary business and is one of the few restaurants in the world raising its own Wagyu in the Japanese tradition. Pete's favorite quote is "there is no limit to the good a man can do if he doesn't care who gets the credit."



Pete Eshelman



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Incredible flavor. Melt in your mouth. Luxury. Those are the words that drive Shane Lindsay as he has brought the unique branded beef program called Mishima Reserve from concept to creation.

Since being established by Lindsay in 2006, the brand has been building a growing reputation in America's premier steakhouses – and around the globe – as “luxury beef,” and owes its decadence to the Wagyu and Angus genetics behind the product.

“Our business has been doubling each year in recent years,” reports Lindsay. In addition to the positive client demand, Lindsay attributes Mishima Reserve's ability to expand to teaming with the expertise of chef and culinary entrepreneur Kurt Dammeier – who became a fan of the Mishima Reserve product as a customer and bought the company in 2013. (Dammeier founded Seattle's landmark steak house The Butcher's Table, as well as Beecher's Handmade Cheese and several other restaurants and artisan food brands, and was an early investor in Amazon.)

Lindsay has remained at the helm of Seattle-based Mishima Reserve, overseeing all aspects of the brand's production, development and marketing. He recently visited with Wagyu World magazine to share more about his history with the Wagyu breed and vision for the Mishima Reserve brand's future.

INTERNATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fueled by an interest in international business, Lindsay earned a scholarship in the mid-1980's to attend college in

Japan, which allowed him to become fluent in speaking and writing Japanese. He notes that at that time the Japanese market was “a big deal – much like China is today.”

Lindsay's family history also included cattle, with both his grandfather and father having ranching and cattle feedlot roots in the Western and Rocky Mountain states. Their cattle connections included affiliations with Robert Rebholtz, Sr. as he established AgriBeef. And, when the market opened in 1991 allowing the U.S. to import Wagyu genetics from Japan, Rebholtz tapped Lindsay – who had the ideal skill set – in the mid-1990's to help establish Snake River Farms Wagyu beef brand.

Lindsay was up for the challenge of building a Wagyu company – and it was indeed a challenge. He notes, “At the time, it [Wagyu] was a completely unfamiliar word; no one knew what it was.”

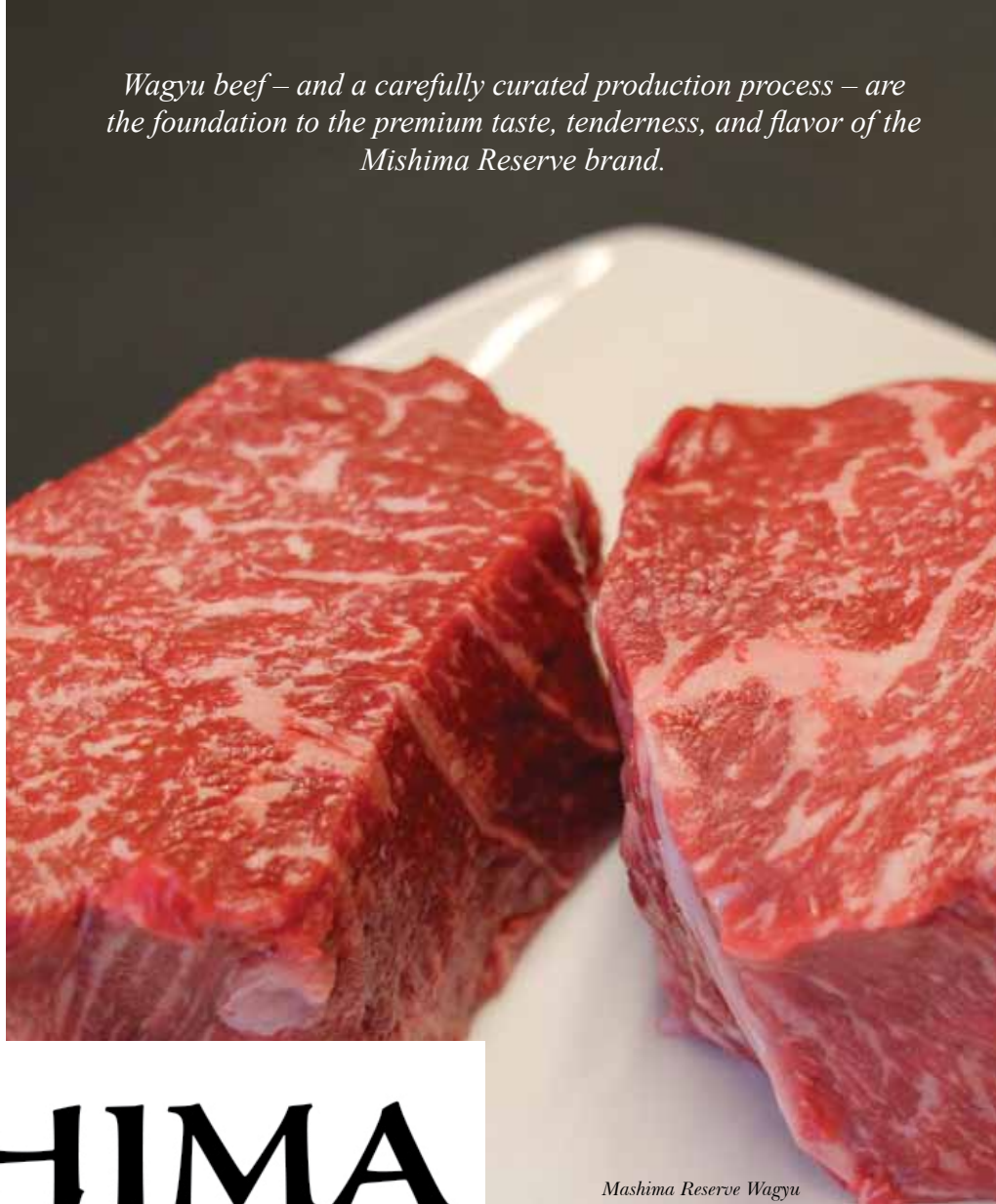
Initially, the focus of the Snake River Farms marketing model was to produce Wagyu beef in the U.S. cheaper than it could be done in Japan and sell it back to the Japanese market.

Lindsay says while that strategy was working, the Snake River Farms team eventually recognized the risk of solely selling into one market given the always tenuous global trade market. Thus, they began testing their Wagyu brand with high-end restaurants in the U.S. market – and found a new marketing model.

He explains, “We realized we were better off selling outside of Japan...In Japan, Snake River Farms was trying



Shane Lindsay



Mashima Reserve Wagyu

MISHIMA RESERVE

Luxury Wagyu Beef

EXTRAORDINARY TASTE
AND TENDERNESS

By Kindra Gordon



to be the low-price alternative to Kobe beef, but outside of Japan, Snake River Farms Wagyu beef was the top of the spectrum.”

The Snake River Farms Wagyu brand flourished – both in the U.S. and in export markets. And, in 2003, when the BSE scare closed several export markets including Japan, Lindsay says he and the Snake River Farms team were thankful they had diversified their marketing clientele both domestically and globally.

However, the BSE event did prompt changes with the Snake River Farms model being rolled into the entire Agri Beef and Washington Beef foods program. Lindsay says those changes altered the work culture and changed his job description, which prompted him to seek a separate career path.

START-UP EFFORT

Lindsay established his own Wagyu branded beef company, Mishima Reserve, in 2006. Working with cooperator herds throughout the Western states, Lindsay developed a defined production protocol identifying genetics, animal health and weaning practices. “We work with them closely on how we want our calves raised,” he shares.

The genetics focus is Angus females bred to fullblood Black Wagyu sires, creating F1 calves. “That is our model. We are not limited by the number of Wagyu females and embryo transfer is not needed.”

After being raised on pasture, Mishima Reserve program cattle are fed to finish in eastern Colorado and Western Kansas feedlots. Lindsay says he selected that region for finishing because he considers it to be the best cattle feeding region in the country. The winter weather is not as harsh as other regions and grain is abundant, inexpensive and high quality.

Ultimately, Lindsay says, “We believe the product you get with a good, well-managed F1 program yields the branded beef results we are looking for.”

He adds, “Trying to be Japanese Wagyu is not our goal. We are trying to bridge the gap between Prime and Kobe – and there’s a huge gap. Mishima Reserve delivers a better-than-Prime eating experience and that’s our goal.”

Additionally, Lindsay says Mishima Reserve fits the American palette and what people want in a great steak – a 10 oz. steak at an acceptable price point.

GROWTH GOALS

Mishima Reserve was well-received in 2006, 2007 and 2008, but the economic downturn in the later part of 2008 and through 2010 was “painful for the luxury goods industry and my customers in high end restaurants,” Lindsay reports. He notes, “I made it through, but knew I could not endure another downturn.” Thus, in 2013 when Lindsay was approached by one of his Seattle beef customers chef Kurt Dammeier about buying the company, Lindsay recognized it was too good of an opportunity to refuse.

The duo has continued to build the company and upscale restaurant clientele. While their focus is on the U.S. market and restaurants in Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Seattle, as well as some East Coast presence in New York, Washington DC and Miami, Mishima Reserve is also growing in Asian countries, Mexico and Canada.

Lindsay acknowledges that Snake River Farms is still the largest volume Wagyu brand, but he says companies ranking second, third and fourth are all pretty close. He believes Mishima Reserve is best positioned to be a strong second in the market, and notes, “Every Coke needs a Pepsi.”

Of the future he adds, “Our goal is not necessarily to be the biggest, but to be the best and focus on building integrity in the brand. We have the capital behind the company that allows us the ability to make decisions that are the best for the brand versus solely focusing on survival of the brand. Our ultimate goal is to build a brand that people can trust and that represents quality and luxury.”

Will the company ever go direct to consumers? Lindsay says Dammeier has that eventual goal, particularly having a presence in retail in some way. He notes that with Amazon’s headquarters across the street from Mishima Reserve’s Seattle home base – and with Dammeier’s early investment ties in Amazon and Amazon’s growing foray into online shopping and delivery of foods – there are likely some synergies there to be explored.

In the meantime, watch for Mishima Reserve to continue its burgeoning growth in luxury restaurants, and learn more at www.mishimareserve.com.

THE MISHIMA RESERVE PRODUCTION PROCESS

Born and bred in America, Mishima Reserve cattle from Angus females and Wagyu sires are supplied from a network of family ranches. Currently, about 20 cooperator herds based primarily in Idaho, Montana, and Colorado are involved. Some southern ranches provide supply of fall-born calves. Shane Lindsay notes that new cooperators are being added as the brand grows.

Pasture raised calves are eventually moved to feedlots in eastern Colorado and Western Kansas. Instead of the typical 90-120 day finishing period for traditional U.S. cattle, Mishima Reserve cattle are finished over a period of 350-500 days, allowing time for the meat to richly marble. The brand does not allow use of animal by-products, hormones or growth promotants of any kind.

Lindsay notes that the challenges in supplying a luxury branded beef product is a moving target. Over the last several years, high input costs and high calf prices challenged margins. More recently, a deficit of packing capacity at appropriately sized packing plants has been difficult.

In spite of those obstacles, Lindsay underscores the commitment to growing the Mishima Reserve brand both with additional cow-calf producer partners and expanding the restaurants featuring the product.

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Dam: 2013 Houston Grand Champion Female



UKB MS J84 / 84-156E (FB12434)

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Bar N

By Heather Smith-Thomas



Vince and Laurita Berland feel that they are living the American dream, doing what they love to do--and being successful in what they love to do, surrounded by family. "We have 5 children and 15 grandchildren, and are now raising Wagyu cattle on our place near Abilene, Kansas," says Vince.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Laurita and Vince both grew up on farms in Kansas, married at age 18, and during college got started in the Am-Way business. "We built it to the Diamond level and are still active in this business today," he says.

"Then 30 years ago we moved our family from Colorado Springs back to Kansas and ended up at Abilene, probably the most beautiful place in Kansas. For a while we had racehorses, but didn't do very well with that; we spent a lot of money every year but never won a race. So then we got into the greyhound business here, since Abilene is the greyhound capital of the world. This is where the national headquarters is located, and the Greyhound Hall of Fame," says Vince.

"What I learned through Amway and what I'd learned with the racehorses, I applied to the greyhound business and we became the top breeders in the entire world. We still have 1100 greyhounds. Our two sons help us with that business. Lance, the oldest, and Lynn, our youngest, run a big part of that operation but Laurita and I are still active in it 6 days a week," he says.

"We have the best brood females in the greyhound business, so we have the best dogs in the world. That's not just our idea of the best; the best is what

generates the most revenue, and what other people want. That's how you can tell how good you are—if everyone wants what you are producing. That's the only thing that counts," he says.

"Most people try to do everything cheap because they have to. That's how we spent the first part of our lives, and it didn't work. I was in the race-horse business 9 years and lost \$40,000 a year and never won a race!"

They both grew up with horses and enjoy horses. "We've never lived a day of our lives without horses," says Laurita. "We had an old pony that my dad sometimes chased cattle on. He had cattle and fed cattle and we always had a horse—though I got to chase them on foot when I was a kid," she says.

"We were so broke in college that we couldn't afford to eat beef ourselves," says Vince. "We had some pork my dad and I ground up to make sausage, out there on the farm, but we had horses in the stable eating alfalfa hay! My dad was a horse trader and we had horses around all the time when I was growing up. We raised them and I broke them. I trained horses all my life—I trained barrel horses and we rode a little bit. We weren't very good at that, but we showed horses all over the U.S. We won national titles, and enjoyed it."

He and Laurita are strong Christians. "We pray a lot, and God has blessed us. We don't call ourselves lucky, because we work about 18 hours a day. Most people work hard, but it's not just about working hard; it's also about facing life with a good attitude. When you get kicked, you get right back up again. We've gone through

some trying times, but we've also been blessed."

Vince is in the Greyhound Hall of Fame and was the youngest ever to get in. He was also on the Board of Directors of Amway Corporation. "It's been one of those miracle successes in life for two kids from western Kansas who grew up on wheat farms. It's been a dream come true that we could live the lifestyle we are enjoying," he says.

"We are risk-takers. We got married at 18, so you know we are risk-takers! We've been married 46 years, so it worked. We believe that if we are persistent and put everything into what we are doing, it will work. We've made all kinds of mistakes, like we did with the horse racing, but you just shed those off to the side and realize you aren't going to do that anymore. It's better to learn from other people's mistakes, but we've seemed to learn a lot from our own."

"Our 3 daughters all have their own businesses. Our oldest son runs a big part of the greyhound business. Lynn runs another part of that, but he's also the one who is always here at our place, helping with the cattle. He absolutely loves it, and is excited about our venture into Wagyu. Vince started with a small herd of Angus cattle 10 years ago. All of our kids and their families enjoy eating the meat, so now when we butcher we make sure all 5 of the kids get some of it. It's been a fun life.

Laurita and I are 64 years old and just bought a home in Arizona at the same time that we bought our Wagyu cattle and 2 more ranches, but I never want to retire," says Vince. "Life is just too much fun and we enjoy what we

Page 28 >>



Vince Berland



<< Page 27

are doing, and are enjoying our Wagyu cattle."

GETTING INTO WAGYU

"When we were at the Denver Stock Show in January, 2015 Laurita was going to a horse show and I was just there to go to the rodeo. I was taking my son and his new wife to see the stock show and rodeo," says Vince.

"Laurita talked me into going to see the Wagyu show. I'd raised one Wagyu calf the year before. My embryologist, Dr. Casey Barton, wanted to use all my Angus cows as recipients for embryos, for Jack Cossette at Gypsum Valley Wagyu. Jack's place is just 7 miles west, down the road from us; we live on the same road. Dr. Barton knew how nice our cows were and wanted to use them as recipients for Jack. We put in 4 embryos but only got one calf. She was about the size of a rat when she was born—very small and cute—and we called her Little Kim," he says.

"Earlier I had thought about going into Wagyu, but when I saw how small this Wagyu calf was, I had second thoughts. I still had an idea about how big the Angus calves were, and after that tiny calf was born I went out and bought another Angus bull. The next year when we were at the Denver Stock Show, I happened to sit by Eldon Clawson at the Wagyu Show. He's a big promoter of Wagyu, and we talked and talked," Vince says.

In that show, Muddy Flats Cattle Company had a lot of nice-looking

calves sired by MFC Itomoritaka 0-41 and won the show. "Those calves looked as good as my Angus calves. I told Laurita afterward that I was going into the Wagyu business. I told her that if I can raise those kind of cattle that look like my Angus and taste better, I wanted to do this," he says.

"He did tell me that cattle were the most peaceful part of his life," says Laurita. "He said he needed to do something different or get rid of the cattle because the Angus weren't making any money!"

Vince says that his Angus all look like show cows because he feeds them so well. "I still use registered Angus cows as my recip for the Wagyu embryos. Every bit of money I ever made on my Angus I put back into them in feed and they look awesome."

He left that Wagyu show in January of 2015 and started making calls to find some land and Wagyu cattle. "We only had 80 or 90 acres of grass here by our house, so Laurita and I went out and bought 2 ranches. One was a ranch we'd owned before, and sold about 10 years ago. We found out it was coming back up for sale so we bought it again. The ranch between my 2 greyhound farms and my house came up for sale at the same time so we bought it, too," says Vince.

"I bought 55 Angus heifers to use as recip for Wagyu embryos, and purchased 60 embryos from Muddy Flats Cattle Company. That was the

beginning of our entry into the Wagyu business. We had a great percentage on those 60 embryos; we ended up with 44 calves, so that was about 71% success rate. We didn't do quite as well this year, but still got quite a few calves," he says.

"If a person is going to start a business, I learned through Amway and my mentor there, that it is important to get to the very top—whatever it takes. You work as hard as it takes, because people always want to purchase something they assume to be the best. So that's what we did with the Wagyu," he says.

They went to Jerry Reeves' sale and spent a lot of money, and bought what they considered the best 4 females (2 cows and 2 heifers) in his sale. "We also bought the top heifer in the Denver Stock Show this year. She brought \$13,500 for a third of her. People think we are crazy to spend that kind of money on seedstock but if you have the best brood cows, you will have the best cattle," Vince says.

He and Laurita recently took a few more cows to have embryos put in them. "We want the best donor cows, and we want to be able to sell the top embryos and top semen. It takes a while to get there, but we just keep working at it, studying the bloodlines, etc."

Laurita says this is what Vince does best. "With everything we've gone into, he delves deeply into it, studies and reads about it, to know what works and what's best," she says.

"It's also important to have the right mentors," says Vince. "My mentors are Michael Goodell at Muddy Flats (who has been a great help), Ralph Valdez, Eldon Clawson, and Jerry Reeves, who is such a great friend. I learned in the Amway business that you need to surround yourself with the right mentors, and then you are always headed in the right direction. That's what I did in the greyhound business and for the last 20 years I have been the mentor in that business.

Literally hundreds of people in the greyhound world sought my advice and hopefully I helped them become better greyhound people. I want to eventually do that in the Wagyu business, as well," he says.

"Laurita and I would do anything for anybody. We enjoy people and enjoy entertaining our friends. We've been doing that for 45 years, ever since

we were in college. We always have people here at the house, and we've been able to build a couple nice dream homes. The one we are in at Abilene has a nice big living-room where we can sit and look out at our paddocks, buildings and hay sheds and cattle.

This is what we enjoy," he says.

"Laurita is a cowgirl and she loves to go out and help me with the cattle. She and I do the whole Wagyu thing because the boys are so involved with the greyhounds. It's fun, even though our joints and knees aren't as good as they once were, but we are never going to retire! We'll do it as long as we can still do it."

"I think the Wagyu are the most fascinating cattle in the world. They are like deer, in the way they move. If we are loading Angus and Wagyu cattle in a trailer, the Wagyu will always be the first into the trailer," says Vince. They have inquisitive minds.

"We have about 89 Wagyu, but they are always the first to do anything, no matter what you are doing—whether they are trying to get away from you or get into something. They are different from other cattle, and I like the way they move. If they take off and head for water, they will get there first. They cover twice as much ground in the same time as any of our Angus, and they are a lot better to eat!"

Laurita always tells everyone that in this business, if you make a mistake, you can eat it. "In the greyhound business we had to just adopt them out if they didn't pan out, but with cattle you can eat your mistakes."

Vince is a skeptic, and at first he didn't think the Wagyu beef could be that much better, but it is. "We always raised top of the line Angus cattle, and that's what we butchered for our own meat—and I always told everyone how good it was. It was awesome, but compared to a Wagyu, there's no comparison, especially as you get older and your teeth aren't as good! There's no tough chewing."

He met Willie Mays 2 years ago at the ball park in San Francisco. "He owned a Wagyu cow back in 1970. I asked him how he happened to get the cow. He said he won the batting title in Japan in 1969, during his final year in baseball. They gave him a car and a Wagyu cow. He sold them both, but said the cow brought a lot more money than the car! Laurita and I came home

after meeting him, and decided to give him all the meat for his 85th birthday party. We loaded up a Styrofoam cooler with Wagyu, and took it to him from our home in Arizona. So Willie Mays served Wagyu hamburgers at his party."

Vince and Laurita are still very involved with Amway, greyhounds, and cattle. "Dad always taught me, as a kid, that when you get started with something you keep going. It's also best to not have just one crop. Diversity is good because you never know when one crop might get hailed out. Always have another one planted. I learned that as a kid, and carried it through. But the Wagyu will be our last enterprise in terms of new ventures. We will do the best we can do with it." 🍷🍷



Lynn Berland



Vince and Laurita

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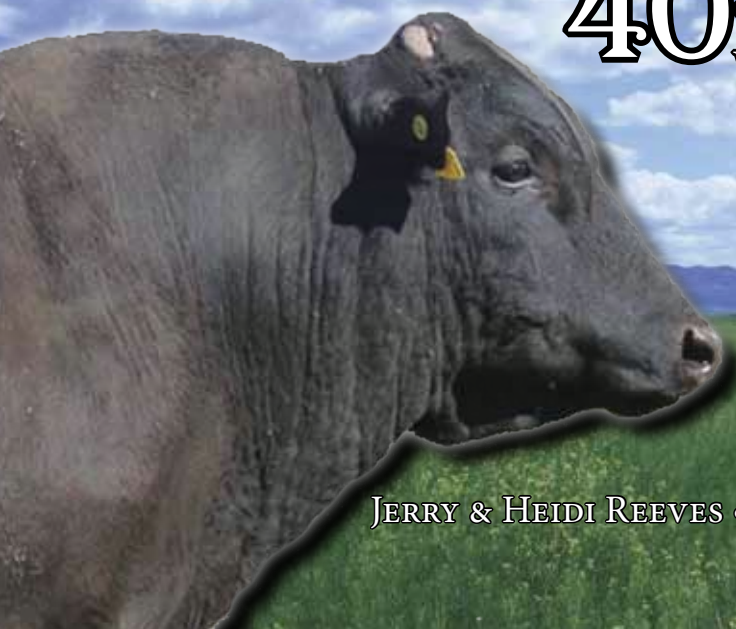
*all bulls selected from data on both
carcass and growth traits*

INCLUDING

POLLED SIRES

heterozygous & homozygous

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OUT & ABOUT

Wagyu Sales, Shows, and Other Happenings

2017 ^{Sales} Lone Mountain Fullblood Wagyu Sale ALBUQUERQUE NEW MEXICO

May 20th





Lone Mountain Fullblood Wagyu Sale

>> *The Results*

Averages

4 Bulls	Avg: \$11,625
44 Cows	Avg: \$8074
25 Heifers	Avg: \$8100
16 Cow/Calf Pairs	Avg: \$11,200

Total Gross: \$783,350

Total lots sold: 89 Avg: \$8802

Tops

FEMALES

Lot 10: LMR MS ICHIBAN 4248B, 4-21-2014 sired by LMR Ichiban 810T with a 5-01-17 heifer calf; **\$25,000** to **Brooke Pidgeon**, Homeworth, OH.

Lot 19: LMR MS ICHIBAN ½ 1292Y, 6-20-2011 sired by TF Itomichi 1/2; **\$20,000** to **M6 Ranch**, Alvarado, TX.

Lot 49: LMR MS HIRO 3442A, 5-24-2013 sired by LMR Hiro 0195X with 4-01-17 heifer calf; **\$16,500** to **M6 Ranch**, Alvarado, TX.

Lot 29: LMR MS ITOSHIGENAMI 3519A, 9-03-2013 sired by Itoshigenami TF148 with 3-29-17 heifer calf; **\$14,500** to **Jay Redlin**, Estancia, NM.

Lot 1: LMR MS ITOMORITAKA 2391Z, 8-26-2012 sired by Itomoritaka J2703; **\$13,500** to **Brooke Pidgeon**, Homeworth, OH.

Lot 5: LMR MS MICHIFUKU 5503C, 9-01-2015 sired by World K's Michifuku; **\$13,500** to **Bar V**, Abilene, KS.

Lot 20: LMR MS KITATERUYASUDOI 4217B, 3-19-2014 sired by Kitateruyasudo J2810; **\$12,500** to **M6 Ranch**, Alvarado, TX.

Lot 36: LMR MS SANJIROU 4P 2406Z, 9-12-2012 sired by Bar R Sanjirou 4P; **\$12,500** to **Bar V**, Abilene, KS.

Lot 70: LMR MS Hirashigetayasu 4232B, 3-25-2014 sired by Hirashigetayasu J2351; **\$12,500** to **M6 Ranch**, Alvarado, TX.

Lot 48: LMR MS HARUKI 1296Y, 9-11-2011 sired by World K's Harukii II with 4-21-17 heifer calf; **\$12,000** to **Jay Redlin**, Estancia, NM.

BULLS

Lot 15: LMR YOJIMBO 5335C, 6-23-2015 sired by LMY Yojimbo; **\$19,500** to **Cross Creek Ranch**, Hesperus, CO.

Lot 3: LMR HAYAO 5549C, 9-27-2015 sired by LMY Kenichi 807T; **\$10,000** to **Brooke Pidgeon**, Homeworth, OH.

Lot 8: LMR MASAHIKO 5534C, 9-21-2015 sired by LMY Masahiko 1250Y; **\$10,000** to **Michael Cutler**, Lee's Summit, MO.

The Lone Mountain Fullblood Wagyu Sale was once again a very exciting event. The event drew in folks from all over the country; both long time Wagyu breeders and new Wagyu breeders filled the bleachers. The perfect weather complimented the day, as with an exceptional Wagyu lunch highlighting the Lone Mountain Wagyu Beef Company. The auction was exciting all of the way through and cattle were sold to 10 different states and Australia. We had many visitors and bidders join us online via LiveAuctions.tv A big round of applause to everyone involved for once again making the Lone Mountain Fullblood Wagyu Sale a huge success.

Auctioneer: C.D. "Butch" Booker

Sale Management: James Danekas & Associates Inc.

Internet Venue: LiveAuctions.tv

Sales
2017 Passion for Prime Sale
SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

June 10th





Passion for Prime Sale

>> *The Results*

Averages

Bulls	Avg: \$3,900
Cows	Avg: \$4,500
Heifers	Avg: \$5,000
Cow/Calf Pairs	Avg: \$5,600
Embryos	Avg: \$580/embryo
Semen	Avg: \$206/straw

Tops

FEMALES:

- Lot 24: L7 MS SANJI 036B**, 8-30-2014 sired by SR Y13 Sanji, bred to L7 Harry, consigned by Lucky 7 Ranch, Hamilton, TX; **\$15,000** to **Midwest Wagyu**, Seymour, MO.
- Lot 21: MS SIGENAMI**, 11-05-2009 sired by Itoshigenami with a 2-26-2017 bullcalf at side sired by JR-Hiroto, consigned by Faith River Ranch, Camdenton, MO; **\$8,750** to **Joe Petit**, Charleston, SC.
- Lot 23: GAF MS HARUKI SUZATANI C15**, 8-10-2015 sired by World K's Haruki 2, bred to GAF Topher, consigned by Golden Age Farm, Lexington, KY; **\$7,500** to **Drury Cattle Company**, Cape Girardeau, MO.
- Lot 29: WAGYU 100 MS KENHANAFUJI E74**, 3-12-2017 sired by Kenhanafuji, Wagyu 100, Mineola, TX; **\$6,750** to **Ryan Bagley**, Shreveport, LA.

BULLS:

- Lot 40: GAF TOMMY C37**, 9-30-2015 sired by SSF Toby- Z278-31-225; **\$5,500** to **Ausley Family Farm**, Bismarck, AR.
- Lot 43: LUV OZZIE AKA R09C**, 5-20-2015 sired by HB Red Emperor; **\$4,750** to **Roger Keese**, Lynch Station, VA.

EMBRYOS:

- Lot 58: LAG MR HONJO MASAMUNE X LAG S1029P**, 3 Embryos, consigned by Legendary Akaushi Genetics, Katy, TX; **\$1600/embryo** to **Kathy Moore**, McGregor, TX.
- Lot 57: BRADY 2627A X LAG B1002P**, 3 Embryos, consigned by Legendary Akaushi Genetics, Katy, TX; **\$1300/embryo** to **Roger Keese**, Lynch Station, VA.
- Lot 52: SOR HASTINGS 1066 X MYERS-COOPER QUEEN S2409R**, 3 Embryos, consigned by Myers-Cooper, San Angelo, TX; **\$1000/embryo** to **PrismaGen**, Altenburg, Germany.

SEMEN:

- Lot 76: SHIGEFUKU J1822**, 5 Straws, consigned by Crescent Harbor Ranch, Oak Harbor, WA; **\$975/straw** to **Sherri Walker**, Valley View, TX.
- Lot 74: HIKAR**, 5 Straws, consigned by Crescent Harbor Ranch, Oak Harbor, WA; **\$800/straw** to **Ryan Bagley**, Shreveport, LA.
- Lot 77: MT FUJI**, 5 Straws, consigned by Crescent Harbor Ranch, Oak Harbor, WA; **\$800/straw** to **Ryan Bagley**, Shreveport, LA.

Auctioneer: C.D. "Butch" Booker

Sale Management: James Danekas & Associates Inc.

Internet Venue: LiveAuctions.tv

Save the Date **Upcoming Events**

2017

SEPTEMBER

27-29 American Wagyu Association Annual
General Meeting & Grandeur Sale
Kansas City, Missouri

OCTOBER

21 Muddy Flats Cattle Company Complete
Dispersal Sale
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

27-29 American Akaushi Association Annual
Convention
Bastrop, Texas

NOVEMBER

15 North American Livestock Exposition
Wagyu Show
Louisville, Kentucky

DECEMBER

15 A-N's Celina Cattle Company
Production Sale
Ft Worth, Texas

2018

JANUARY

16 National Western Stock Show
Wagyu Show
Denver, Colorado

17 Mile High Wagyu Experience Sale
Denver, Colorado

MARCH

4-7 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo
Wagyu Show
Houston, Texas

APRIL

20-21 Texas Wagyu Association Annual
Membership Meeting & Steaks
are High Sale
Salado, Texas

MAY

19 Bar R Cattle Company Production Sale
Pullman, Washington

SEPTEMBER

29 Vermont Wagyu Female
Production Sale
Springfield, Vermont

*if you would like to include an event within
the Upcoming Events, please contact
israel@jdaonline.com*

In the News

Texas Junior Receives Honors

Lucky 7 Cattle Ranch's Lauren Lee, incoming senior at Hamilton High School, won the prestigious 2017 Texas Cup for livestock judging. To earn this award, Lauren bested thousands of entrants when judging live cattle, sheep, swine, and goats for the overall judging season of ninety-five contests held between 6/9/16 and 6/7/17.

Lauren takes great pride in being a spokesperson for the Wagyu breed, promoting the breed at state and national conferences. Through her participation in agriculture, she has realized an unmet need for the voice of a younger generation. Her plans for the future include obtaining a dual major in Animal and Meat Science, followed by a Masters in Business Administration, from a leading Texas university where she will be an asset to their meat and livestock judging teams and using her education to further advance the Wagyu breed.



Calling All Junior Exhibitors to the N.A.I.L.E.

Calling all Youth ages 9 to 18. Get out your

show sticks and grab a calf. The Largest International Show in North America wants you! The prestigious NAILE (North American International Livestock Exposition) will host the First Novice and Jr. Showmanship classes for the Wagyu Breed.

The Novice division is for ages 9 to 18 that have never shown before. There will be 2 divisions of Jr. Showmanship, Division 1 ages 9 to 13 and Division 2, age 14 to 18. Novice entrants may also enter the Jr. Showmanship divisions. Cattle arrive November 14th and the show begins at 8 am November 15th. Prizes include Belt Buckles and Banners and a Mystery bag of GOODIES for every entrant.

If you would like more information or if you are interested in sponsoring or donating to this great event please contact Desi Cicale of Red Bull Cattle Company, LLC at (850) 619-1119 or at redbullcattle@gmail.com. Please help support this great opportunity.



PASSION *for* PRIME

Thank You



Lot 22 - GAF ITOMICHI SANJI 4D
Sold to Drury Cattle Co, MO



Lot 23 - GAF MS HARUKI SUZATANI C15
Sold to Drury Cattle Co, MO



Lot 39 - GAF ICHUTANI 10D - Sold to Rocking 711, TX



Lot 40 - GAF TOMMY C37 Sold to Ausley Family Farm, AR

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Richard & Sue Masson, Owner
Caleb Schaeffer, Mgr.



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Caleb: 989-620-6118
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This logo has been created for the use of all Wagyu breeders. If you would like to utilize this artwork to market your Wagyu beef, please contact **Mike Kerby** at: mkerby@aol.com

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THANK YOU

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BMR MS 56T-TC (FB25963)
10/02/2015

WORLD K'S SANUIROU WORLD K'S MICHIFUKU
BAR R NAKAGISHIRO 56T WORLD K'S SUZUTANI
WORLD K'S NAKAGISHI 5 KENRYU 1905
NAGAYOSHI 472016
HIRASHIGETAYASU J2351
BAR R 37R BR MS MICHIFUKU T4E 8605
BMR MS. HIRASHIGETAYASU 777 ITOZURU DOI
CHR MS KIMIFUKU 455 TF 709

SCD Fat	Tenderness
AA	5

Purchased by Ryan Bagley, LA



BMR MS. RED STAR 9007 (FB20043)
DOB 04/06/2014

KALANGA RED STAR HEART BRAND RED STAR
BV ROA RED GALAXY KALANGA HIKAHOMARE VW36
UKB MS SHIGEMARU 803 SHIGEMARU
JVP MS HOMARE HIKARI
WORLD K'S SHIGESHIGETANI
BMR MS. SHIGESHIGETANI 5 CHR MS SANUIROU 185R
BMR MS. SHIGESHIGETANI-01 CHR KITAGUNI 07K
CHR MS KITAGUNI 406 CHR MS KIKUMICHI 028

SCD	Ribeye	IMF	Birth wt.	Yearling Wt.
VA	8.2	6.21	67	638

Purchased by Steve Cattaneo, AR



BMR MS. RED GALAXY 87 (FB20000)
DOB 04/06/2014

KALANGA RED STAR HEART BRAND RED STAR
VBV ROA RED GALAXY KALANGA HIKAHOMARE VW36
UKB MS SHIGEMARU 803 SHIGEMARU
JVP MS HOMARE HIKARI
WORLD K'S SHIGESHIGETANI
CHR SHIGESHIGETANI 5 CHR MS SANUIROU 185R
BMR MS. SHIGESHIGETANI-01 CHR KITAGUNI 07K
CHR MS KITAGUNI 406 CHR MS KIKUMICHI 028

SCD	Tenderness	Ribeye	IMF	Birth wt.	Yearling wt.	Exon Gene
7		10.4	7.27	42	686	BC

Purchased by Patrick Montgomery, MO



BMR MS. HIRASHIGETAYASU 777 (FB20044)
DOB 09/29/2013

HIRASHIGETAYASU J2351 DAI 20 HIRASHIGE 287
BAR R 37R DAI 5 YURUHIME
BR MS MICHIFUKU T4E 8605 BLUE ROCK MICHIFUKU
JVP MS KIKUSHIGE 09E
ITOZURU DOI ITOZURU DOI
CHR MS KIMIFUKU 455 KIMIFUKU 3
TF 709 HIKOKURA 1/12

Purchased by Robert Fogarty, MN



BMR MS ITOMICHI (FB20005)
DOB 09/21/2013

BR ITOMICHI 0602 TF ITOMICHI 1/2
BR ITOMICHI/0602 4632 JVP KIKU SHIGE 5298E
BR MS KITATERU-9680 2611 BR KITATERUYASUDOJ 9680
WORLD K'S KITAGUNI JR.
CHR KITAGUNI 07K CHR MS MICHIFUKU 030H
CHR MS KITAGUNI 407 TF KIKUHANA
CHR MS KIKUSHIGE 012 JVP MS KIKUSHIGE 403

SCD	Ribeye	IMF	Birth wt.	Yearling Wt.
AA	9.3	7.33	48	528

Purchased by H&H Ranch, OK



BMR MS. JIRO (FB20004)
DOB 08/21/2013

JVP FUKUTSURU-068 DAI 2 YASUTSURI 774
BAR R JIRO 22T TERUYASU 6486B3
BAR R MISS 2N WORLD K'S SANUIRO
MISS BAR R 321H
WORLD K'S KITAGUNI JR.
CHR KITAGUNI 07K CHR MS MICHIFUKU 030H
CHR MS KITAGUNI 412 TF KIKUHANA
CHR MS KIKUSHIGE 013 JVP MS KIKUSHIGE 403

Purchased by H&H Ranch, OK



BMR HIKARI R1C (FB25962)
DOB 09/15/2015

HIKARI DAI 10 MITSUMARU
SUMO CATTLE CO SEISAKUSHU C221 KAZUTOMO 92958
TWA ONESAN SHIGEMARU
DAI 8 MARUNAMI J19461
HB BIG AL 502 DAI 10 MITSUMARU
COATES KAZE AKIKO
TWA MITSUNAMI SHIGEMARU
DAI 8 MARUNAMI J19461

SCD	Birth wt.	Yearling wt.	Birth date
AA	45	544	9/15/2015

Purchased by Lucky 7 Ranch, TX

Also Thank you to:

• PrismaGen, Germany

• Lucky 7 Ranch, TX

For their purchases of our embryos

PASSION *for* PRIME

Mike Kerby
P.O. Box 1692 • Warsaw, MO 65355
660-221-9225 • mkerby@aol.com
www.buckmountainranch.com



DIAMOND T RANCH

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THE PINNACLE OF WAGYU BEEF

DIAMOND T IS THE HOME TO OUR FULLBLOOD BLACK WAGYU HERD, WHERE WE ARE SETTING THE STANDARDS WITH OUR HANDS ON HERDSMANSHIP AND NUTURING CARE THAT OUR CATTLE RECEIVE ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS.

WE MAKE SURE THE NUTRITIONAL PROGRAM COMBINED WITH OUR GENETICS PRODUCE THE PRIME ENVIRONMENT SO THAT OUR CATTLE ARE ABLE TO REACH THEIR MAXIMUM POTENTIAL.

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2016 AMERICAN
ROYAL STEAK
CONTEST
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From start to finish

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available

• SEMEN

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available

CATTLE

bulls, bred & open
cows, steers

• MEAT

whole carcasses &
select cuts

FINISH

By Dr. Jimmy Horner

Most of us are very familiar with the saying, “it’s not how you start but how you finish.” This can indeed be an encouraging reminder when we stumble, try to pick ourselves up and attempt to muster the resolve to go on and hopefully, finish strong. We can also help our cattle to be able to finish strong once they enter the feedlot or finishing phase of the production cycle.

A frequent misperception in our industry is that if a producer’s cattle don’t perform or finish well at the feedlot it must be “their” fault. This can certainly be the case, but all too often the cow-calf producer may actually be the one primarily responsible for disappointing results in the finishing phase by failing to prepare their cattle properly prior to leaving the farm.

Whether a producer sends their cattle to a commercial feedlot to be finished or feeds them out on the farm, there are some basic management practices which can contribute to success during this period. Please let me first clarify that in the Wagyu industry whether producing full bloods or F1’s or anything in between, I am of the belief that producers should be focused on beef quality above all else. Our firm encourages our clientele to aim for US Prime as their benchmark or base.

I’m absolutely convinced after serving this industry for over 23 years that any Wagyu is genetically capable of yielding “Prime Plus” beef and yes, I’m even referring to Wagyu crossbreds as well. The genetics in the Wagyu breed are that good, it’s the management and care of these animals that has the most room for improvement.

We’ve learned in recent years through fetal programming research that all roads lead to the momma cow as the beginning of how much success is going to be realized 20-30 months later after her calf is harvested.

So, we’ll go ahead and consider it a given that mom will be well-cared for, fed properly and in good condition prior to calving in order to best “set the table” for her calf’s performance down the road. In addition to proper care and nutrition of the dam, some key management practices required for optimum success in the finishing phase at the farm level include a proper herd health and vaccination program, early and low-stress weaning, early and low-stress castration and dehorning, creep feeding, and feed bunk and trough training.

HERD HEALTH AND VACCINATION PROGRAM

Past US cattle industry surveys have revealed that over a third of cow-calf operations do not vaccinate calves for respiratory disease though this is the leading cause of death in most feedlots. Obviously, vaccination schedules can differ but a customized program for the herd should be implemented after consultation with a local veterinarian. Calves should also be de-wormed and studies show that de-worming weaning age calves at least 2 weeks prior to vaccinating allows them to mount a better response to the vaccine.

EARLY AND LOW-STRESS WEANING

The benefits of early weaning on eventual feedlot performance and carcass quality have been well-documented. The advantages of early

weaning with calves on Wagyu cows is even more justified when considering the milk production of most Wagyu cows. Early weaning can also lead to more rapid rumen development as well as functionality if calves are fed a high-quality starter grain.

Since a large amount of stress can be associated with weaning, techniques that minimize stress during this time may benefit both calf health and performance. Additional stress results when calves are introduced to unfamiliar surroundings post-weaning. Providing calves access to the weaning area a few days beforehand can prove useful. Corals, drylots, or “small” pastures or paddocks can serve as weaning facilities but facilities must have good fencing that will prevent nursing. Small lots haven’t the advantage of reducing fence walking or pacing.

Fenceline weaning, where calves remain in sight of and in close proximity to their dams, can reduce weaning stress. One technique involves initial nose-to-nose contact between cows and their calves followed by gradual increases in separation distance. Fenceline weaning also allows high-quality pastures to be used as weaning facilities instead of potentially dusty drylots.

Research has shown that fenceline contact with dams at weaning minimizes losses in weight gain in the days following separation. In addition, calves totally and abruptly separated from their dams did not compensate for losses in weight gain even after 10 weeks post-weaning compared to fenceline-weaned calves. Properly weaned calves result in better feed consumption and better weight gain

along with less stress.

EARLY AND LOW-STRESS CASTRATION AND DEHORNING

Castration becomes increasingly stressful as bull calves get older. Younger calves experience less bleeding, infection and weight gain depression than older ones. Younger calves also have more time to recover or rebound from the stress associated with castration. It's entirely understandable that seedstock producers may prefer to delay castration before deciding if a particular calf is a meat or breeding prospect.

But for those in the business of producing beef, castration should be performed as early in the calf's life as possible. Restraining and handling younger calves is much easier than working older, larger ones. An ideal time to castrate is during the initial 36 hours after birth and calves should be castrated no later than 3 months of age.

Though many commercial producers castrate at time of weaning, this practice is not advisable due to the amount of stress incurred. If calves are not castrated soon after birth it is best to ensure a minimum of 2-4 weeks between castration and weaning. Of the various methods available, surgical castration soon after birth works well. Though banding may seem less stressful, research does not necessarily affirm this and recent research appears to associate banding soon after birth with increased susceptibility to urinary calculi and bladder-related issues later in life.

Dehorning is pretty much a must if a producer is sending calves to a commercial feeder. Though the simplest way to produce calves without horns is through the use of a homozygous polled sire, availability of this trait in the Wagyu breed is limited currently. Dehorning method may differ by age.

Horn tissue is formed in specialized cells in a small ring surrounding the horn button. Bloodless dehorning methods attempt to destroy this ring of cells and should be performed early in life prior to significant horn growth. Mechanical dehorning can be performed at any age or size; however, stress and related complications can be lessened by dehorning at a younger age.

As with castration, it is very important to ensure that calves are properly restrained for physical dehorn-

ing. Commercial feedlots and certain preconditioning programs may require dehorning or tipping horns back to the hairline. Nevertheless, dehorned calves should be fully healed before shipment.

CREEP FEEDING

Creep feeding Wagyu calves is vital in most instances due to the below average milk yield of most Wagyu dams. Obviously, this practice is not as critical if calves are born to Angus mommas or other better milking breeds, but it is still recommended in any operation trying to produce high quality beef.

Ample research has demonstrated the benefits of creep feeding as long as the creep feed is high quality (high protein, high energy, low fiber) and highly palatable. Creep feeds may be pelleted or coarse textured, but finely ground feeds should be avoided due to reduced palatability and greater chances of respiratory issues associated with their use.

Many of our clients begin offering creep feed as early as 2 weeks of age to supplement momma's milk and to help initiate rumen development earlier in life. Some think creep feeding is only for calves after they're weaned and this practice is certainly better than not creep feeding at all, but calves should be offered a high-quality starter grain as soon after birth as possible not only to supplement nursing and to stimulate rumen development, but also to ensure the calf is on a high plane of nutrition when the initial marbling surge takes place around 3-4 months of age.

If the calf is not on a proper plane of nutrition and/or if they're severely stressed during this time, a producer cannot capitalize on this first significant surge in marbling which is lost forever and can even highly impact an individual's final quality grade at harvest. Recent research from university studies has implied that as much as 50% of a calf's final quality grade or marbling score at harvest is determined during a 6-month window (the last 3 months in-utero when pre-adipocytes or fat cells are being formed and the 1st 3 months after birth). So, the bottom line is, as much as half of a calf's future marbling potential is determined at the farm by the time the calf is 3 months old.

FEED BUNK AND TROUGH TRAINING

Calves exposed to eating from a feed bunk and drinking from a water

trough prior to finishing typically go on feed faster. Feed bunks and water troughs should be highly accessible with adequate bunk space (at least 18-24 linear inches per head). Calves should have access to clean, fresh water and a high quality mineral supplement at all times prior to entering the finishing phase.

I have always maintained that if the water is not good enough for you to drink then don't expect your calves to drink it. My dad used to be adamant about bringing 1st calf heifers into the milking barn prior to calving so they would be familiar with their surroundings after calving in order to minimize stress and exposing calves to feed bunk and water troughs comparable to those used in the finishing period is no different.

Lastly, I'm often asked by clients, "what is an acceptable death loss rate or percentage for the feedlot I'm using?" In my experience, an acceptable death loss rate should be 1% or less for Wagyu cattle in commercial feedlots. The standard for the top US commercial feedlots is 1-2% with years in which 2% death loss is realized is usually related to lighter incoming cattle.

Lighter weight cattle generally experience a higher death loss than the same source of cattle at heavier arrival weights. So, the lighter a producer's cattle are upon entrance into the finishing phase, the higher the death loss at the feedlot. Also, though many feedlots are very skilled in taking light, unthrifty cattle and "straightening them out", the best feedlot manager is still in a potentially precarious position in which he or she must work with whatever is received and in whatever shape it is in at arrival.

Incoming cattle need to be healthy, eating consistently well, in good condition, and prepared or preconditioned for the finishing facility. Producers can certainly play a critical role as to whether their cattle are adequately prepared and finish strong or not. The Wagyu breed is like no other on earth and possesses all the material required for producing premium quality beef.

The bottom line is that it is entirely up to us to allow them to attain their amazing genetic potential. Better quality, properly prepared cattle entering the finishing phase equals better results both during and at the end. 🌱

GOING TO SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2017
KANSAS CITY



AWA GENERAL MEETING

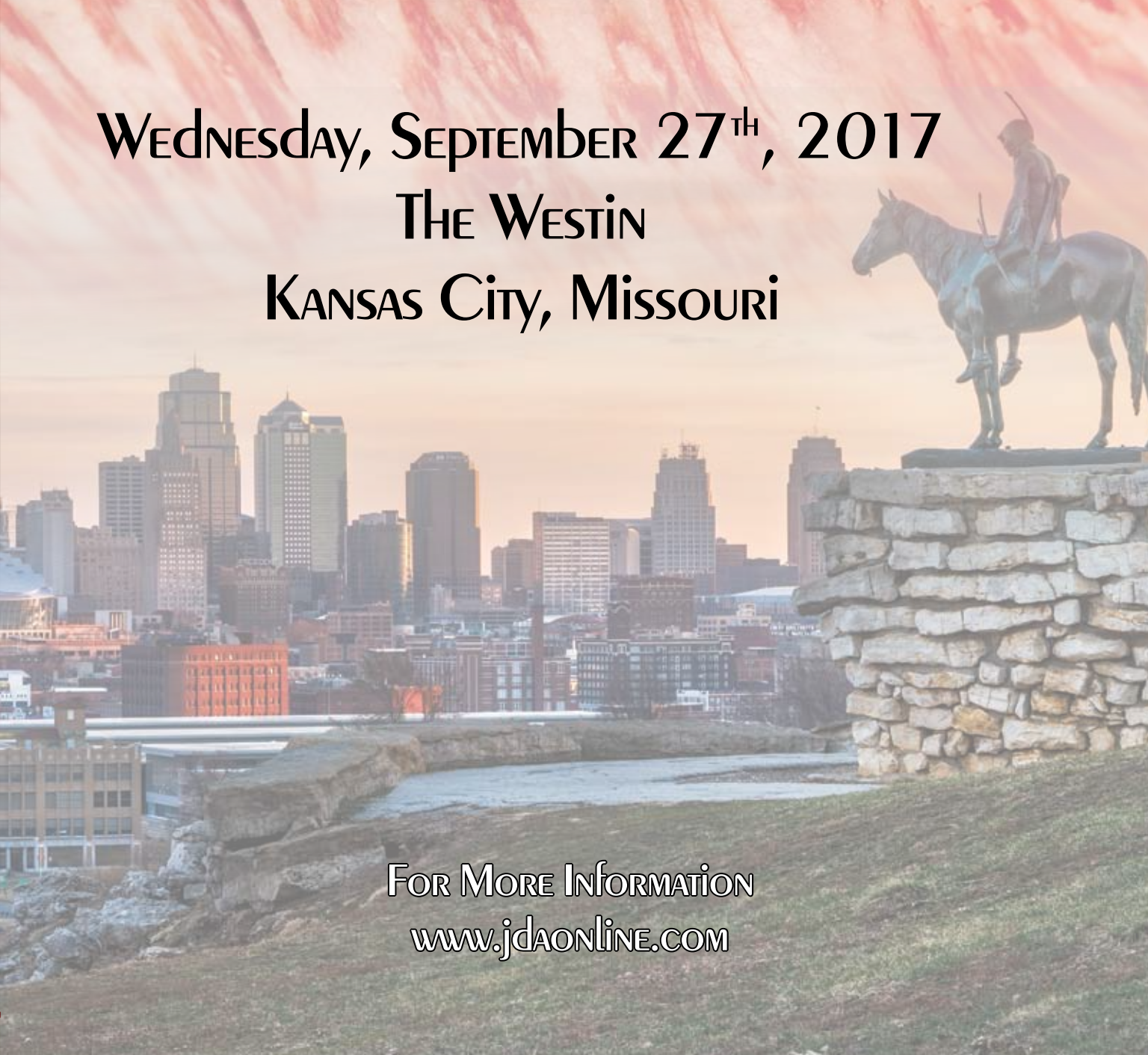


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the Kansas City edition

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2017
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The Power of Meat

By Jeri Tulley

For the past twelve years, the Food Marketing Institute (FMI), in conjunction with the North American Meat Institute (NAMI), has commissioned an annual study entitled The Power of Meat. Founded in 1976, the FMI is an American food marketing organization that conducts food safety, public affairs, education, research, and industry relations programs for food retailers and wholesalers, while the NAMI is considered to be the leading voice for the meat and poultry industry.

The NAMI's mission is to shape a public policy environment in which the meat and poultry industry can produce wholesome products safely, efficiently, and profitably. The 2017 Power of Meat study, sponsored by Sealed Air and conducted by 210 Analytics, researched industry trends and shopping habits of consumers. Findings from this study directly pertain to all cattle producers and their bottom line profits. The top ten findings as presented at the 2017 Annual Meat Conference and how they might relate to selling Wagyu are discussed below.

1. The paper circular is losing relevance to in-store and digital/social, but the concept of promotional activity remains crucial.

While slightly fewer shoppers check meat promotions pre-trip and research frequencies are down somewhat compared with prior years, meat remains a well-planned purchase. Sixty percent of shoppers check primary store promotions, and forty-six percent research across banners.

The paper ad remains the best way to drive the purchase among primary and secondary shoppers, and meat returned to front/back pages along with big picture features and hotter promotional pricing. However, trends show that increased attention should go to in-store execution of promotions and digital/mobile/social media outreach.

A significant portion of the American population has not seen or tasted Wagyu beef. To increase consumer awareness of the product and overcome the initial trial barrier, highly targeted promotional activity is extremely critical. Higher income customers, referred to as luxury shoppers, have a higher recall rate for digital ads according to Business Insider. Digital and in-store ads placed alongside other premium

products might be your best use of advertising dollars.

2. Price per pound has the greatest purchase influence, and price relief is driving increased volume and premiumization.

The importance of price is untested, but the way shoppers assign value is changing. Older generations place great value on price per pound and appearance.

Millennials emphasize total package price, having the preparation knowledge, and preparation time/ease. They also favor fixed-weight pricing over varying pack prices on a per-pound basis.

As a Wagyu producer with a premium priced product, knowing that older generations are generally more price-sensitive may lead you to focus your marketing on the younger Millennials. Adding value to your product for those younger customers through cooking demonstrations or preparation recipes and videos could drive sales.

3. Brands are one of the strongest stories in both fresh and processed meat/poultry, particularly among Millennials.

Shoppers are rewarding brands for their innovation and increasingly equate quality with brands, including national manufacturer, small/regional manufacturer, and store brands. Importantly, shoppers express interest for all three types of brands when buying fresh and processed meat, allowing retailers to build a unique mix tailored to each audience for optimal differentiation.

End consumers are demanding transparency in the production chain of their food products. They want to know exactly where the cow that gave them the steak on their plate was raised, what it was fed, and how it was treated. Telling the cow's and your ranch's story is a way to connect emotionally with your consumer and make a bond that creates a repeat customer.

4. Consumers are looking for the story of meat, and special attributes are seeing growing shopper uptake and sales.

Shoppers increasingly seek transparency into meat/poultry ingredients and production practices, fueling double-digit growth for organic, antibiotic/hormone-free, grass-fed, and other

special attributes.

Shoppers report high interest in expanded assortment of all these items as well as claims relative to better treatment of the animal/environment. Price differentials are the main barrier to purchase, while core users are relatively unaffected by price premiums — natural buyers being the exception.

Wagyu has many special attributes - its marbling which gives it flavor, its tenderness, and its health benefits. Besides capitalizing on advertising on these qualities, some producers also specialize in organic, antibiotic-free, hormone-free, grass-fed, etc. Sharing these benefits with your consumer in your advertising is crucial to selling your story and distinguishing your brand.

5. Improved shopper outreach can help foster high levels of satisfaction and drive spending and loyalty.

While the lowest-rated performance attribute, customer service and education are highly valued by shoppers — particularly personal assistance and on-pack information. Being seen as meat experts and a personal concierge who provides a curated selection of products will help secure future spending. Three-quarters of surveyed retailers are working on allocating more labor hours to the sales floor. However, eighty-nine percent say finding good people looking to make a career in meat is an issue.

According to She-economy's Marketing to Women Quick Facts, ninety-three percent of all food decisions are made by women. Pam Danziger, president of Unity Marketing's has stated, "The more mature luxury consumer places the highest priority in making memories and experiences. They don't buy thing to have more things; they want the experience to go along with it.

Luxury consumers expect superior quality and are extremely discerning." By combining those two pieces of information with the fifth finding and applying it to Wagyu, producers should tailor their education events and customer service towards women. Ideas for this might include feminine websites, online cooking classes, or exclusive dinner parties where the chefs explain the preparation techniques.

6. Meat and poultry are slowly returning to the dinner plate, but the quest for variety is driving

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switch stores, arguing for assortment optimization at the store level. Variety is also the main reason for serving protein alternatives.

While the meat case offers an abundance of proteins and cuts, buying unfamiliar meat/poultry items has a much higher trial barrier than other new food experiences. Overcoming habitual purchases through education, customer service, sampling and/or recipes can pay off through incremental dollars in meat and the total basket.

for Wagyu producers to become “the” new meal in a family’s traditions if the family is able to prepare and enjoy the product successfully. Getting the consumer to consider Wagyu for the meal is your primary challenge, and educating them to be successful in preparation is your secondary challenge to gain a repeat customer.

9. Trip trends and the growing popularity of alternative channels emphasize the importance of shopper relevance.

Meat remains a supermarket stronghold through high conversion and secondary store trips. However, trips are down for traditional channels as alternative formats pick up more of the occasional meat purchase. Millennials are drawn to alternative channels — a red flag for traditional retailers to understand and serve their different purchasing and consumption habits better.

Millennials are purchasing more and more items online, including their groceries. Grocery delivery services and meal delivery kits are becoming more popular. Luxury ingredients, such as Wagyu, are successfully selling online and being delivered straight to the consumer’s doorstep.

10. Convenience meat/poultry is poised for growth, but it’s important to address quality and freshness perceptions actively.

Identified as a future growth area by retailers, and valued by high-income, convenience-seeking shoppers, value-added meat and poultry saw robust volume increases.

Uptake is growing among the core user group, but price, quality, and freshness perceptions stand in the way of wider adoption. Better communication about grade, handling, and prices commensurate with the level of convenience may help accelerate growth. Some of the biggest challenges in selling Wagyu meat are a lack of industry standard terminology and of an appropriate American grading system on which the consumer can depend. Without these two things, the consumer has to rely heavily on a brand to provide a consistent experience. As a producer, your brand’s image is the only one of those three things that you can control. Work hard to create and retain your customers’ faith in your brand. 🍖

<< Page 45

regular use of protein alternatives.

The majority, and a growing number, of home-cooked meals include meat/poultry and protein choices shifted along with price changes.

But three-quarters of shoppers prepare meat alternatives at least once a week, with growth for fish, eggs, and plant-based proteins. Protein continues to be a popular claim; however, it is not leveraged exclusively nor optimally by the meat industry.

Simply touting the benefits of animal-based protein and how much protein Wagyu provides might be an advertising angle that would attract customers. Expanding variety in your product line (burger, ribs, stew meat, roast, etc.) to interest current customers and attract other customers who are more price-sensitive with your lower end cuts could increase your bottom line.

7. Thoughtful curation of the meat case tailored to shopper needs, trends, and innovation can drive incremental sales.

Variety is one of the top reasons to

Purchasing an expensive cut of beef from an unfamiliar breed of cattle (Wagyu) is a very high trial barrier for customers. Understanding this, producers can do several things to make that easier on customers. First and foremost, offer familiar cuts. Second, include detailed directions on the package for preparation, and, third, have someone available to answer questions either in person, over the phone, or online.

8. Selling meat as part of a total meal solution prompts interest for everyday and seasonal meal occasions.

Thinking like the shopper by positioning fresh meat as part of a total meal solution versus meal component piques shopper interest. Ready-to-prepare meal kits in the meat department draw interest among fifty-three percent of shoppers.

Meat-inspired events and high-quality meal solutions for secondary holidays may be other ways to drive incremental dollars and volume. Consumers are more likely to splurge on specialty ingredients for holiday meals. This presents an opportunity



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Advertiser's Index

A to Z Feeders	46
American Livestock Mortality Insurance	48
American Wagyu Conference.....	42
Bar R Wagyu	31
Buck Mountain Ranch	38
Celina Cattle Co	11
C.D. "Butch" Booker	37
Colorado Genetics.....	48
Diamond T Ranch.....	39
Drury Cattle Co	21
Emerson Cattle Co	30
Golden Age Farm	37
Grandeur Frozen Genetics	43
JDA	47
Legendary	51
Marble Ranch	52
Midwest Wagyu	25
Mile High Wagyu Experience Sale.....	50
Muddy Flats Cattle Co	3
Passion for Prime.....	30
Protocol Technologies.....	2
Rancher Lives Matter	49
TAI Ranch	10
Todo Santos Creek.....	48
Vermont Wagyu.....	17



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