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September / October 2020

Volume 6, Number 6

14 RANCH REACH

Subtilia

We visit with Wilco Onderdelinden and learn about the steps he has taken to produce a very high end product that not only represents his program well but is a great example for the entire Wagyu breed.

>> *By Ronda Applegarth*



18 MARSHALL'S DAILY DISH

Wagyu Texas Cheesesteak

Wagyu brisket, Texas toast and cheese...need anymore be ssaid. Check out the latest recipe and if you're not hungry, you will be.

>> *Chef Marshall Johnson*



EDITOR'S LETTER 8

PUBLISHER'S POST 9

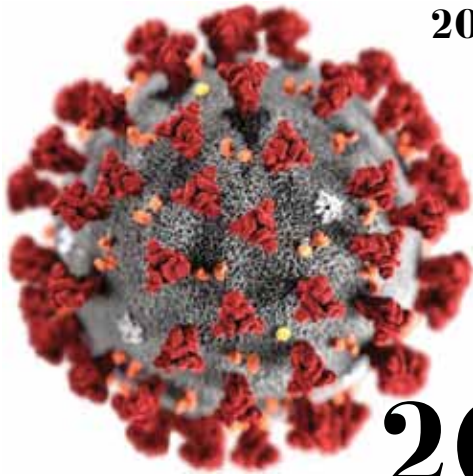
CONTRIBUTORS 10

CONNECTIONS 36

INDEX 29

COVER>>

*Courtesy of: Landgraf Ranch
Location: Red Rock, TX USA*



20 MARKET MATTERS

Wagyu & COVID

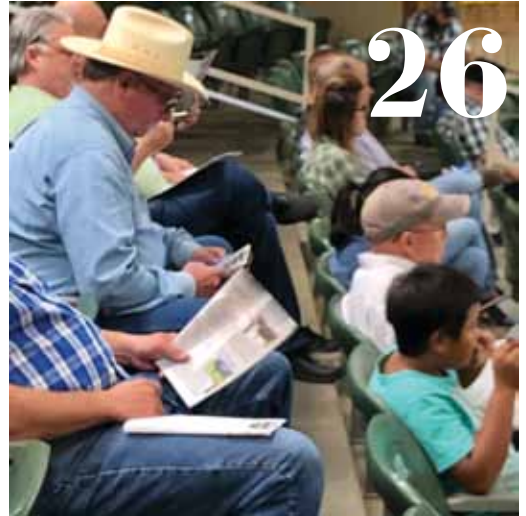
The current pandemic has affected everyone in some way, but how has it changed the Wagyu beef market. We ask some of the larger producers to see how and what they have done to roll with the punches.

>> *By Heather Smith-Thomas*

20

26 OUT & ABOUT

This issue includes the Passion for Prime sale results, the Wagyu breed's very exciting upcoming events as well as some important information from the AWA including details around the new genetic recessive disorder that has been discovered.



26



32

32 RANCH REACH

Landgraf Ranch

The story behind a successful businessman's journey to becoming a cowboy raising high end Wagyu beef and genetics.

>> *By Heather Smith-Thomas*



38 HEALTH & HUSBANDRY

ACCUBREED

With so much embryo transplant and AI work that takes place, just imagine getting a phone call to let you know exactly when to breed and transplant. Imagine no longer because the technology is out there and ready to be put to use.

>> *By Jeri Tulley*



38

VIRTUAL

VIRTUAL: NOT PHYSICALLY EXISTING AS SUCH BUT MADE BY SOFTWARE TO APPEAR TO DO SO

OK, is it just me or is everyone else tired of the word virtual? Virtual this and virtual that. I know it's due to the current pandemic and all but word on the street says that it may be the new norm. When we analyze the definition of the word, it's more or less saying nicely that it is something that is fake, made to appear to be real by computers. If this is our new norm, then I'm out. I know computers make each day possible these days, which is sad unto itself, but if this is the new norm for school, work and conferences, then what's next? Being fake isn't my style in any way shape or form and I'm protesting this new ideal set forth within our society. I'm already frowned upon by not allowing Wi-Fi into my home; I believe in being "old school" and staying human. I'm blessed that I live on a ranch and have a rural lifestyle; a lifestyle that cherishes interactions, worshipping together and where a face to face conversation and handshake means more than a 5 hour Zoom meeting. Good luck out there folks and God bless the younger generations.



Mercedes Janes-Jahoe

APPRECIATE WHERE YOU ARE IN
YOUR JOURNEY EVEN IF IT'S NOT WHERE
YOU WANT TO BE. EVERY SEASON
SERVES A PURPOSE.
~UNKNOWN~

Today is not a great day, and neither has the last two weeks been all that terrific. Living in California does come with a lot of pros and cons. Currently, as I write this piece it is 100 degrees out with a north wind pushing us with gusts up to 50 miles per hour, and it is impossible to distinguish the smoke from the dust. There are fires burning all over the state, and quite frankly the whole west coast is dealing with some kind of wrath from Mother Nature or cities being torn apart by strangers who don't even reside in them. Through this entire pandemic I've worked diligently to maintain what I would call a positive attitude; and well, I'm sad to say that is wearing thin at the moment.

It is heart-wrenching to watch friends businesses and restaurants that they have had for years being forced to shut their doors. Even sadder yet is watching videos of riots happening in so many American cities and once again strangers to their communities come in and in one night, destroy what has taken years to build. I know eventually the fires will be contained, and to November 2nd to see what road our country will be on. In the meantime, the good news is the Wagyu sales have certainly been looking up and I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events. In October be sure and book reservations for the Vermont Wagyu sale on October 24th; it will be beautiful there! In Florida there is the Sunshine State sale, and at the end of November be sure and get ready for Buck Mountain Ranch's The Final Chapter sale in Springfield, Missouri.

I'm working hard to find the bright side of things and quite honestly it's just wonderful conversations with friends and the small things that make a day "a good one", like the sound of my grandson's laughter coming through the windows of our office. I will keep looking forward to sitting down in a restaurant again with friends and shopping without waiting in long lines.

One more thing, we're pleased to introduce a new writer to our magazine, fellow Wagyu breeder Ronda Apple-garth. We are very excited to have her join us!



Sherry Danekas - Publisher



P: (530) 668-1224

W: www.buywagyu.net

M: P.O. Box 8629

Woodland, CA 95776

Publisher: Sherry Danekas

sherry@jdaonline.com

Editor & Advertising: Mercedes Danekas-Lohse

mercedes@jdaonline.com

Circulation/Subscriptions: Morgan Fryer

morgan@jdaonline.com • (530) 668-1224

Design Department: Israel Robinson

israel@jdaonline.com • (530) 668-1224

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DISCOVERY

This Issue's Four Contributors Share Themselves With Us.



MARSHALL JOHNSON

*Wagyu Breeder / Chef
Restaurateur*



Pumpkin spice is my...not my favorite!!

This fall I'm looking forward to...breaking ground on an exciting project that we have been working on for years!!

When it comes to a COVID 19 mask, I prefer...non election years!!



JERI TULLEY

Writer



Pumpkin spice is my...signal that fall is around the corner. Everywhere you look, places start to advertise pumpkin spice this and pumpkin spice that. At the moment though, it is hard for me to crave a warm, creamy pumpkin spice latte when it is 105 degrees in Texas.

This fall I'm looking forward to... cooler weather and spending more time outside on my back porch. With a hammock, a hot tub, and a rocking chair shaded by trees with hummingbirds buzzing by and with views of my cows grazing in the surrounding fields, it is my outside escape.

When it comes to a COVID 19 mask, I prefer...to see people wearing them and wearing them correctly. The mask is supposed to cover your mouth AND your nose. Since COVID 19 is a respiratory disease, leaving your nose uncovered defeats the whole purpose.



HEATHER SMITH-THOMAS

Rancher/ Writer



Pumpkin spice is my...has a great smell and brings back fond memories of the pumpkin cookies my mom used to bake and send to me when I was in college.

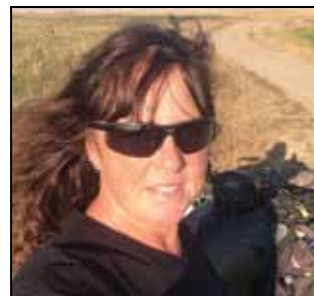
This fall I'm looking forward to... getting the calves weaned and sold and their mothers trailed to our upper place for fall pasture on the mountain. I'm hoping for a nice long fall before winter sets in—with the irrigation finished, and the summer work done, and a lot of good days before we have to bring the cows home to start feeding hay. Riding up there on our mountain to check cows in that peaceful, beautiful mountain pasture, before the snow gets deep and the frozen hillsides create treacherous footing, is one of my favorite times of year.

When it comes to a COVID 19 mask, I prefer...don't have one. I haven't been to town since before COVID reared its ugly head (when my husband and I attended the high school play early this year, to watch our grandkids perform in Beauty and the Beast). When I finally went to town the end of August for an eye doctor appointment, I wasn't required to wear a mask. I don't plan on leaving the ranch again any time soon.



RONDA APPLGARTH

Wagyu Breeder



Pumpkin spice is my...favorite! Fall is my favorite time of the year.

I love all the flavors that go along with it.

This fall I'm looking forward to...a hunting season. I come from a family of avid hunters. We hunt for deer and elk in both archery season and rifle season in Oregon and Montana.

When it comes to a COVID 19 mask, I prefer...not to wear one. Fortunately, I spend most of my time with cattle and they don't mind.

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In 2013, Wilco Onderdelinden and his wife Femke set out on a new adventure. Wilco retired from his career as the CEO of a wealth management company. He sold the company and they left their country and immigrated to Princeton, British Columbia, Canada and bought a ranch. They literally started with a blank page, arriving with no friends, no family and knowing no one in their new homeland. Wilco knew he wanted to do something with the ranch or there was no sense in even buying it, so he started his research. He noticed that most ranchers in his area were doing “the same old thing” with Herefords and Angus. Having traveled to Japan some in his business life, he knew about and was impressed with Wagyu and the course was set. Wilco had no previous experience with cattle but was determined to develop a program that would provide the best possible beef available. Not certain at first which Wagyu he wanted to concentrate on, he purchased some red embryos because he preferred the color. As his business grew and developed, he found that the gene pool for Akaushi is very limited and decided to move away from the reds and settled into a solid fullblood black program providing not only beef but quality frozen genetics.

When asked about bloodlines, Wilco said he looks at maternal lines to make decisions. He credits Ken and Kevin at Wagyu Sekai for their ongoing help and advice in making mating selections. He likes Suzutani, Rikitani and Okutani and feels like he’s achieved his goal of having those great bloodlines in his herd. He likes the proven sires that are available to him here in North America and also incorporates some of the newer sires from Australia as well. He mentioned that he will have calves on the ground shortly that are sired by Itoshiganami Jr. sons. Wilco noted

that when you’re doing something with Wagyu, it takes a good three years to know whether you’ve made a correct decision or not. Thankfully, with DNA and genomics, it’s easier to make a “guestimate” for mating selections. You can only sell genetics if they’re proven and you can only prove them if you eat them.

With regard to marketing, Wilco has found that there is a “pre” and “post” COVID world of sales. Prior to the pandemic, he was selling most of his beef to high end restaurants in British Columbia. During that time he’d find himself always sold out. When restaurants were closed by COVID, Wilco

chose to look into a retail option and online sales. After building an online site and advertising on social media, he offered beef for sale online for the first time. Within a matter of only two minutes of his first release, he was sold out. He soon realized that he’d offered his product too cheaply and went about modifying his pricing model. Now he has a waiting list of customers that want to purchase his high quality beef.

Wilco’s cattle are in his program from birth to harvest. Calves are weaned at six months depending only on season due to the potential of severe Canadian winters. They are fence line weaned to reduce stress on the calves

during that time. He hand selects high end heifers for replacement and the rest of the calves go into his feeding barn at around fourteen months of age. In the barn the cattle receive what Wilco calls “a tweaked Jimmy Horner program”. Canada restricts some of the commodities that the Horner program calls for so Wilco has modified his ration in accordance. He’s fine-tuned his ration and is very happy with his results.

His calves are fed for around 500 days so they are harvested between 30 and 34 months old. He’s seeing carcass weights of between 1100 and 1300 lbs on his steers. He attributes his impressive hanging weights to the idea that the cattle tend to eat more in the cooler climate. He recalled harvesting an older cow at one time that weighed 2200 pounds on the hoof. He laughed when he shared that she wouldn’t fit in his squeeze any longer but noted that she tasted fantastic. Wilco starts harvesting in April and tries to have the last of the cattle to the harvest facilities in November so everything is done for the year before the poorer weather sets in.

When asked if he does all the work himself, Wilco explained that when he set out on his new endeavor, he decided that if he couldn’t do the work

SUBTILIA, IS THE
LATIN TRANSLATION
OF HIS LAST NAME,
ONDERDELINDEN. IT
MEANS “UNDER THE
LINDEN TREE”



SUBTILIA

[ˈLATNɪ]
UNDER THE LINDEN TREE

By Ronda Applegarth





<< Page 15

himself, he wouldn't do it. This creates a situation of limited production even though there have been several opportunities to go bigger. Currently Wilco's operation includes about 30 head of fullblood cattle but he plans to expand in the near future to closer to 50 head. He has new ideas for the online store as well. In addition to the Wagyu boxes already available, he's broadened his beef offering to include hamburger patties seasoned with spices imported from his homeland, the Netherlands as well as Wagyu dumplings, jerky, pepperoni and sausages.

Recently he's met with a potential partner in Vancouver who could be a player in the expansion of Subtilia's ability to offer a bigger supply of Wagyu beef. This possible partnership would create a sub brand for the beef portion of the operation and free Wilco up to concentrate on the mother cows, breeding decisions, feeding decisions and the genetic portion of the ranch's operations. His leading goal is to offer the finest frozen genetics in North America and he strives to be

in the top five providers of exceptional Wagyu embryos. He credits Mayura Station in Australia as an inspiration and an exceptional model for Wagyu breeders.

Wilco feels like there needs to be

significant consumer education with regard to this breed. In talking to potential customers, he's realized that many people have no idea the differences between F1 and fullblood Wagyu. He's frustrated that F1 cattle

can be sold as Wagyu and differentiates his cattle by calling them "REAL Wagyu". He's a strong proponent for truth in labeling and feels it should be mandatory. With his European background, Wilco has noticed stark differences in the attitudes of consumers. He feels like Europeans tend to be more of an "eating culture" and are willing to pay a bit more for a superior product. In contrast, North Americans tend to reach for quantity over quality for a fuller stomach. He tries to teach people how to cook Wagyu as well with his favorite method being sous vide.

Subtilia Ranch has matured since its inception with a solid vision going forward. Wilco's grasp on the time it takes to create a superior product coupled with his patience and in depth research on genetics projects a bright future for Subtilia's program. 🍷





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- MIX WELL AND STORE IN AIR TIGHT CONTAINER.

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PEPPER JACK CHEESE WHIZ

- 2 TBSP SALTED BUTTER
- 2 TBSP FLOUR
- 1 CUP MILK HEATED
- 1 CUP PROVOLONE PROCESSED CHEESE (SUB SHREDDED WHITE AMERICAN)
- 1 CUP SHREDDED PEPPER JACK CHEESE
- WATER TO THIN SAUCE AS NEEDED

HEAT SMALL SAUCE PAN HEAT MILK WITHOUT BRINGING TO A BOIL. HEAT ANOTHER SMALL SAUCE PAN TO MEDIUM HEAT. ADD BUTTER UNTIL MELTED THEN ADD FLOUR. USING A WHISK STIR MAKING A BLONDE ROUX. COOK WITHOUT BURNING FOR 4-5 MINUTES. SLOWLY WHISK IN HOT MILK. WHISK UNTIL MIXED. SLOW STIR BRINGING TO A SIMMER. SIMMER FOR 4-5 MINUTES. SAUCE SHOULD COAT A SPOON AND BE SMOOTH. REMOVE FROM HEAT WHISK IN SHREDDED CHEESE. MIX UNTIL CHEESE IS MELTED. USE 1 TBSP OF WATER AT A TIME IF NEEDED TO THIN TO A CHEESE WHIZ CONSISTENCY. SET ASIDE KEEPING WARM.

GRILLED PEPPERS AND ONIONS

- MIXED COLOR SWEET BELL PEPPERS SLICED THIN
- YELLOW SWEET ONIONS SLICED THIN
- BUTTER
- SALT AND PEPPER

SAUTÉ PEPPERS AND ONIONS WITH BUTTER SEASONING THEM WITH SALT AND PEPPER TO TASTE.

WAGYU TEXAS CHEESESTEAK ASSEMBLY

TOP BUTTER TOASTED TEXAS TOAST WITH SLICED BRISKET. TOP THE SLICED BRISKET WITH MIXED GRILLED PEPPERS AND ONIONS THEN TOP WITH GENEROUS PORTION OF THE HOMEMADE PEPPER JACK CHEESE WHIZ !! GRAB SOME PAPER TOWELS AS IT COULD GET MESSY AND ENJOY!



Photography by Hillary Johnson



DIAMOND T RANCH

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by Chef Marshall Johnson

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WAGYU &

COVID

Impacts on Meat Marketing

By Heather Smith-Thomas

When the pandemic hit this country and disrupted supply chains for meat—with shut-downs and slowdown at major packing plants—there were many empty shelves in grocery stores, or limits on how many packages of meat a customer could buy. Some people tried to find other sources of meat and more consumers looked into buying direct from producers. The market disruption had an impact—both negative and positive—on Wagyu producers.

LONE MOUNTAIN WAGYU

Reid Martin (Chief Operating Officer, Lone Mountain Wagyu) says their meat business was affected in several ways. “We have a fullblood Wagyu operation (no F1s or crossbreds). We operate in a very small niche in the beef market. Before COVID started, we had a direct-to-consumer web business established. We also had a few partner websites that were already established, and some direct-to-restaurant business which we were moving away from at that point in time. We also had some distributor sales to food services.”

What he saw happening after initial shut-down of the economy was a big pickup in the direct-to-consumer sales. “We had more orders and were selling more than twice as much as we’d been selling, per month, starting in April. At the same time we saw a decline in restaurant sales because they were all closed. The food service distribution already had existing inventories that they’d brought in, ahead of COVID.

“We already had our orders set up before the news about COVID, but by April it was clear that the food service businesses had slowed so much that they were not coming back for more orders. There was a big shift to web sales, across the board, with our website and partner websites. This helped

make up some of the difference,” says Martin.

“We also saw an increase in ground beef sales and different parts of the carcass like shoulder meat, trim, etc. that would be used for ground beef. We did a lot of promotions on our website, in terms of getting packages together for home consumers, and there was a lot of interest. The most interest at that time was in the lower value cuts because some people couldn’t get meat at the grocery stores,” he says. There was also more demand for packaged goods like jerky and raw beef sausage.

There were some scheduling challenges with processing; many meat processing businesses had labor issues with COVID,

and it was harder for some producers to get carcasses processed in a timely fashion.

"We focused more on e-mail marketing and social media, building up our direct-to-consumer business. Previous to this, we'd been aggressively going after more food service distribution. So for us it was a big disruption and change from what we'd been doing before," says Martin.

"Overall it was not great, but we were lucky because we already had the e-commerce in place with web sales. Some small

helped us, since we've not had to lower our prices much. There is a lot of demand for our meat and for other Wagyu products, and even more demand for Prime and cheaper cuts, since many people are just trying to feed themselves," he explains.

"We operate 100% domestically; we don't export any of our meat so we haven't been impacted by any of the foreign market issues. Some producers are affected by imports and exports, but we are not involved with that business. We've also been lucky

to raise our own bulls," he says.

"I think we've done a good job improving our genetics. I can harvest our animals now at 22 months of age, at 1400 pounds, and have fantastic meat. Our bulls are starting to look a little more like men, and not quite so dainty! At first they were back-pasture cattle and we didn't want anyone to see them," Cade says.

Since then, the A Bar N team has focused on growing the herd and perfecting their beef. "We worked hard to achieve superior marbling by continually enhancing our genetics and feeding." To do that, the ranch acquired the best Japanese and Angus genetics available, providing optimum marbling, tenderness, flavor and health benefits.

"When COVID first hit, it was a huge blow to our business. We lost all of our restaurant sales, and that was scary; it changed everything we'd been working for because the restaurants were shut down and we didn't know how long that was going to last. We were scrambling, trying to decide what we should do," Cade says.

"Our restaurant sales had been so good that we hadn't concentrated very much on our online sales. We hadn't completely quit our online sales, but we'd cut them way back, about two months before COVID. We'd shifted a lot more into our restaurant sales," he explains.

After about two weeks of the pandemic, the ranch began receiving requests for meat. "People in north Texas knew about us, and there was a big shift; our online sales exploded, along with more sales to butcher shops and places where people could pick up beef locally. Our business really picked up, though we still had a fair amount of meat that we needed to sell," Cade says.

"This helped us get back in the game, and then when restaurants started doing take-home prepared packages, it also helped. Their customers could pick up a meal and take it home to heat up or just need 20 minutes to cook it. We figured out how to keep our meat sales going and now they are

"There was a big shift to web sales, across the board, with our website and partner websites."

producers who were just doing direct-to-consumer sales did well and were sold out, but it was a big shift for us because we had previously been selling a lot of our meat to restaurants. We've maintained those relationships, however, in hopes that when things open up again we can be well positioned to resume that business. We won't be ending our food service business; we are just trying to balance it all," he says.

One of their food service distributors has an online component that sells to home consumers. "Their business improved on that end (e-commerce), while the restaurant business went down. We felt pretty good because through the end of June our sales had been good, though now we are seeing a bit of slowdown on the web; perhaps people are a little more cautious about what they are spending money on, with all the uncertainty today," says Martin. Most of the restaurants Lone Mountain works with are in cities and are either still closed or reopened in a diminished take-away mode.

"Right now it seems like people are buying more staple goods, though some are still seeking out Wagyu. There's been an increase in retail and on-line sales of Wagyu because of COVID, but in terms of how much was being sold in restaurants before this happened, it's been a big change. Those sales took a big dive, and when those restaurants do come back, they'll be trying to figure out whether they want to do more take-away and lower price items than before COVID," he says.

He reminds people that in the months before COVID hit, business was going very well for restaurants, so this was a big change. "There are always labor and cost problems, but not having customers was not a big issue, until the pandemic. The whole food service business was pretty far up the ladder, and then took a huge fall."

Martin feels there are potential opportunities that will come out of all this, that have not yet been realized. "Cattle prices have been really down, but this hasn't affected us very much because we're not in that market. Beef prices have stayed high, which has

in that we've been able to get all of our cattle slaughtered and processed. We've not experienced any blips that way. We send ours in batches, so we are not slaughtering every day or every week. This makes it easier because if there are scheduling issues we can work around them," he says.

They had conversations with all their employees about social distancing and good habits on the ranch. "Even though there have not been a lot of COVID cases here in New Mexico, we've been proactive about trying to keep everyone safe, and have been successful, so far."

A BAR N RANCH

Cade Nichols (A Bar N Ranch, north of Dallas, Texas near Celina) says 90% of their business and beef sales was to restaurants. "We raise our own cattle from birth to harvest and retain interest all the way through to boxed and selling it to restaurants." His family has been in the cattle business and farming for a long time. The A Bar N Ranch is owned and operated by Gregg Allen and Van Nichols and began as a cow/calf operation in June 2005 to more effectively utilize land assets in north Texas.

"We switched to Wagyu about 12 years ago and I thought my family was insane! At that time we teamed up with the Allen family to get into Wagyu and build this enterprise; the ranch name is a combination of our two last names (Allen and Nichols)," Cade says.

Their ideas about raising cattle changed after experiencing their first Wagyu steak and learning about the benefits of the breed. "At first I thought these were the ugliest cattle I'd ever seen, but they sure taste good! When my dad told me we were going to try this new thing and breed about 100 of our cows to Wagyu bulls--and I saw those bulls--I didn't think we should even put them out with the cows. But now we have 200 head of registered black fullbloods. We got involved with breeding stock basically

"We've seen a real change in our dynamic and I think it will eventually help us in the long run."

doing well again and we hardly have any surplus on the shelves anymore," he says.

"Our sales and marketing team, headed by Katie Allen, went to work and did an unbelievable job to get us back on track," says Cade.

There was a huge demand for meat when people could no longer get what they needed at the grocery stores and couldn't go to restaurants; they were desperate to find places to buy meat. "Our hamburger sales have been unbelievable. Even cuts like chuck that are normally up and down

on sales were being used in restaurants. A person could buy a meal for 4 to take home. There are a lot of city people who don't have freezers and don't even know how to cook anymore. They were glad to be able to go to a restaurant and pick up a dinner that would be easy to prepare," he explains.

"We've seen a real change in our dynamic and I think it will eventually help us in the long run. We already have a good relationship with many restaurants and now many other people have reached out and found us. We are selling more meat online and more to butcher shops—and places here and there that started buying a lot of meat. We've also had more people call, wanting to buy a half or a whole beef. We've always done a little bit of that, but the problem right now is getting the beef processed," he says. There are so few federally and/or state-inspected processing plants and small local custom processors were overwhelmed by numbers of animals that people wanted to process. There have been waiting lists and long wait times.

"We had a standing order for our main products, at a big processor in Fort Worth and luckily we could still get our animals harvested. We've been with them for a while and every Wednesday we had a harvest day. For individuals, however, like if you called me and wanted to buy an animal to harvest, there would be a long wait," says Cade.

"About the time COVID started, I called our processor and got two dates to get some animals harvested just for our family. A week and a half later I called in and they were ready al-

booked four months out. I actually took our cattle in on July 23rd. I called them two months ago and they were booked 9 months out. If we could have gotten into the small processing businesses, I could have sold every animal to individuals!"

The pandemic scared everyone. "We went from good weekly sales to nothing. Those first two weeks, literally nothing. Then sales started picking up and in 6 weeks we were back rolling again. We just had to find a new platform and go from there." It was a good thing that there was great demand for the product; it was just a matter of finding a way to get it to the people who wanted it.

"Luckily our processing plant hasn't been shut down. They had a few light shifts be-

"Now we have reversed our channels in terms of how we sell; we now sell almost 100% of our meat via e-commerce sales."

cause they had some concerns and wanted to wait and get tests back on some of their employees, but they didn't completely shut down. That's our biggest concern, because if they shut down, that would shut us off," he says. Things are going well at this point in time, however. "I recently took some cows in for harvest, and as long as our processor keeps operating, we will keep operating. We are bouncing back. We harvest about 75 cattle per month," Cade says.

VERMONT WAGYU

Sheila Patinkin founded Vermont Wagyu in 2007 and now her herd is fullblood Japanese black Wagyu, selling meat direct to customers. "We don't sell to a feedlot or to a middleman. At first we sold to restaurants and local entities and butcher stores, up until February 2020. Then the restaurants closed down. We'd already started an e-commerce site about a year earlier, and were in a good position to rethink and relaunch that site and get it out there," she says.

"We also applied for assistance with the grants at the beginning of COVID, and got some assistance for marketing. At the same time, two of my sons became involved, so we had a lot of family

gathering around and figuring out what we were going to do and how

we were going to rethink this business. We started to concentrate on our e-commerce platform," she explains.

"Now we have reversed our channels in terms of how we sell; we now sell almost 100% of our meat via e-commerce sales. We do sell some local, direct to customers, rather than selling to restaurants and chefs. We just sell to anyone who wants to buy from us or get product shipped to them. We have a large New York and Boston business—pretty much up and down the East coast," says Patinkin.

"That's how we turned it around. We were fortunate to have some of this already in place, and then have the help from family, particularly sons Joshua and Max, to help turn it around. My daughter Shannon

and son Benjamin also helped. The University of Vermont's Department of Sustainable Agriculture assisted us. More recently we had help from Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business. Taste Profit Marketing also helped us along the way," she says.

"We've been very successful in pursuing this direction and will continue with it. We may seek help from more local entities like restaurants and taverns in terms of our burger, and ski areas, once they reopen. We lost all that business during the pandemic. As soon as those entities and the tourist businesses in Vermont open up again, we will probably send our burger business that direction. Our steaks will probably go (as fast as we can make them) to e-commerce," she explains.

It helps to have a product that's in demand that can be accessed by customers who want it. "One thing that has been helpful is our great-tasting product. Every time we enter a steak contest we win or come close to winning. We won Taste of Wagyu in terms of taste and tenderness two years running and Reserve Grand Champion last year in the American Royal. People really like our product," says Patinkin.

"I am not sure whether it's the 100% full-blood Wagyu genetics or if it has to do with the grasses we have here in Vermont. Either way, our meat has done well, but it's very much a family enterprise, which helped turn the business around during this challenging time. I have a great team that really pitched in," she says.

"They did the podcasts and e-mail blasts, handling social media, etc. I am not a social media person so I relied on the help of family to get that going and revamping our website. All of this happened since February, and now we are revamping our livestock webpage," she says.

"The other half of the business is seed-stock production. We are gearing up for a



big sale in October. We have some of the highest quality Wagyu in the U.S. So we are involved with both the meat and the livestock business and they are run a little differently. It helps to have two enterprises, and it also makes life more interesting!”

DIAMOND T RANCH

Patty Birdwell (Diamond T Ranch, Jack-sonville, Texas—owned by Tony Tristani) says their ranch raises 100% fullblood Wagyu. “Our main focus is beef production and we harvest 12 to 15 steers each month that are bred, born and fed out here on the ranch. They never leave the ranch until day of harvest,” she says.

“During COVID 19 our sales were not negatively affected; we sell more by the carcass now than by the cut. More of our consumers bought freezers so they could buy

more meat per household, rather than having to keep going to the grocery store.” During the pandemic many stores did not have beef.

“Some of our customers asked if we knew where they could buy freezers. It changed the way people buy their groceries, rather than shopping at the store every day or two. It’s like we went back in time, when people went to town less frequently and bought what they needed for a month or more,” she says. They kept supplies stocked up and always had food on hand.

“We had a waiting list on our steers. People were always calling and asking if they could have one, if someone didn’t take

have been using Panola Processing for our harvest, in Carthage, Texas,” says Birdwell.

Panola County Processing is one of very few small-plant USDA Federal inspected slaughterhouses, serving East Texas and the surrounding area. “We have been using this facility since 2014 and they’ve been harvesting our animals on a regular basis. We are on a schedule with them through 2022. That’s another reason why our sales increased—because we could always get our meat processed.” Many producers couldn’t get their animals in anywhere because the facilities they were using got backlogged and there was a long waiting list.

“Since we process 12 to 15 head per

“One thing we did during that time—for two months when there were people who couldn’t buy meat—was provide meat for people that couldn’t get any.”

their steer they’d ordered.” The meat was in high demand.

“On the ranch, we weren’t affected much. We have a team that works together here, taking very good care of our Wagyu cattle from breeding to harvest. That part didn’t change. We just continue to try to increase our production. We’re working on getting up to 20 to 25 Wagyu steers per month for harvest, by next year,” says Birdwell.

With the pandemic and labor shortages at packing plants and slaughter facilities, some producers had problems getting their animals inspected; there was a huge bottleneck in the chain of supply. “We didn’t have any problems that way. We

month, we are on a schedule with Panola Processing and are regular with them. I scheduled us through 2022 to make sure we had our spot, and did this before COVID came along. We were looking ahead a couple years,” says Birdwell.

“It went smoothly for us because we prepared before we ever knew about COVID, but it shook up a lot of people and made them realize what can happen. It’s always better to think ahead and not just plan day by day,” she says.

“One thing we did during that time—for two months when there were people who couldn’t buy meat—was provide meat for people that couldn’t get any. We sold full-blood Wagyu beef for less than half price, to many people who needed meat. We sold 2000 pounds that way, and gave a lot away to people who couldn’t afford to buy it.

“We were selling Wagyu hamburger and stew meat for \$5 per pound, and sirloins, flank and round steaks for \$8 per pound, which was cheaper than any grocery store. We also delivered meat to people who needed it, and they were really grateful. We had a mutual meeting place; people put in their orders and we’d meet there. The meat was already bagged and ready to go, and those people just picked up their order. This helped a lot of people during that time when they just couldn’t get any meat at the stores. And the stores that had meat had a limit of 2 packages of meat per household,” she says.

“My boss suggested that we provide meat to the people who needed it, so that’s what we did. We don’t have a retail store here at the ranch, and people couldn’t come to the ranch to get meat, so we chose to have a mutual meeting place like a farmers market where people could come pick up their meat,” says Birdwell. In the future, our country needs better ways for ranchers to be able to sell direct to consumers, so there won’t be so many problems in situations like this. 🍷



The background of the top half of the poster is a photograph of the Chicago skyline at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, red, and purple. In the center, there is a large purple triangle. Inside the triangle, the words "mile High" are written in a white, sans-serif font. Below "mile High", the words "Wagyu Experience" are written in a smaller, white, cursive font, and the year "2021" is written in a small, white, sans-serif font to the right. A white silhouette of a cow is positioned at the bottom of the triangle.

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High

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2021



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dam



daughter

ML Ms Shigemacho F092 (FB39598)

LMR Ms Haruki 1442Y (FB13483)



dam



daughter

ML MS HARUKIFUKU F043 (FB39626)

daughter



ML Ms Kikuhana D060 (FB28465)

CX4 Ms Sanjirou 303C (FB24791)



donor

From Florida Wagyu.

ML MS YASUFUKU D058 (FB28463)



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ML MS YASUFUKU 2 F035A (FB36464)

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ML MS YASUFUKU 2 F035B (FB36465)

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OUT & ABOUT

Wagyu Sales, Shows, and Other Happenings

Sales

2020

Passion For Prime & Midwest Wagyu Meeting SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI



August 8th, 2020



>> *The Results*

Passion For Prime

Averages

FULLBLOOD COW/CALF PAIRS	AVG: \$4,123
FULLBLOOD FEMALES	AVG: \$4,505
BULLS	AVG: \$3,900
EMBRYOS	AVG: \$700/EMBRYO

Tops

COW/CALF PAIRS:

Lot 14: LMR MS KITAGUNI 6328D, 06/21/2016 sired by WORLD K'S KITAGUNI JR., with heifer calf alongside, consigned by Lone Mountain Cattle Co. Golden, NM; **\$6,000** to **Jason Winall, Powhatan, VA.**

Lot 19: LMR MS HARUKI 3483A, 08/16/2013 sired by WORLD K'S HARUKI 2, with bull calf alongside, consigned by Lone Mountain Cattle Co. Golden, NM; **5,500** to **Landgraf Ranch, Red Creek, TX.**

Lot 18: LMR MS ITOSHIGENAMI 4266B, 06/03/2014 sired by ITOSHIGENAMI, with bull calf alongside, consigned by Lone Mountain Cattle Co. Golden, NM; **5,000** to **Landgraf Ranch, Red Creek, TX.**

FEMALES:

Lot 5: BMR 157E ET, 09/10/2017 sired by JC RUESHAW 92, consigned by Buck Mountain Ranch Warsaw, MO; **\$6,000** to **David Wolfe, Sedalia, MO.**

Lot 24: OLD STONE 024E ET, 09/06/2017 sired by MFC KIMITOFUKU 434B, consigned by Old Stone Wagyu Junction City, WI; **\$5,750** to **Steve Gouker, Lakeside, AZ.**

Lot 4: BMR HIRASHIGETAYASU 248E ET, 10/15/2017 sired by CHR HIRASHIGE TAYASU 533, consigned by Buck Mountain Ranch Warsaw, MO; **\$5,500** to **Branson Wagyu, Weatherford, TX.**

Lot 12: CHR MS SHIGESHIGE 553, 03/24/2012 sired by CHR SHIGESHIGETANI 5, consigned by Landgraf Ranch Red Rock, TX; **\$5,500** to **Rowe Wagyu, Gentry, AR.**

Lot 25: OLD STONE 017E ET, 04/10/2017 sired by CHR HIRASHIGE TAYASU 533, consigned by Old Stone Wagyu Junction City, WI; **\$5,750** to **Branson Wagyu, Weatherford, TX.**

BULLS:

Lot 36: LMR AOICHI 2468Z, 12/05/2012 sired by ITOSHIGENAMI, consigned by Lone Mountain Cattle Co. Golden, NM; **\$7,000** to **William Neal, Seymour, MO.**

Lot 33: WJB HIRASHIGETAYASU 806F ET, 08/15/2018 sired by CHR HIRASHIGE TAYASU 533, consigned by J Brand Wagyu Welsh, LA; **\$4,500** to **Tracy Hart, Honaker, VA.**

EMBRYOS:

Lot 44: JVP FUKUTSURU -068 X CHR MS SANJIROU 925F ET, 2 Embryos, consigned by Crescent Harbor Ranch, Oak Harbor, WA; **\$1,900/embryo** to **Colin McElroy, Center, TX.**

Lot 45: JVP FUKUTSURU -068 X RVW MS ITOZURU DOI 795E ET, 2 Embryos, consigned by Crescent Harbor Ranch, Oak Harbor, WA; **\$1,700/embryo** to **Colin McElroy, Center, TX.**

Lot 66: SR Y13 SANJI X LAURA, 5 Embryos, consigned by Tally Windham Wagyu Ranch Clyde, TX; **\$1,450/embryo** to **Colin McElroy, Center, TX.**

Lot 71: SMO SUMO CATTLE CO MICHIFUKU F154 X LMR MS SENSEI 2425Z, 5 Embryos, consigned by Walker Cattle Co Valley View, TX; **\$1,200/embryo** to **Bar V Wagyu, Abilene, KS.**

Lot 59: BRADY X HEARTBRAND B2324R, 5 Embryos, consigned by Legendary Akaushi Genetics Flatonia, TX; **\$1,000/embryo** to **JMK Ranch, McGregor, TX.**

Lot 69: HIRASHIGETAYASU J2351 X MS SANJIRO 3 MARILYN 027F ET, 3 Embryos, consigned by Wagyu DE Germany; **\$1,000/embryo** to **Colin McElroy, Center, TX.**

SEMEN:

Lot 78: WEST HOLME HIRAMICHI TSURU, 5 Units, consigned by Crescent Harbor Ranch, Oak Harbor, WA; **\$1,100/unit** to **Brian Stamps, Tuttle, OK.**

Lot 94B: MAYURA L0010, 5 Units, consigned by Landgraf Ranch Red Rock, TX; **\$725/unit** to **Jose Zamudio, El Paso, TX.**

Lot 94A: MAYURA L0010, 5 Units, consigned by Landgraf Ranch Red Rock, TX; **\$650/unit** to **Jessup Dean Cattle, Liberty, UT.**

FLUSH:

Lot 31: LAG 2158F ET, Flush to the buyer's choice of Big Al, Shigamaru, Hikari or Tamamaru, consigned by Legendary Akaushi Genetics Flatonia, TX; **\$8,500** to **Blint Cattle Co., Fort Madison, IA.**

The current pandemic we are all facing didn't stop buyers from participating in the 2020 Passion for Prime sale. There was a small presence on the seats and an epic number online. The quality was deep this year and everyone took notice to make this year average even higher than last. The Midwest Wagyu Meeting was a great event the evening before and those that attended were able to try samplings donated by Diamond T Ranch, Lone Mountain Ranch and Buck Mountain Ranch. With many new buyers, the breed is growing and in the right direction as the consignors brought only the best and most favored Wagyu genetics to sell.

Save the Date **Upcoming Events** **2020**

OCTOBER

- 1-5 Prime Harvest Sale**
Online - www.liveauctions.tv
- 24 Vermont Wagyu Production Sale**
Springfield, Vermont
- 31 Texas Wagyu Association Sale**
Salado, Texas

NOVEMBER

- 4 Australian Wagyu Association Elite Wagyu Spring Sale & AGM (new date)**
Online - www.wagyu.org.au/ews
- 7 Sunshine State Sale**
Ocala, Florida
- 19-21 North American International Livestock Expo Wagyu Show**
Louisville, Kentucky
- 21 Buck Mountain Ranch Final Chapter Sale**
Springfield, Missouri

2021

JANUARY

- TBD Mile High Wagyu Experience Sale**
Denver, Colorado

FEBRUARY

- 11-13 Sandhills Performance Wagyu & Friends Disperion**
Online - www.liveauctions.tv

MARCH

- 27 Bowman Farms Complete Dispersion Sale**
Clemson, South Carolina

APRIL

- 10 M6 Ranch Family Wagyu Dispersion**
Alvarado, Texas

MAY

- 22 BAR R Cattle Company Production Sale**
Pullman, Washington

JUNE

- 12 Passion For Prime**
Salina, Kansas

In the News

IARS DISORDER TESTING

The Australian Wagyu Association has recently released information to the international Wagyu community relating to the identification and testing of IARS Disorder in Japanese Black Wagyu.

It is important to note that IARS is one of six genetic conditions now identified in the international Wagyu population (outside of Japan). Like other genetic disorders, it can be managed through testing and paying attention to mating decisions. The prevalence of IARS carriers in the population is approximately half of that observed for the F11 genetic condition – which has been actively managed in the population for many years.

IARS is a genetic recessive condition where animals carrying two copies of the causative IARS SNP mutation (affected animals) have a high frequency of embryonic death during gestation or the first few days of life. This condition is also known as perinatal weak calf syndrome.

DNA testing can now be performed for Japanese Black Wagyu through the Australian Wagyu Association to enable management of the IARS genetic condition.

A scientific article published by Japanese authors in 2013 (Hirano et al., PlosOne, 5: e64036) indicated that of 538,111 Japanese Black calves born in 2010, the number of calves that died before three months was 22,020 (4.1%). The incidence of perinatal mortality was slightly higher at 4.5%, with 27.7% of the cases caused by neonatal weakness and 72% of these deaths were associated with normal gestation periods and low birth weights which suggests intrauterine growth retardation.

The calf shown in Figure 1 had a birth weight of 16 kg (normal average: 28.5kg). The gestation period was 296 days (normal average: 288.9 days). The affected calf was weak and had difficulty nursing. The calf died at two days old.

Hirano et al. (2013) identified a mutation in the IARS gene (iso-leucyl-tRNA synthetase) as being the causative mutation. The mutation results in a reduction in activity of a key enzyme that is important for the protein synthesis process in the developing embryo and newborn. Calves affected by this disorder exhibit anaemia, depression, weakness, variable body temperature, difficulty nursing, growth retardation, and increased susceptibility



Figure 1(Hirano et al., PlosOne, 5: e64036) A calf born in Japan with perinatal weak calf syndrome.

to infection.

A further publication by Hirano (Hirano et al. Journal of Animal Science, 87: 1178-1181) identified that in addition to deaths associated with weak calf syndrome, more than half of affected embryos – those carrying two copies of the IARS gene mutation - died prenatally. When rates of artificial insemination were examined on 11,580 individuals, the frequency of re-insemination in IARS carrier x IARS carrier matings was also significantly higher at 61-140 days gestation.

These findings strongly suggest that the homozygous IARS mutation not only contributes to perinatal calf death, but also embryonic or foetal death.

IARS in the International Wagyu population

The Australian Wagyu Association has members from more than 20 different countries who between them, have conducted approximately 90,000 genomics tests in the past three years. Analysis of the SNP on the different genomics chips used by AWA members identified that the profiles of half of these contained the SNP that is used for determining IARS status.

Using SNP information for 44,839 anonymous registered animals, 36,991 were identified as Free (not carriers), 7,701 as Carrier (carrying one copy of the mutation) and 147 as Affected (having two copies of the mutation).

The prevalence of IARS mutation in the registered Australian Wagyu Association Herdbook population (including international registered animals) was plotted against year of birth so that trends in frequency of the mutation over time could be determined (See Figure 2 on page 40). Figure Fig 2. IARS mutation carriers (blue bars) expressed as a percentage of animals tested for animals born from 2000 to 2019. The orange line represents the allele frequency of the mutation. An allele is a term given to describe a variant of a gene. This can be used to describe a mutation variant such as the IARS mutation. The relative allele frequency of the IARS mutation has stayed at approximately 8% for the past 20

Page 40 >>



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Advertiser's Index

American Livestock Mortality Insurance	36
Australian Wagyu Assoc.....	13
Bar R Cattle Co.....	30
Balck Dog Cattle Co.....	37
Bowman Farms	17
Buck Mountain Ranch	3, 37
C.D. "Butch" Booker	36
Callicrate Banders	37
Crescent Harbor	36
Diamond T Ranch.....	19, 37
Heartbrand Beef	36
JDA. Inc.	40, 41
JMK Cattle	2
Kay Ranch.....	37
Lazy Daze Cattle Co.....	37
Legendary	31, 36, 43
Lucky 7 Ranch.....	37
M6 Ranch Wagyu	37, 42
Marble Ranch	36, 44
Mile High Wagyu Experience Sale	24
Morris Stock Farm	29
Pacific Rogue Wagyu	36
Prime Harvest Sale	12
Protocol Technologies	10, 36
Ragland Wagyu.....	37
Sandhills Performance Wagyu	30
Schacher Auction Services	37
Sunshine State Sale	25
Tai Ranch.....	37
Todo Santos Creek.....	29
Yuba River Ranch.....	37
Vermont Wagyu	4, 5, 36

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Located near Red Rock, Texas (population 125) and 25 miles east of Austin, Kenny Landgraf started raising Wagyu after he purchased his ranch in 2015. “I didn’t come from a ranch background, but my brother Adam and my nephew Jackson (a bullrider) had some cattle previously, on a smaller place near Georgetown and I decided it was time to have my own land and a place in the country. If a person is going to have land, however, you need to own some cows for ag exemption on taxes,” he says.

Texas is the number one state for beef production in the US. “One of the nearby counties, Gonzalez County, is the number one county in Texas for beef. So it seems we are right in the heart of the cattle industry here in Texas. There’s also a big demand for beef, with all the big cities in nearby counties. Additionally, Tesla recently announced that it is acquiring 2,100 acres in the vicinity by the airport, and plans to bring in 10,000 new jobs,” says Landgraf.

After he bought his ranch, everyone kept telling him he needed to get black cows because black calves sell the best at the cattle sales, so initially he bought some Black Angus. “I kept joking and saying I should buy some of those Kobe cows because they are more valuable and the meat is really good,” says Landgraf.

He had sold part of one of his financial businesses (a financial advisory firm), which gave him the capital to invest in the ranch property. With that investment came a ranch fixer upper and investment in the cattle. Still today he still does some work with that financial firm as a financial advisor.

“My firm was acquired by a national financial advisory firm. At that time, I had an issue with my printer, and they sent a service rep to my place to work on it. His father-in-law was Fred Hildebrand, a Texas rancher and co-founder of the American Wagyu Association. Hildebrand worked with a group of investors to bring the original four Wagyu bulls into the country – 2 black bulls (Mt Fuji and Mazda) and 2 red bulls (Rueshaw and Judo). Hildebrand ended up with a good supply of those foundation Wagyu bull genetics,” says Landgraf. Talking with the printer repairman initiated his research on the Wagyu breed and black cows.

“A short time later, I had another problem with my printer and they sent out the same service rep to fix it and by then I knew a little bit more about Wagyu and started asking him more questions. I asked him if he had any cows to sell. He had a few that I purchased, but they weren’t purebreds doing the DNA testing. Then I met wagyu experts here in Austin including Josh Eilers of Ranger Cattle, and also Bubba Kay, of Kay Ranch. Desi Cicale with Red Bull Cattle Company has also been a tremendous resource. They all helped me understand the difference in registrations, fullbloods vs purebloods vs percentage. Also learned about AI and embryos. It was my Wagyu 101 training. I’ve appreciated all the help along the way and try to be a resource for those trying to learn about the Wagyu Breed.”

In 2016, Landgraf went to his first Passion for Prime Wagyu auction in 2016 and purchased his first group of fullbloods. “I learned the importance of having a fullblood Wagyu bull and not an unregistered bull. I made a lot of mistakes early on, but this was



LANDGRAF RANCH

By Heather Smith-Thomas



part of my learning journey,” he says.

“It was kind of an evolution, with the fullbloods, percentage cattle, and crossing them with my Angus cows. The first bull I had was not registered and we called him Houdini because we’d put him in one pasture and he’d end up in another one. He was polled, and we tried to get him registered but couldn’t after working with the AWA,” says Landgraf.

“Through Bubba and Donna Kay at Kay Ranch, I purchased my first registered black Wagyu bull. Once I had a few fullbloods, I wanted more. This led me into embryo transfer and AI. Through Josh and Ranger Cattle, I was introduced to Jarrett Ezell from Elite Repro who is an expert in AI and embryo transfer. After this introduction, we did some embryo work with my Angus cows.”

He also discovered that the meat was phenomenal. “It sells itself once people try it. When I bought my first Wagyu cattle,



there were a few steers in that group. We had them fed out and processed, and the meat was like ‘Wow!’

About the same time, his niece, Christian Mattson launched a food trailer in Austin called Wagyu on Wheels. “When we did a harvest, a good portion of the meat from the carcass is trim / hamburger, so my niece started doing the food trailer in Austin, selling Wagyu hamburgers. I was able to provide some of her wagyu meat supply from my early harvest,” he says. She’s also done some catering with the Wagyu meat.

“From there I bought some different genetics, including some polled genetics—some of the homozygous polled genetics that came from Bar R Wagyu and Bar V Wagyu. Both of those breeders have taken a lead in developing the polled genetics. Some breeders and regions of the world are interested in the wagyu breed but without the horns, and there is a desire for polled genes. I have both heterozygous and homozygous polled genes in my herd from 52Y, 5U, and D64,” says Landgraf.

The Bar R genetics came from Bar R 52Y, a bull owned 50-50 by the Australians and Jerry Reeves. The Australians have a lot of carcass data on bull 52Y and he is one of the top Wagyu polled bulls in the world. “My genetics came from 52Y and 5U (his dam), and my poll genetics are homozygous. It appears that the majority of polled Wagyu in the US go back to that 52Y bull,” he says.

“There are a few of us in the country who have those genetics. One of the things that happened with the polled genetics—there was a flurry of interest for a while and some high dollar sales. When they went back and did some of the DNA testing using the Breedseek test, some of those polled bulls didn’t test out or they failed on parent verifications. Mine, however, all traced back and were 100% parent verified. There are a few of us in the country who have those genetics and it all seems to trace back to Bar R Wagyu (Jerry Reeves ranch) in Washington.”

In Europe there is a big demand for polled Wagyu because those breeders don’t want to dehorn their cattle. “There is a lot of interest in establishing a non-horned Wagyu breed so I have some of those top genetics. Because of the non-diversity of the US polled genetics, I am working to bring in some of the top Australian polled genetics, which includes polled genetics sired by the world leading Mayura Itoshigenami Jnr. He sired Polled Wagyu Midnight whose genetics are limited in the US. We will start using this polled bull on our polled cows. When you research the Mayura Station, they have some of the top genetics in the world, so we are excited to introduce this into our polled animal herd,” says Landgraf.

“I will probably always be a small breeder, but I try to have good genetics, with research and carcass data behind it. This is what the Australians give you, which can be hard to get in the U.S.—especially for the smaller producers. Through this COVID thing, people wanted meat, and they also wanted animals, and especially animals with Wagyu influence. There’s been an uptick in requests for Wagyu bulls; some people with Angus herds want to put a Wagyu bull with their cows. This instantly steps up the quality of the meat for that commercial cattleman,” he says.

With that cross, you don’t give up much size, and dramatically increase the quality of the meat. “This year, even the commercial guys have shown interest. If a heifer is 50% Wagyu, I have been able to sell those wagyu percentage cattle at a pre-



Kenny & Brandon



Kenny & Adam



Landgraf Ranch beef



Ranch tour

mium, versus what you'd get from the normal commercial market. This has been nice. I am still learning my way, and have to lean on the advice of mentors who know more. Every year we try to improve the breed and improve our own herd, to take a step forward," he says.

"Many of my F1 calves in the past year were sired by my Red / Black bull LUV Emperor Takanami. He puts some amazing calves on the ground, and we sell his semen as well. My F1's are Black crosses or crosses with my Red / Black. We just got our first harvest from Takanami and I will have more in the next year. Breeding cattle is a little bit like making wine; it takes time (3 years) and gets better with age," he says.

"I have been at it long enough to get some of my steers through the pipeline, and then had to decide which direction to go with this. I got to a point where I sold some meat at the local farmers markets," he says. The demand is there, for people to buy local, from someone they trust. Austin is a big city, providing a large customer base. Many people are health conscious and willing to pay for what they feel is the best food.

Earlier this year, with the COVID problems, enough people were asking for the meat that he finally decided to launch an online website to sell meat. The website is LRXWagyuBeef.com for the beef side, and he has another website for the ranch, which is LandgrafRanch.com. This was his original website and he has kept it, for the genetics and breeding stock.

"I have mostly black Wagyu and a little bit of the polled genes. I kept some of the Angus cows and do some F1 crosses for beef production. Over time it slowly changes and I'm getting a higher percentage of Wagyu in my beef animals to harvest. I have several fullbloods in the harvest pipeline coming up in the fall," he says.

"At first I was keeping just about all my breeding stock but after you get a few years down the road you have enough to become more selective, and are able to say: 'This one bull is never going to be a herd bull' and can make a steer, for meat."

Recently he acquired some Australian genetics, including the world leading bull Mayura L10. "In 2018 he went for a record price in Australia. In Australian EBVs, he is one of the highest ranked Wagyu bulls in the world, so it seems his high EBV's justify the higher prices. We will be using his semen with our AI and flushes. This was a significant upgrade, to jump to those genetics, and we're going to integrate more of those genetics into our herd.

This will help on breeding values and on the meat side," he says.

"It's interesting what the Australians are doing in terms of research and genomes and the carcass data and indexes they are putting out, with the breeding EBVs (breeding values). I have learned quite a bit about what the Australians are doing. I figured I could either wait for the Americans to calculate EBV's or stand on the shoulders of what the Australians are doing. They seem to be farther ahead with their carcass data and EBV's and breeding indexes," says Landgraf.

He's been at this for 5 years and has seen some things change, with COVID, but the demand for Wagyu meat has been steadily growing. At present he doesn't plan to expand his breeding operation, partly because of his location, with not much room for expansion on the existing property. "I have about the optimum number of heifers. Unless I buy or lease another place, I've reached my maximum capacity."

This has forced him to sell some breeding stock, to keep his numbers static. "I am increasing the percent of Wagyu in my herd, and keeping F1 females to replace the Angus cows. This year I launched LRX Wagyu Beef, which is an online store. I still get a lot of people coming to me direct, but having the website gives some credibility; people can find our meat there," he says.

He's also getting increasing requests for live animals. People find him through Google searches and come across his two websites, and they cross-reference. "I guess I've been doing this long enough now that I've had some repeat buyers of my cattle and word of mouth helps," he says.

"I've gotten to know a lot of people in the industry and participated this year in one of the progeny studies with the polled bull I had. They look at the F1 calves produced, and I think it's a 3-year cycle before they have all the data they want. By that time they also have carcass data on each bull," he says.

"They need to get to the point where they can calculate the EBVs and they don't have that yet in the U.S. with the Wagyu. So they pretty much rely on a lot of the foundation genetics, whereas the Australians have progressed to where they actually have good research and data, and genomic research behind it."

The Landgraf operation is small, but focused on quality, and it's a family enterprise. "My brother Adam helps sometimes, and owns some of the cattle. I don't plan to become a big breeder—just more of a local boutique producer of beef." 🍷

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RIGHT ON Time

By Jeri Tulley

Imagine what it would mean to you as a Wagyu breeder to know exactly, down to the minute, when each of your recipient cows was within her twelve-hour estrus window. Next, think what you could do if there was a way that you could reliably predict which of your recipients will come back pregnant. Besides assisting in recipient cull decisions, lowering vet tech bills, and raising the percentage of successful AI and embryo implantation, utilizing valuable information like this could allow you to guide herd genetics more accurately in the chosen direction and, ultimately, make more money.

When Buzz Yancey was growing up, he claims that he did not know the difference between a cow and a cocker spaniel. However, as life often does, Buzz's life "took a left turn kind of thing." Buzz's friend, Ray Nebel, said that he wanted to build something neat – some kind of device that would tell you when your cows are standing. During the brainstorming/idea creation stage, partner Tim Starzl had a lightbulb moment when he saw a garage door open in response to a signal sent from a button being hit. That was exactly what they needed – data being sent in response to a button being depressed! The first prototype of the product was actually a garage door opener. Trade-named HeatWatch™,

the product was off and running for the next eleven years until the company was sold in 2005.

For the next few years, sales for the system were sluggish and limped along under a New Jersey company that did not pursue its full potential. After the patents and non-compete clauses expired, several of the principal players who still believed in the product got back together to see what they could do with the idea. Estrotect patches took an interest in it and said that they would fund development of the product if they got worldwide distribution rights. A deal was struck, and a product was created.

Accubreed System is a wireless heat detection system that captures mount-

ing activity and records the data for each animal in a software program that is easily accessible – by computer or even by a cell phone. To track an animal, an Estrotect type patch is put on the animal's tailhead. Buzz describes the patch as looking "like a big lottery ticket. You put a radio frequency transmitter inside it, peel the backing off, and stick it on the cow, and, as the cow is mounted, the silver wears off, and it reveals orange." Besides changing colors when a cow is mounted, a button on the transmitter is depressed, and a signal is sent through the wireless technology to relay the cow, date, time, and duration of the mount. All data is collected, stored, and instantly reported to the farmer through the Ac-

culbreed software, allowing the farmers to know which cows are in heat and the precise onset of that heat. With an AI window of eight to eighteen hours after the onset of heat, Accubreed's software sends a text message when a cow enters heat, again at default hour ten, which is considered the prime breeding zone, and again an hour before the breeding zone expires.

Using the data provided by the system, Accubreed's software sorts cows into several different mounting activity levels as defined by Accubreed's mounting activity lists that were created based on scientific reproductive research:

Suspect Heat List – Cows that have received one or two mounts but not yet confirmed in standing heat.

Standing Heat List – Cows that have received 3 mounts in 4 hours, with each mount being greater than 2 seconds. When a cow enters this list, a downward clock (default setting of 10 hours) will indicate the time until the cow enters the Breed List.

Breed List – Cows that are at the ideal time to breed.

Inactive List – Cows that have shown no signs of heat for 25 days since the enrollment.

Brief Cycle List – Cows that have returned to heat 13 days or less since their last heat.

Non-Return List – Cows that have not returned to heat 25 days after their last breeding. Cows on non-return list are excellent candidates for pregnancy tests.

Accubreed's clientele are generally high-end breeders who are very serious about what they do. They are spending a significant amount of money on embryos and semen, and they want to get the most information about their cattle as they can. Accurate information often leads to better decisions that give a better chance for financial gain. One very valuable piece of information that could impact the success of AI decisions comes from Texas A&M's Ky Pohler. He has documented research proving that the intensity of the estrus cycle has a direct correlation to the viability of the embryo.

THE SCIENCE

Ky Pohler grew up in Shiner, Texas, working in his family's diversified livestock operation. He received his undergraduate degree in animal science from Texas A&M University (TAMU). While he was in College Station, he worked at the fetal physiology lab at the vet school. This was where Ky developed his strong interest in reproductive management and reproduc-

ized capacities – 1. cattle adapted to tropical and sub-tropical environments and 2. pregnancy and developmental programming.

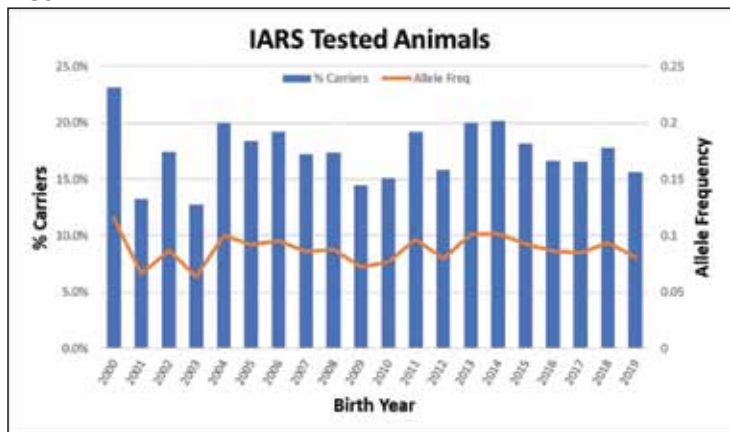
In TAMU's department of animal science, there are five areas of excellence to focus and bring together faculty members to work together. Pregnancy and Developmental Programming... it focuses on all aspects of reproduction and all aspects of the fetus – how prenatal life can affect postnatal development. Pohler explained that



tive physiology. After completing his undergrad, Pohler went on to earn his masters at the University of Missouri, where he worked at the USDA in Montana and pursued his PhD in animal science. His life path led to international work experience in Brazil and then on to a faculty position at the University of Tennessee for several years. Pohler hired on with his Texas alma mater, TAMU, approximately two years ago, and has been working in two special-

embryonic mortality is affected by three categories of factors – 1. From the male such as genetic makeup 2. From the female such as the ability to show estrus and 3. Environmental aspects such as heat stress. Being more interested in the biological and physical aspects of embryonic mortality, his group designed studies to look at how the genetic make-up of the bull and the ability to show estrus directly impacted embryonic mortality. 🌱

FIGURE 2

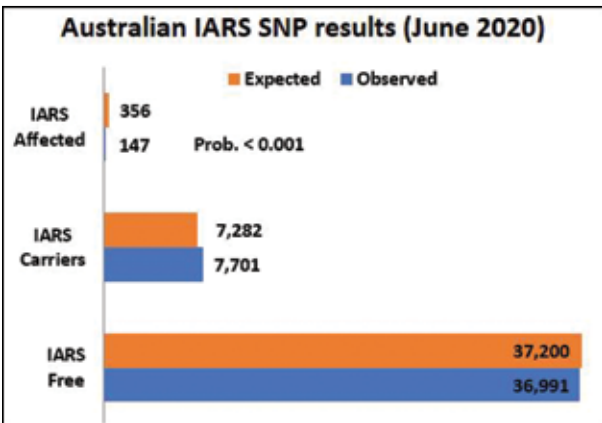


CALLOUT BOX

The relative frequency of the IARS mutation in the International Japanese Black population is approximately half of that seen for the F11 genetic condition. F11 was described in V74 of the Wagyu Update Magazine . For F11, 83% of the expected number of Affected animals were observed in the Australian Wagyu Association registered population. Using the IARS status of animals within the Australian Wagyu Association database, we used GeneProb to determine the probability of Free and Carrier status for the sires considered 'Foundation Japanese Black Sires'. These sires are the common base for the majority of the international Japanese Black Wagyu population. The results are shown in the table at the bottom of the page:

years. Because each animal contains up to two variants of each allele (one maternal and one paternal), the relative level of carrier animals in the population is roughly twice the allele frequency. The relative level of carrier animals in the population is approximately 16%. If mutations have no effect on survival and reproduction, the frequency of Free compared to Carrier and Affected animals would be predicted to conform to the expected population genetics ratios. In Figure 3, the expected and observed frequencies are compared for different IARS condition status. For Affected animals, only 41% (147) of the expected 356 were found in the genotyped population. This represents a highly significant difference (statistical significance $p < 0.001$). This is a clear indication that IARS affected animals are dying during pregnancy or shortly after birth. Figure 3. Based on SNP test results, the expected compared to observed number of affected, carrier and free animals show that 209 affected animals were unaccounted for and therefore "lost" before calving or registration.

FIGURE 3



Foundation Japanese Black Sires			Genetic Condition Status					
NAME	IDENT	Progeny	IARS*	F11	CL16	CHS	B3	F13
Kitateryasudoi J2810	IMJFAJ2810	4,111	Carrier	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
Itozurudoi TF151	IMUFLT151	2,637	Carrier	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
World K's Hanuki 2	WKSFM0139	1,665	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Fukutsuru J068	IMJFMJ068	1,003	Carrier	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
JVP Yasutanisakura	IMUFN2102	129	Carrier	Carrier	Carrier	Free	Carrier	Free
Kikutsurudoi TF146	IMUFRTF146	40	Carrier	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
Itoshigenami	IMUFQTF148	6,291	Free	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
TF Itohana 2	IMUFN2294	3,016	Free	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
Kikuterushige	IMUFMTF150	1,142	Free	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
TF Yukiharunami 4	IMUFQ2599	882	Free	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
TF40 Terutani	IMUFJTF40	593	Free	Carrier	Free	Free	Free	Free
World K's Yasafuku Jr	WKSFS0100	909	Free	Free	Carrier	Free	Free	Free
Itoshigefull	IMUFQTF147	4,170	Free	Free	Free	Carrier	Free	Free
Itomoritaka J2703	IMUFAJ2703	1,552	Free	Free	Free	Carrier	Free	Free
Mitsuhikokura	IMUFNTF149	98	Free	Free	Free	Carrier	Free	Free
World K's Michifuku	WKSFM0164	5,632	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Hirashigetayasu J2351	IMUFAJ2351	3,255	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
TF Terutani 40/1	IMUFR3258	2,084	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
TF Itomichi 1/2	IMUFP0036	1,147	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Kikuyasu 400	IMUFM2100	613	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
TF Kikuhana	IMUFN2127	538	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
World K's Kitaguni JR	WKSFP0001	499	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Kenahanafull	IMUFN2461	403	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
World K's Takazakura	WKSFN2892	356	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
TF Kinto	IMUFN2299	147	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free

IARS* status determined as >99% probability based on DNA test status of progeny

Testing for IARS became available from Monday the 24th of August 2020 for Australian Wagyu Association members (including international members). If you wish to have the IARS status of animals you have already had tested on 50K SNP displayed on the web, please contact the office (office@wagyu.org.au). If we can confirm that your genomics tests contain the IARS SNP already, we can display this information at no charge to the member.





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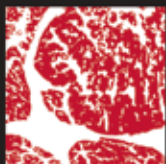
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MARBLE GENETICS



Dish to Plate Genetics


From day one our goal has been to develop a herd that will perform at the ranch and on the rail.


USDA approved embryo export facilities, a unique feeding concept and objective carcass grading, using one of the few Japanese carcass cameras in the US, are all tools we utilize in producing genetics that have both a local renown and global reach.


GENETICS AVAILABLE

BRED FEMALES, PAIRS, BULLS, HEIFERS, FROZEN GENETICS & STEERS (ALL STAGES)

Contact us to see how our embryos, pregnancies, females, and bulls can move your genetics from **Dish to Plate**.

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Contact: Kyle Jurney

Marble Ranch, IOLA, TX
(979) 450-3842

kyle@marbleranch.com

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