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September / October 2022

Volume 8, Number 6

14



14 RANCH REACH

RURAL ROOTS - DOUBLE W

A long farming heritage has paved the way for a present day Wagyu program based in Kansas .

>> By Heather Smith-Thomas



24

24 MARKET MATTERS

AGING GRACEFULLY

A process that has been done for years, but why? This piece covers this question and discusses the different techniques for aging a carcass.

>> By Heather Smith-Thomas

32 MARKET MATTERS

60 YEARS

A long time well known name in Wagyu is celebrating 60 years in business. Joe Morris and his family have specialized in Wagyu and we are here to help them celebrate and honor this legacy.

>> By Heather Smith-Thomas



36 OUT & ABOUT

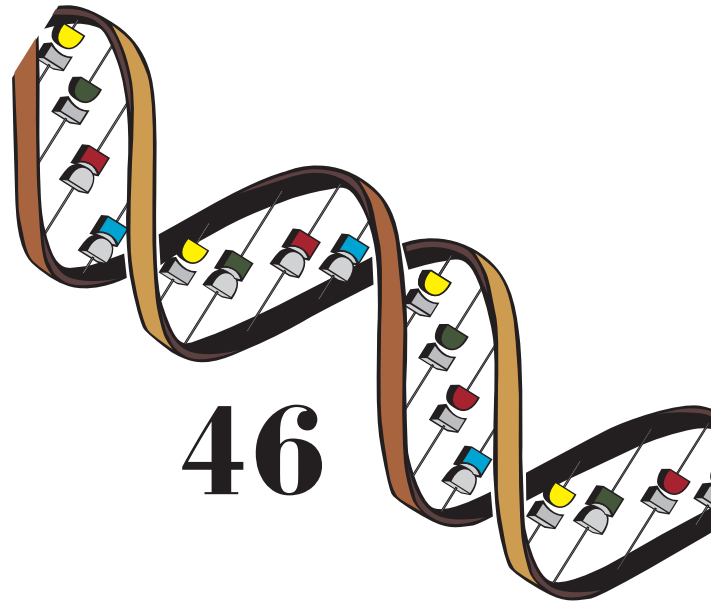
We are just ramping up the fall sale season so be sure to check out the upcoming sale dates in the upcoming events.

46 HEALTH & HUSBANDRY

RECESSIVES - F11

With so many recessive genetic defects, we are going to cover each one in depth and in this issue we examine F11.

>> By Ronda Applegarth



EDITOR'S LETTER	10
PUBLISHER'S POST	11
CONTRIBUTORS	12
CONNECTIONS	44
INDEX	40

COVER>>

*Courtesy of: Double W Wagyu
Location: Kansas*

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FRIDAY

- 10 AM** Cattle Viewing & Coffee
- 4 PM** Pre-Sale Social & Casual Dinner
- 5:30 PM** Speakers
 - Sheila & Roger's Choices on Top Sale Animals "A Tit For Tat"
 - Jes Lockerby, Vermont Wagyu Director of Sales & Shipping

SATURDAY

- 10 AM** Cattle Viewing & Coffee
- 11:30 AM** Complimentary Wagyu Lunch
- 12 PM** Speaker
 - Hanna Ostrovsky, Director of Research American Wagyu Association; AWA Conference Highlights & American Wagyu Junior Association
- 1 PM** Auction Begins

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MISS YOU

The American Wagyu Convention is taking place this month. It is always a good time to see so many familiar faces as well and meet so many folks in person that I have talked to on the phone or through e-mail through the years. The social aspect is the best part of convention; some of the best memories have happened. A few would include a late night dinner on the patio in Florida, getting kicked out of a club in Nashville (we still don't know why), homemade moonshine in Kansas City, and being very pregnant on the auction block in Coeur d'Alene. These are just a few that come to mind at this very moment but believe me, there's many more and some I probably shouldn't share. Nonetheless, convention is really like a recess time for us and it's a blast.

This year I will not be there; I am the maid of honor in my cousin's wedding. You can only fit so much into a year and I have to take the family route this time. I will miss you all and I can't wait to hear from you all about the stories and moments from the event. Our team member James will be there at the Wagyu World booth; he will have all of our normal goodies there for you so please stop in, introduce yourself if you haven't met him. James is a wealth of knowledge of what we provide to the industry and also a great person to know.

Take care and make it an epic event – I want pictures!



Mercedes Danekas-Lohse - Editor



There will be many chapters in your life.
Don't get lost in the one you're in now.
~ Anonymous ~

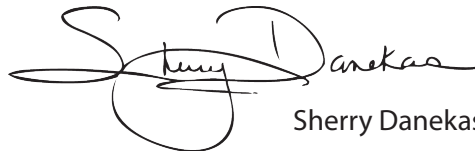
The heat in California really ramped up this summer; I can't remember having weeks of over 100 degree temps and some days wavering at the 110 mark. Fortunately there looks like there is relief on the horizon. Mercifully we have been spared the type of fire seasons that have plagued us the past few years, but the reason for it is that most of our mountain ranges and valleys no longer have any fuel left to burn. Between the lack of rain and not a green blade of anything the "golden state" is holding up to its name.

On an optimistic note, just a couple of weeks ago we found ourselves all over our little basin sweeping hundreds of dead crickets out of our houses, barns, and patios. Google tells us that historically this means an early winter, which if it has some moisture in it would be a blessing.

September signals that this year's American Wagyu Conference will be taking place and this year it will be in South Carolina. Coming up on the heels of the AWA Conference we will be traveling back to South Carolina for the Caroland Farms Inaugural Production Sale on October 1st, it's an occasion all Wagyu breeders won't want to miss. Come mid-month you're going to want to make your way to Vermont as on October 15th the place you need to be is Vermont Wagyu for their 4th Edition Production sale. Making for a very sensational October!

Come November get your travel plans made to be in Luling, Texas for the Texas Wagyu Association Fall Harvest sale on November 12th. Truly a great place to make some sensational purchases and enjoy a great time. So spend some time with this issue of Wagyu World, it's a natural on your kitchen table with your coffee cup in the mornings and will always make great company for a moment under the shade tree on a hot afternoon.

As for myself I'm going to stay the trail heading into fall.



Sherry Danekas - Publisher



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DISCOVERY

This Issue's Two Contributors Share Themselves With Us.



**HEATHER
SMITH-THOMAS**
Rancher/Writer



My favorite movie is...It's a Mad, Mad, Mad Mad World, or maybe Chariots of Fire

If I could be any character from a book or movie it would be...a composite of several; I can't think of any one character that I'd actually want to be.

The most significant dream I have had lately was...a situation where I was talking with my Dad, who has been gone now since 2007.



**RONDA
APPLEGARTH**
Wagyu Breeder



My favorite movie is...The Princess Bride

If I could be any character from a book or movie it would be...Wonder Woman. She was an Amazon, too.

The most significant dream I have had lately was...my brother, who passed away from cancer in 2009, appeared at the foot of my bed. I told him, "I have so many questions for you". He replied, "and I have no answers for you".



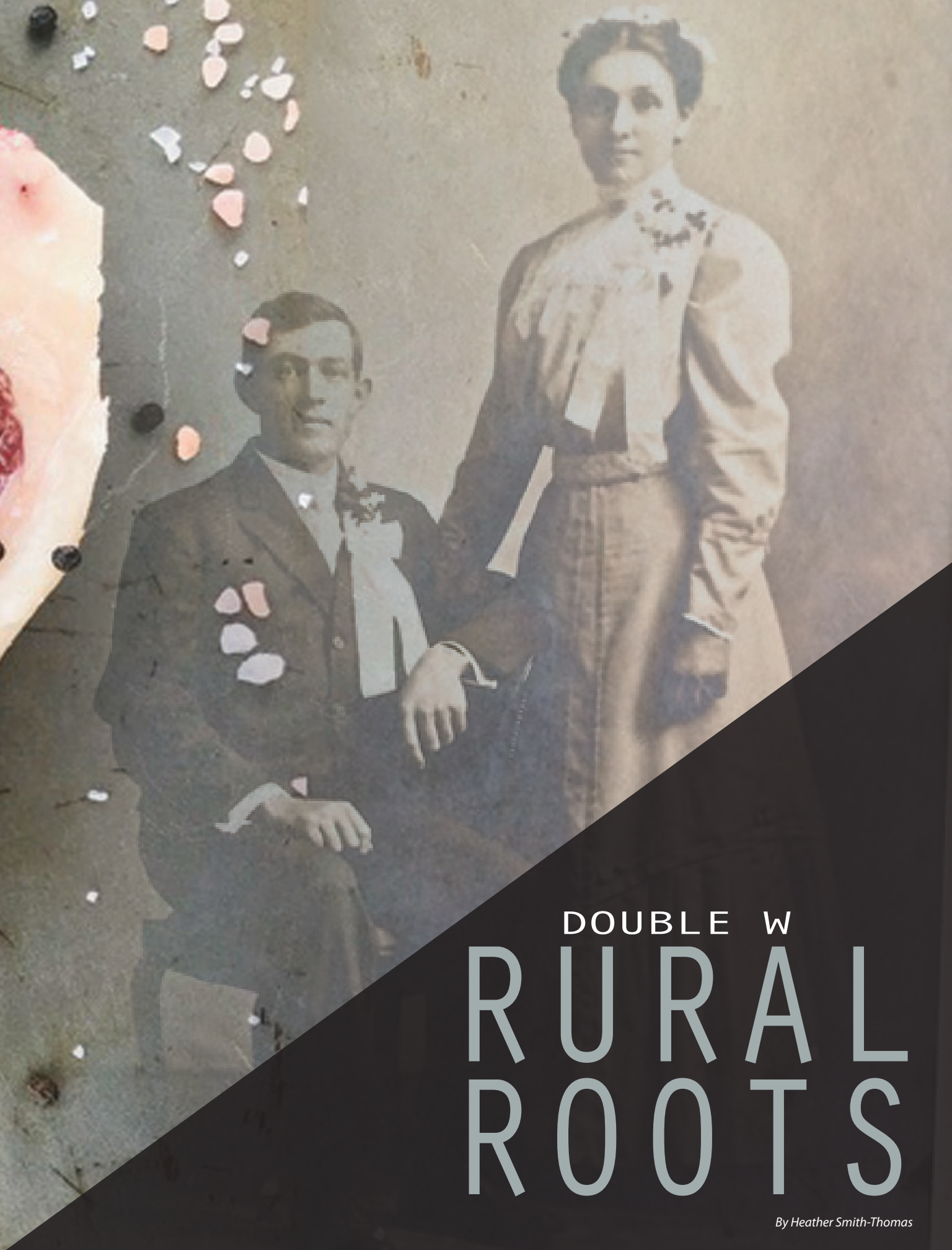
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DOUBLE W
RURAL
ROOTS

By Heather Smith-Thomas





Bradon Wiens is a 4th generation farmer/rancher near Meade, Kansas. He and his wife Rachael began raising fullblood Wagyu cattle a few years ago.

Bradon's ranching roots go deep. His great grandfather KL (Kornelius) Wiens came to Kansas from Prussia at age 17 in the late 1800s. He met his future wife Agatha and after they were married in 1912 her parents gave them 80 acres. KL worked the land and helped neighbors build their houses. He built a small farmhouse for his family in 1925 and by 1929 had built the house where Bradon and Rachael now live.

KL lost his brother in World War I and lost a child. Agatha and KL eventually raised 6 children, and Rolly--the youngest--is Bradon's grandfather. Rolly also suffered tragedy in his life. On July 4, 1949 at the age of 10, he witnessed his father's death in a tractor accident. Back then, tractors did not have cabs and were operated with a hand clutch. As his maneuvered the tractor to get out of a washout, the tractor reared over backwards, crushing and killing him. So at age 10, Rolly took on a lot of responsibilities to help keep the farm going, with the help of family and friends.

Rolly bought his first piece of land at age 15, then went to Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas where he met Marge, who



<< Page 17

was studying to be an elementary teacher. They were married in 1959. That first year, Marge taught 6th grade and Rolly worked as a scrub nurse. They decided to come back to the family farm the next year.

When they returned to Meade, Rolly farmed and supplemented their income with an off-farm job. He also had 30 cows and calves and started a custom baling business. He and Marge bought and rented more land and bought the original farmhouse from Rolly's mother, Agatha. There they raised three children, 2 girls and one boy—Jerome—who is Bradon's father.

Jerome also attended Tabor College majoring in agriculture, then married his high school sweetheart, Anita, in 1984, who also attended Tabor College majoring in Elementary Education. When they moved back to Meade, Rolly and Jerome worked together for many years and built up the cattle side of the operation by backgrounding calves. They continued to rent land to grow wheat and feed for the cattle. Rolly and Marge received the Kansas Master Farmers and Master Farm Homemakers award in 1998 from Kansas State University.

In 2004, Jerome began taking over management of their Double W Farms. He continued to buy calves to background. Jerome and Anita raised four children--3 boys and a girl.

Bradon is the oldest. He loved farm work growing up, but decided to go to college to see other options for careers. After a few years he decided that farming and ranching was what he really wanted, and started working full time for his dad in 2011.



Bradon and Rachael knew each other in high school and reconnected during college. They were married December 2013 and moved into the original farmhouse that his great grandfather built. Bradon worked for his dad on the farm and Rachael taught school (teaching art classes, kindergarten through high school).

"At that time my grandpa's health was failing, so I wanted to step in and help. We were still backgrounding cattle—buying calves in the fall to feed through winter and then sell as feeder cattle. My family had been doing that for about 40 years. We also raise wheat and feed for the cattle," Bradon says. They grow grain sorghum and feed sorghum for the cattle to graze in the fall. They also put up most of their own hay and straw to be fed in the winter months.

He and Rachael started their cattle operation with 30 cows and are now breeding Fullblood Wagyu. Bradon always had a passion for cooking and grilling, and after he ate a Wagyu steak and learned about this unique breed, the idea of raising world class beef was irresistible.

"I was looking into getting into more of a cow-calf operation and different ways to do that, and found something online about Wagyu. I got in touch with Don Brown at Triangle B Ranch and he was instrumental in getting us started. We got a lot of our foundation genetics from him. He's been a very helpful resource," Bradon says

"We had some Wagyu steaks at his place, and that convinced us! I bought a donor cow from him. I also bought 30 Angus cows and transferred some of Don's best Fullblood Wagyu embryos into them so I could start my herd with the best genetics I could find. We began collecting and transferring embryos and started our Wagyu that way. We also bought a few more embryos here and there. This is the main way we've grown our herd, then finally got to the place where we could breed more cows with natural service and IA," he says.

When they started, he and Rachael sold the meat through farmers' markets in Wichita, then switched to online, and that became their focus for marketing. "We've been doing that for about 6 years. We've just recently begun to sell live animals. Our opera-

Page 20 >>



tion has gotten too big to do just the retail online marketing. That's a lot of work, but we moved a lot of cattle that way," Bradon says.

They decided to go a different route and start selling live animals to other people who are marketing the meat, and they also begin selling seedstock. "We are just now selling the rest of our frozen supply of beef, and marketing a lot of our cattle through Booth Creek Wagyu in Manhattan, Kansas. They are buying some animals from us; we are looking to simplify our beef marketing."

Bradon and Rachael want to keep growing their herd. They have about 200 cows but 75 of those are Angus. "We want to keep growing the Wagyu herd and learn more about breeding. I want to become a better Wagyu breeder, learning about different breeding philosophies and trying to develop my own breeding philosophy. I want to figure out the best way to do that and to improve the genetics of our herd," he says.

He and his dad work together and they have one hired man. "It's very much a family operation, with some help from my wife and my mother. Rachael and I also have three young boys, ages 5, 4 and 1 year old. "The older two tag along and really enjoy the cattle and all the farming. The boys enjoy being out checking cattle and riding in the tractors with me," Bradon says. A farm is a wonderful place for kids to grow up.

Bradon set out to become the best he could at raising this breed by surrounding himself with the best Wagyu in America. He continues to improve his cattle by studying the breed, working with a highly respected nutritionist and being counseled by highly respected Wagyu breeders. Jumping into the Wagyu breed with no prior knowledge was challenging, but he was determined to learn as much as he could—to be successful and produce a top-quality product.

"From the beginning, my philosophy was to not cut corners. I wanted to be the best. I found successful breeders who held those same ideals and I picked their brains until they were probably tired of me! Don Brown has been in this breed nearly since its beginnings in America. He has worked closely with one of the best Wagyu breeders in Japan, Shogo

Tekada, and has used his model of breeding to produce a balanced, very high marbling and tender beef," Bradon says.

"I also learned as much as I could from Dr. Horner. He is the "go to" Wagyu nutritionist not only in the U.S. but also in Japan. Before Wagyu was even in the U.S., Dr. Horner was traveling to Japan to help formulate rations and improve the health of Wagyu. He tells me exactly what I need to feed my cattle and how to take care of them in order to reach their full potential. We love this breed; they are not only the most delicious beef, but are also docile and great to work with."

RAISING THE MEAT

The calves are born on the buffalo grass prairie of Southwest Kansas. "Buffalo grass is full of nutrients and high in protein, keeping our mamma

touch noses as they both learn to live independent of each other," Bradon explains.

After weaning, the calves are slowly grown to 800 lbs. In summer, they reach that weight grazing. In winter, the grass is less abundant and nutritious, so they are fed high-quality wheat hay or sudan grass hay grown on the farm, supplemented with local distillers grain and corn or wheat or sorghum grain from the farm.

Once they reach 800 pounds they are started on a finishing ration. "During this time, our cattle are kept in spacious well-maintained pens with fresh clean water from the Ogallala aquifer. They are kept out of the wind by a cedar shelter belt, and always have shade from surrounding elm trees and shade shelters. They enjoy daily massages from repurposed street sweeper brushes around the pens," he says.

Pens are routinely cleaned and snow promptly removed. "High-quality



cows happy year-round. Our calves stay with their mothers on grass for the first 5 or 6 months of their life. We slowly wean then by introducing an all-natural starter feed with probiotics, created by Dr. Horner. This feed replaces the calories from the milk and helps slowly change their rumen to a plant-based diet. Once they are eating enough starter feed and do not need their mothers, we put them in neighboring pastures so they can

ity wheat hay from our farm is always available. The cattle are fed a ration of mixed grains with the right amount of vitamins and minerals to keep them healthy. We finish them slowly, allowing them to put weight on naturally. They reach butcher age at about 30 months of age, compared to 18 months in typical cattle. Our goal is to remove as much stress in their lives as possible. We know that if we treat them right we will be rewarded with the highest quality beef possible." 🍖



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- 0397H ranks in the Top 1% of all Wagyu bulls outside Japan with EBVs: **Marble Score (+3.0)**, **Marble Fineness (+0.41)** and **Birthweight (-3.3)**.
- Direct dam is one of Lone Mountain's best donor cows, having produced 52 calves, including 2 **Itoshigenami TF148** steers that graded 43% and 41% IMF and 2 herd sires. In addition, she has produced an astounding 303 viable embryos in 33 flushes.



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sire MAYURA L0010 ET

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GL	BW	200	400	600	MCW	M	SS	CW	EMA	RF	RBV	MS	MF	WBI	SRI	FTI	F1TI
-0.1	+0.5	+12	+15	+22	+5	-1	-0.8	+18	+9.9	-1.9	+1.6	+2.9	+0.34	+\$280	+\$303	+\$239	+\$251

- 0365H ranks in the Top 1% of all Wagyu bulls outside of Japan for **Marble Score EBV (+2.9)**, **EMA EBV (+9.9)**, **Self Replacing Index (+\$303)**, **Fullblood Terminal Index (+\$239)** and **F1Terminal Index (+\$251)**.
- Top 5% and better for Wagyu Breeder Index.
- Dam of 0365H is a direct daughter of **Itoshigenami TF148** and has been a superb donor for Lone Mountain. 3525A has produced 44 viable embryos and 9 calves and counting. In BreedPlan, 3525A ranks in the Top 1% for **Eye Muscle Area EBV (+8.2)** and in the Top 3% for **Marble Score EBV (+2.1)**.

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Growing older is not that exciting for most people, but age can be beneficial for some of the things we eat. For instance, with wine, cheese, and red meat, age can enhance flavor.

WHAT IS AGING AND WHY DO WE AGE A CARCASS?

Aging or “ripening” of beef is simply holding a carcass (or wholesale cuts) at low temperatures to allow natural processes to improve flavor and tenderness. The muscles of meat animals undergo progressive changes after slaughter that affect tenderness when cooked.

At first, a muscle goes into rigor; it becomes shorter and stiffer (rigor mortis, which simply means stiffness after death). Rigor generally lasts for a few hours up to one or two days. During this period, the meat won’t be very tender if cooked. After the rigor subsides, changes take place that result in gradual improvement in tenderness.

Chemical breakdown of certain muscle (and fat) occurs, resulting in a more intense flavor and aroma. In general, these changes in flavor and aroma are desirable to most folks who eat meat. However, undesirable flavors and aromas can develop during the aging process if conditions aren’t just right—due to effects of microbial growth, rancidity of fat and adsorption of off-odors present in the chill room.

After the animal is killed and cleaned, it is hung as a full or half carcass. It is traditional to hang a carcass—at least a few days—in a cool area to completely chill out (so the meat will be easier to cut and package) and to “age” and improve tenderness.

When a carcass (or halves or quarters) is hanging, this exposes the meat to oxygen, which allows natural enzymes within the meat to work. This process also involves aerobic micro-organisms that need oxygen to survive. They start breaking down molecular bonds of the muscles, which alters the flavor and texture.

If left hanging long enough, the outside of the carcass may develop a crust that includes “good mold” which also helps to slowly break down and

increase the amount of evaporation, pulling moisture from the meats over time. The mold continues to grow, but it’s similar to the mold on blue cheese—it is good mold, not bad mold. Before any of the beef makes it to your plate, however, all the mold will be trimmed away, leaving just tenderized, delicious meat.

The steaks you buy are usually dry-aged or wet-aged before they are cut in to steaks. Many Wagyu carcasses or primal cuts are dry-aged, for the ultimate in flavor and tenderness.

DRY AGING

So-called dry aging is the process where beef carcasses or primal cuts are hung and aged for 14 to 55 days under controlled conditions. A primal is a piece of meat initially separated from the carcass of an animal during butchering. An example would be the entire tenderloin before being cut into filets. Primals are placed in a refrigerated room at a temperature near freezing (between 32° and 40°) with relative humidity of 75 to 90%. Temperature, humidity, air movement and general sanitation of the cool room are essential factors in successfully aging beef. Air flow of 15 to 20 linear feet per minute at the surface of the carcass is ideal. In the dry-aging process, the carcass hangs in a way that exposes all sides to unimpeded airflow. Low temperature, controlled humidity and ultraviolet light can inhibit excessive bacterial growth.

Sub primal cuts such as strip loins, rib eyes, and sirloin can be dry aged on racks in climate-controlled coolers or within a moisture-permeable dry-bag. Only the higher-quality grades of meat such as prime or choice can be dry aged, since this process requires meat with good marbling—large, evenly-distributed fat content.

The aging room should be clean and free of all off-odors at all times.

Floors and walls of the aging room should be thoroughly washed with an alkaline cleaning solution and an approved sanitizer applied weekly or more often if needed. Sawdust should not be used on the floors because it contributes to air contamination.

The most common timeframe for a steak to be dry-aged is 30 days but sometimes longer. The meat won’t spoil during this time if aged in conditions that tightly control the levels of moisture and bacteria. During the dry-aging process, moisture is drawn out of the meat.

Meat is about 75% water. If some of that moisture is lost to evaporation, what’s left will be more concentrated, and the flavor will also be more concentrated. The natural beef flavor intensifies. A dry-aged piece of beef can lose 30% or more of its initial volume in water loss.

Chemical changes also affect flavor. During the aging period, some compounds and molecules in the meat undergo change that increase some flavor components while reducing others. Muscle cells are made up of many different materials, especially proteins, and the molecules that fuel muscle movement, such as glycogen. During dry-aging, these large, flavorless molecules are broken down into smaller, more flavorful fragments.

Flavor change is due to numerous processes, including action of enzymes and bacteria, along with oxidation of fat and fat-like molecules. Properly dry-aged meat will develop a beefy, nutty, and almost cheese-like aroma.

Tenderizing occurs when the enzymes naturally present in the meat break down some of the tougher muscle fibers and connective tissues. A well-aged steak will be noticeably tenderer than a fresh steak. Fresh meat has a complex internal structure that can be difficult to bite through.



AGING Curfocarr

By Heather Smith-Thomas

After some of these proteins are broken down, the meat can be more easily chewed.

Dry-aging usually promotes growth of certain fungal (mold) species on the external surface of the meat. This does not cause spoilage, but forms an external “crust” on the surface, which is trimmed off when the meat is prepared for cooking. These fungal species complement the natural enzymes in the beef by helping tenderize and increase the flavor of the meat.

Dry-aged beef is typically not sold by most supermarkets because it takes longer and there is a significant loss of weight during the aging process. Typically up to a third or more of the initial weight is lost as moisture evaporates. This type of beef is mainly served in higher-priced steakhouses and select restaurants.

Most of the tenderizing activity occurs in the first 10 to 14 days, but some high-end restaurants age their meat for 28 days or more. Increased aging increases shrinkage and trim loss, however, due to the drying and surface mold.

A few decades ago, dry-aged beef was the norm, then with the advent of vacuum packaging along with increased efficiencies in beef processing and transportation, the dry aging process mostly fell out of fashion. In modern processing plants, the carcass is broken down and vacuum-sealed in plastic bags within 24 hours, and the beef ends up in a grocery store meat case within 2 to 4 days after harvest. Because long-term refrigerated storage is expensive, dry-aged beef is 15-20% more expensive than “fresh” beef or wet-aged beef simply because of the yield loss, the cost of maintaining a dedicated dry-aging cooler and the time it takes to age. Between trimming off the moldy parts and moisture evaporation, you might lose up to 50% of the primal’s original weight. If your butcher bought 10 pounds of meat, there might only be five pounds left to sell by the time it’s been aged, so the price must be higher per pound.

WET AGING

Beef can be “wet aged” in a vacuum-sealed plastic bag for improved tenderness but won’t have the characteristic dry-aged flavor. The meat is held for several weeks enclosed in a

plastic bag that prevents evaporation, so you don’t get the loss of water (and weight), but you also don’t get the tenderness or concentration of flavor. There’s no trim loss and no moisture loss, but the flavor and tenderness is not as good.

With the advent of “boxed beef” and processing beef into primal cuts by packers, aging of beef in vacuum bags has become common. Beef can be successfully aged in a vacuum bag but precautions must be taken to ensure no loss of vacuum occurs in the bag. If that happens, air will be present in the bag and aerobic microorganisms will grow on the meat and cause rapid spoilage.

The aging of beef requires refrigerated storage space, which is costly to maintain. Consequently, most processors try to move products through their facility as rapidly as possible; some don’t hold beef for more than seven to 10 days.

Not all beef tenderness problems can be solved by aging. Less-tender cuts such as shank, neck and plate cuts are usually made into ground beef. Also, greater improvement in tenderness can be achieved by correct cooking than by aging. Consequently, all cuts of beef should be properly identified and labeled correctly during processing, so proper cooking can be utilized for each cut.

The advantage to butchering animals that are genetically selected for good marbling and tenderness (such as Wagyu) is that even the cuts considered less tender on a typical carcass are often acceptably tender, especially with proper cooking.

THINGS TO AVOID DURING THE AGING PROCESS

Beef carcasses and wholesale cuts are perishable. Several undesirable conditions during the aging process can cause spoilage or make the product unacceptable. Most spoilage and off-odors and flavors can be attributed to one or more factors which include improper chilling of the carcass. Internal temperature of the round and other thick muscles should be lowered to 40 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit within 24 hours after slaughter, the sooner the better. Failure to do so may result in “sour” meat.

If the carcass is chilled/aged in a chill room containing an off-odor (a

room that’s not clean, or where poorly dressed-out wild game with “gamey” smell is also hanging), the carcass will adsorb the bad odor. Most common off-odor is from excessive growth of bacteria, yeasts and molds on the meat and on the chill-room walls and floor. Storing any other product that has an odor in that same area will create problems.

Poor sanitation during slaughter, chilling and processing will allow contamination with microorganisms and cause off-odors, off-flavors and spoilage.

In addition to the off-odor produced by microorganisms, their presence in large numbers on a carcass or cut of meat creates a slimy-looking surface. The most likely places for microorganisms to grow are on moist, lean surfaces of the carcass such as the neck, flank and round. If these contaminated areas are not completely trimmed off and discarded during processing, the microbial growth will produce undesirable flavor and odor in the finished product, especially the ground beef. Trimmings and portions not designated for certain cuts are often ground, but these trimmings should be carefully sorted to avoid “bad” meat ending up in the hamburger.

The longer the aging period, the greater the need for trimming of any surfaces that have dried excessively or have detectable growth of microorganisms.

Aging under-finished carcasses (not enough fat cover) results in excess shrinkage, surface drying and discoloration. Carcasses with little or no fat cover should not be aged very long. 🍖





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60 *years*

By Heather Smith-Thomas





Joe Morris is fourth generation on his ranch and feedlot operation near Gruver, Texas, and his children and grandchildren are the 5th and 6th generation. This year marks the 60th year that the Morris family has been custom-feeding cattle for the public.

"My father, Vance Morris, was a young farmer in 1957 when we had a big drought. He ran out of pasture and had to sell the cattle he had on pasture, and lost a lot of money," Joe says. "He said he would never do that again."

When Joe was about 6 years old his father started building pens and he was out there wanting to help. "He had me running the cutting torch, cutting the augers off the sucker rods just to keep me out of the way."

Joe's father started feeding cattle for the public in May of 1962. "We started taking in customer calves getting them weaned and ready to go back out on pasture or growing them." Backgrounding calves for other folks worked out well.

Joe proudly boasts that they have not missed a feeding and have never been empty since that day. Morris Stock Farm has expanded gradually over the years but didn't get very big because they were still farming about 3500 acres.

For many years they grew all the feed they needed for custom feeding, and then their region ran out of water

for irrigation. "We still have enough water to function, but not enough to irrigate like we used to," he says.

Morris Stock Farm is permitted to have 9000 head which is mostly all natural Fullblood or Wagyu F1 cattle with the majority being fed for other people. "We started feeding Wagyu cross cattle in 2010 and have been very blessed since then--attracting a fantastic customer base. We still have one of the original families feeding with us but they do not feed Wagyu cross cattle."

Customers include Rosewood Ennis, LLC, A Bar N and Midland Meat Company. "These customers have the majority of our cattle inventory here, but we also feed for many small producers and families that just want one or two animals fattened to fill their freezers. People ask how I can feed for people with one or two head and I explain to them that if I have 100% of their business I don't know how I could be doing any better! We have a lot of loyal customers, and we are loyal to them. I believe in doing what my dad taught me. If you tell someone you will do something, that's what you'll do. The customers have confidence in us; we do our best to treat people the way we'd want to be treated," Joe says.

It takes a different mindset to feed all-natural cattle like Wagyu than it does to feed cattle in a commercial yard. "In a big finishing yard, the goal is to get every calf that walks off the

truck as fat as it needs to be and get it back on that truck as quickly as possible. My goal is to take our time, let those cattle mature and get them fat. We are not as concerned about the number of days it takes to get them there as we are about the taste of the finished product," Joe says.

There are several restaurants that use beef finished here, and animals from this feeding operation do very well in steak contests, such as the one Desi Cicale puts on. "Midland Meats has won the F1 division ever since they have entered that contest. What puts the feather in my cap is that probably 3 of the top 5 animals were all fed here at Morris Stock Farm. There are chefs who request only meat that was fed here at Morris Stock Farm. It tastes different!"

Meat from this feed yard has been shipped all over the country and many places outside the USA. "Two weeks ago, we sent 5 head to Pennsylvania and we have a load going to California next week. We ship many loads of cattle to the Fort Worth area to various plants," Joe says.

"Meat from here goes all over the world—New York, Taiwan, to the Philippines, and just about everywhere, as well as to local grocery stores." A few months ago, a man wanted 4B Meats (the meat business owned by my daughter and her husband) to send meat to a lady who lives in the far north part of Alaska, and it went by

2nd day air.”

Morris Stock Farm also buys a few cattle from producers and shapes them up. In any calf crop there are some animals that are larger and some smaller than average. “We get the little ones into one group and the big ones in another and sort them about three ways. We have buyers who want to uniform groups,” he explains.

“What got us into the Wagyu feeding business? Five people came to us from the Texas Wagyu Association, wanting to know if we could feed cattle for them. We decided to give it a try, and we successfully impressed them. Burch Wallace, Ralph Lee, Tally Windom, Jim and Joan Chisum and Bruce Hemmingsen brought us a group of cattle—about 5 each. Then Jim Spainhour from Utah sent us some Wagyu Holstein crosses. After feeding the cattle, we sent them all to the packing plant at Fort Worth. The inspector said he’d never seen the BMS 12 yield grade one, and that’s what those Holsteins/Wagyu were. They were pretty impressed with that,” Joe says.

It’s been full steam ahead ever since. “Every 2 years we’ve added more pens and capacity. We just opened up another new set of pens which is another 2000 head. We don’t have all those pens finished yet but we have cattle in the ones that are.”

“We use Jimmy Horner as a consulting nutritionist, to help us with our feed formulation and help us out of problems. We also use a special product that I don’t think anyone else has. We feed an alcohol blend to these cattle. The feed has a molasses base and we blend some other things with it,” he says. This feed is very palatable and cattle like it.

“We used this product for years to straighten out cattle that wouldn’t eat. If they were off feed for some reason, we would give them this product and it got them going; it got their rumens working and got them on feed,” Joe says.

This feedlot sends a lot of cattle to a small plant at Stratford. “We keep them very busy, sending cattle there for different customers. When we started, there were only 4 people working at that plant, and now there are 19.”

Family Operation

Morris Stock Farm has several fulltime employees but also depends greatly on family members who help in various roles. Joe says that his wife Nancy has been the best thing that ever happened to him. “We’ve been married 43 years, and Nancy is very active in this business every day. We live in the house that my father was born in (1930). It started out as a half dugout in 1926 when my grandfather came here. Since then, it has changed many times but still has only one bathroom.”

Joe had 2 brothers and 2 sisters. Sherry is the only one who is still involved in the business; she is in charge of the bookkeeping. “I have both of my daughters here living on the farm and all of my grandkids are also active in the daily activities. My daughter Brandy is involved with cattle health, processing, shipping and is moving into the office. Her daughter Reagan helps with the cattle and also runs a tractor during the summer.” Reagan is the 6th generation on the farm.

“My other daughter Brittany is married to Dustin Bordon and both of them are active in our family business. Brittany has a job that allows her to work from home. She and Dustin also have their own meat company and sell their home-grown Wagyu cattle through their company (4B Meats.com).

Dustin is working into taking Joe’s place. Joe is 68 years old and hoping to slow down a little. “Dustin oversees the farming of our 3500 acres of land and is extremely involved in the cattle side. He has added the last addition to the feed yard and it can now pen 4000 additional cattle. He also has his own cow herd and grass land,” Joe says.

It has been wonderful being able to have family here, with all the kids growing up on the farm. “It takes a special mindset to work with family (a lot of compromises) but it’s worth it. I’ve always said that more than one woman on a section is a challenge, and right now I have FIVE of them! They all have their own opinion!” But he wouldn’t change it for the world, and it’s very satisfying to have family members who want to continue on with this business. Joe also has three young grandsons who live on the place—Tommee, Eastin and Briggs.

“There is a lot of history and a lot of life that has been lived right here. The one thing that has made this family prosper the most is our belief in Jesus Christ and to him I give All the Glory. If it wasn’t for him, we wouldn’t be here! We are just a humble family, trying to make a living and trying to make a POSITIVE difference.”

Joe says he enjoys cattle and feeding them and just never figured out anything else to do, to leave the farm. He is doing what he loves, working with cattle and family. “A lot of people work all their lives in town at a job they hate, and want to move to a small farm and retire on a few acres of land. I’m out here on 3000 acres and I AM IN PARADISE so I see no need to leave home. This is our passion as well as our work; it’s what we love to do.” 🍷



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OUT & ABOUT

Wagyu Sales, Shows, and Other Happenings

Save the Date Upcoming Events

2022

SEPTEMBER

- 3 **G5 Cattle Production Sale**
Sulphur Springs, Texas
- 21 **Wilders Wagyu Field Day**
Turkey, North Carolina
- 22-24 **Shaping The Future - AWA Conference**
Charleston, South Carolina

OCTOBER

- 1 **Caroland Farms Production Sale**
Landrum, South Carolina
- 15 **Vermont Wagyu Production Sale 4th Edition**
Springfield, Vermont

NOVEMBER

- 12 **TWA Fall Harvest Event**
Luling, Texas

2023

MARCH

- 5 **Wilders Wagyu - Frozen Genetics Sale**
wagyuulive.com
- 18 **Triangle B Ranch Production Sale**
Stigler, Oklahoma

APRIL

- 1 **M6 Ranch Bull & Female Production Sale**
Alvarado, Texas

MAY

- 13 **Passion For Prime**
Salina, Kansas

JUNE

- 10 **Bar V Wagyu Production Sale**
Salina, Kansas

JULY

- 7 **Wagyu Sekai - Royal Bloodlines Sale**
Puslinch, ON, Canada

SEPTEMBER

- 21-23 **AWA Conference**
TBD
- 30 **Wilders Wagyu Production Sale**
Turkey, North Carolina

OCTOBER

- 14 **DL Texas Ranch Wagyu Production Sale**
Montgomery, Texas
- 21 **Vermont Wagyu Production Sale 5th Edition**
Springfield, Vermont

2024

MARCH

- 16 **Triangle B Ranch Production Sale**
Stigler, Oklahoma

APRIL

- 6 **M6 Ranch Bull & Female Production Sale**
Alvarado, Texas

SEPTEMBER

- 19-21 **AWA Conference**
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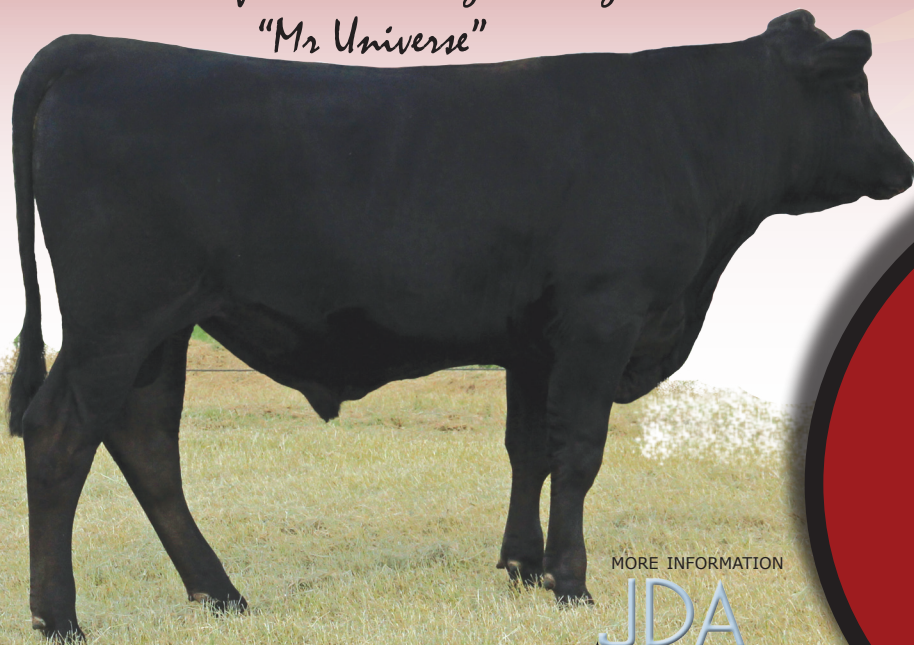
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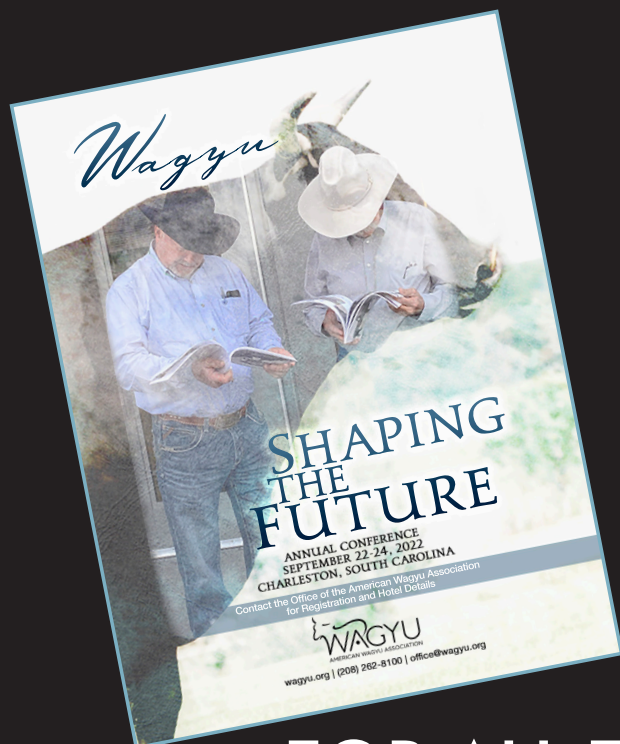


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Advertiser's Index

A To Z Feeders.....	45
Australian Wagyu Assoc.....	37
Bar V Wagyu.....	43
Black Dog Cattle Co.....	44
Brenner Cattle Co.....	45
C.D. "Butch" Booker.....	44
Callicrate Banders.....	45
Caroland Farms.....	4-5
Crescent Harbor.....	28, 44
DAR J Easy Weigh.....	44
Diamond T Ranch.....	31, 45
Findley Farms.....	51
JMK Cattle.....	2
Landgraf Ranch.....	48
Legendary Akaushi.....	3
Lone Mountain Ranch.....	23
Lucky 7 Ranch.....	45
M6 Ranch Wagyu.....	39, 45
Marble Ranch.....	45, 52
Milburn-Kroh Ranch.....	45
Morris Stock Farm.....	35
Pacific Rogue Wagyu.....	44
Passion For Prime.....	38
Protocol Technologies.....	13, 44
Ragland Wagyu.....	45
Renew Livestock Co.....	40
Schacher Auction Services.....	45
Slator Ranch.....	45
Tai Ranch.....	22, 45
Texas Ten Akaushi Cattle.....	41
Todo Santos Creek.....	35
Triangle B Ranch.....	29
TWA Fall Harvest Event.....	21
Wagyu Live.....	49
Wilder's Wagyu.....	30
Wagyu Sekai.....	27
Yuba River Ranch.....	45, 50
Vermont Wagyu.....	8-9, 44

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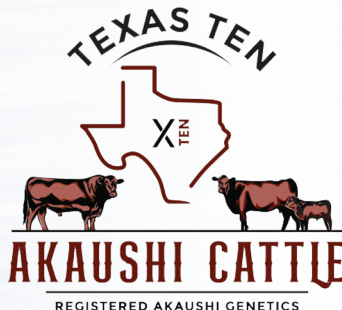
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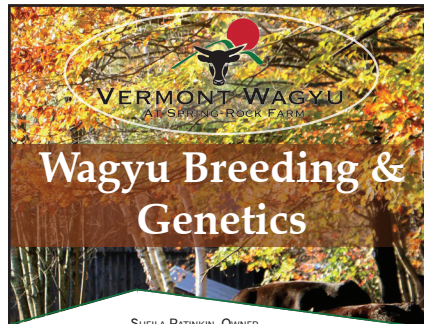
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By Ronda Applegarth

In this series, we'll be investigating the six genetic conditions known to be carried by Wagyu cattle. The intent is to help our readers be more aware of the history of the conditions and their behavior in affected cattle.

Factor XI is one of more than a dozen proteins involved in blood clotting. An inherited deficiency of Factor XI results in a bleeding disorder that has been documented in humans, dogs, and cattle and is commonly referred to as F11. The bovine form of the disease was first discovered in Holstein cattle in Ohio in 1969. It was later observed among Holsteins in Canada, England, and Australia. F11

has been identified as affecting both red and black Wagyu as well. Carriers of the defective gene are outwardly normal, while affected animals have a mild hemophilia-like disorder. Twenty five percent of offspring of mating a carrier bull to a carrier cow will be affected with Factor XI deficiency. The following table demonstrates the potential for affected offspring based on matings.

In 1975, a herd of Factor XI deficient animals was established at the University of Guelph (Canada) by identifying heifers that were carriers and breeding them to a carrier sire. This herd was proven to be invaluable in studying the genetics of the condition and its consequences for health and reproduction. Selective mating established its mode of transmission. Affected animals had less than 10 percent of normal biological activity of plasma Factor XI, with most having less than 1 percent. Carrier animals had from 20 to 60 percent of normal levels, with a mean value of 38 +

10 percent. While affected animals potentially surviving for years with no overt clinical signs, they did appear to have, as a group, higher mortality and morbidity. Affected cattle are often referred to as "poor doers".

Unlike many other blood clotting disorders, Factor XI deficiency may or

cows were also difficult to breed and offspring of planned matings suffered higher pre- and postnatal mortality, compared to normal offspring in the same herd. Furthermore, affected animals were more susceptible to diseases such as pneumonia, mastitis

MATING	OFFSPRING DISTRIBUTION		
	FREE	CARRIER	AFFECTED
<i>Free X Free</i>	100%		
<i>Free X Carrier</i>	50%	50%	
<i>Carrier X Carrier</i>	25%	50%	25%
<i>Free X Affected</i>		100%	
<i>Carrier X Affected</i>		50%	50%
<i>Affected X Affected</i>			100%

may not be accompanied by spontaneous or induced bleeding episodes. Continued bleeding from the umbilical cord is sometimes seen in affected calves. Prolonged oozing of blood following dehorning and castration may also be observed. Bleeding episodes may be catastrophic; for example, one affected cow died after calving as a result of hemorrhaging into her lungs. Affected cows frequently have pink colored colostrum. Blood in milk led to the identification of the condition in a British dairy herd. It is important to note that although F11 is encountered in Holstein and Wagyu, there are some differences. The causative insertion mutations are on a different location of the F11 gene and these variations are considered to be responsible for the differences in severity between the two breeds. Most consider F11 to be non-lethal in Wagyu.

Maintaining the small research herd of Factor XI deficient animals in Guelph proved to be a challenging experience. Some animals were lost to excessive bleeding. Affected

and metritis.

Because affected cows have a 50 percent higher frequency of being repeat breeders than normal herd mates, ovarian function was examined. Daily blood sampling showed that plasma progesterone concentrations were slower to decline at the end of the estrous cycle in affected cows. The average estrous cycle length for affected cows was longer, 24.7 + 2.1 days compared to 22.9 + 3.0 days for the control cows. Ultrasound monitoring was used to assess ovulatory follicular development. Follicular diameter was smaller in affected cows, which may be due to lower peak levels of plasma estradiol measured around ovulation.

A search of the Australian Wagyu Association's website indicates several foundation sires such as Fukutsuru 068, Hikari, Itohana 2, Itoshigenami, Kimifuku, Kitateruyasudo, Shigemaru, and Yasutanisakura are carriers. Both the American Wagyu Association and the Australian Wagyu Association offer the ability for testing for F11 when DNA testing your cattle. 🐾



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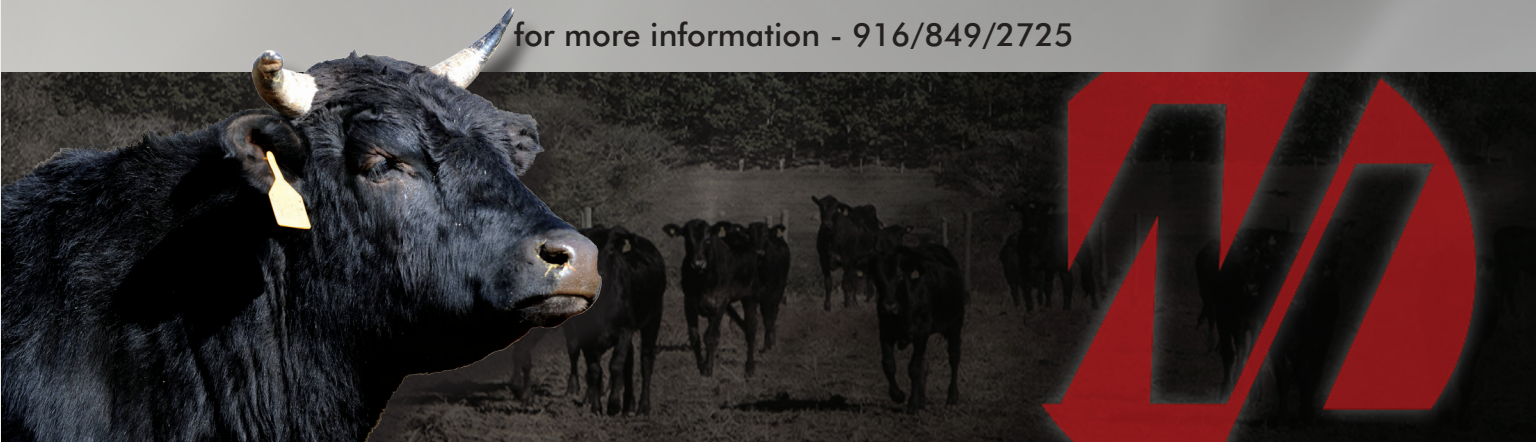
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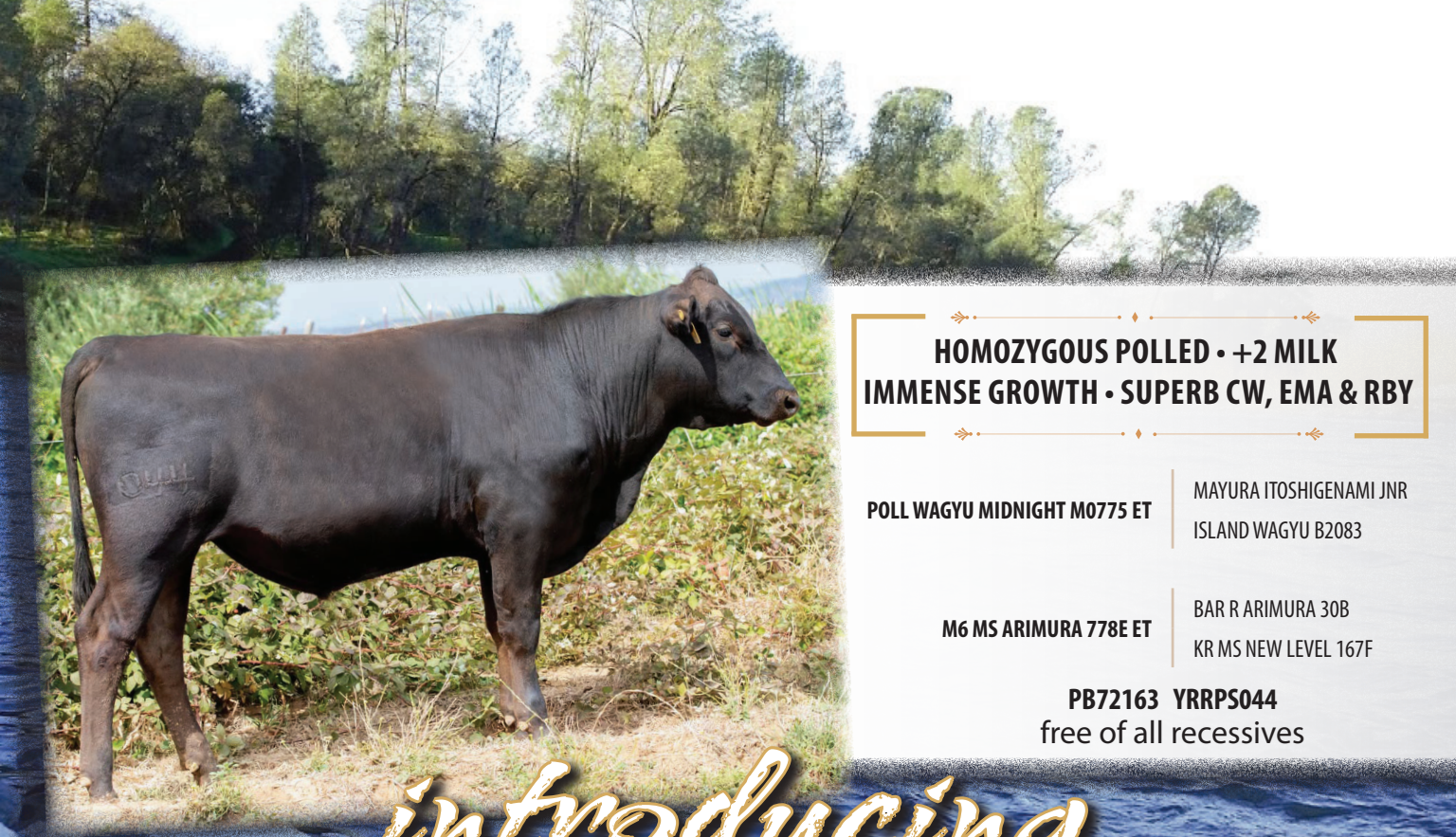
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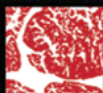
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