



Committed to Supporting Angus Youth

Charles W. and Judy Herbster have continuously supported the Angus Foundation.

by Sarah Hill, projects editor

Herbster Angus Farms, owned by Charles W. and Judy Herbster, Falls City, Neb., has a reputation for honesty, value and customer service. That reputation also includes generosity, from which the Angus Foundation and entire Angus industry has benefited.

“All of the credit for the Angus Foundation’s ability to fund the education, youth and research endeavors for the benefit of the Angus breed and beef cattle industry is due to our extremely generous charitable supporters. Charles and Judy Herbster have truly given from their hearts,” says Milford Jenkins, Angus Foundation president. “We are honored that the Herbsters continue to support the Angus Foundation as an organization that gives back to the Angus breed and agriculture industry.”

Laying a foundation

Herbster Angus Farms was homesteaded in 1847 by Charles’ great-great-grandfather, William McKendry Maddox. At age 11, Charles’ grandmother, Leta Meyers Carico,

bought 65 registered-Angus cows for him — teaching responsibility, decision-making and wise business practices.

“She had no idea that her initial investment would serve as the foundation for a world-recognized Angus herd,” says Charles. “Our philosophy has always been to acquire the best genetics available and then breed our Angus cattle to improve any weaknesses they possess.”

Herbster Angus Farms today

Today, the herd is more than 300 strong, and each registered-Angus cow is functional, sound and productive, says Ed Raithel. Raithel and his wife, Mandy, manage Herbster Angus Farms. The couple has been with the operation for 18 years.

In addition to the Raithels and their daughter, Miranda, there are four other full-time staff members, including Judy’s father, Bob. Together they make sure things run



► In 2014, Charles W. and Judy Herbster were named members of the Honorary Angus Foundation for their commitment to the Angus Foundation and the future of the Angus breed.

smoothly at Herbster Angus Farms. Vice President Brittany Barker works with Charles marketing semen to their customers.

Herbster Angus Farms has a rigid herd management program that sets high standards for each animal as defined by “function categories.” If an animal doesn’t meet those standards, they will not be retained, sold or purchased by the Herbster operation.

The “function categories” include feet and leg structure, fertility, udder quality, growth, maternal excellence, cow longevity and

► **Left, top:** Ed Raithel, who manages Herbster Angus Farms, and his daughter, Miranda, tend to a group of young bulls.

longevity of her lineage, temperament, and production records for both the individual and its dam.

“The herd’s goal is to produce bulls that are profitable for commercial cattlemen and bring value to elite breeders worldwide,” Ed says.

Many of the bulls owned and used by Herbster Angus Farms, including well-known Angus sires Harvester, International, Seedstock and Sensation, were purchased from Schaff Angus Valley of Saint Anthony, N.D.

“Our breeding program focuses on maximizing performance,” adds Ed. “We want increased growth, carcass merit and the intangibles — the things that the current EPDs (expected progeny differences) can’t predict, like the function categories.”

“Our goal is to help improve our customers’ herds and ultimately the Angus breed,” says Charles. “We provide excellent customer service to give the customer more than they expect.”

“The Herbster cow herd rivals the best cattle in the business,” says Ed. “Our cattle have to be functional, profitable and meet the rigorous demands of today’s cattlemen. They also have to look good. EPDs are important, but if you’ve got an unattractive cow with an awesome set of numbers, or she has an udder that needs to be milked out — that’s not where we’re going. We want cattle with good EPDs, but the animal has to work for all facets of the industry. Our cattle are doing what the ‘paper cows’ are doing in regards to intramuscular fat (IMF) and ribeye area (REA). Our carcass traits are improving right along with our growth.”

Since 2011, Herbster Angus Farms has hosted an annual bull sale in the spring. The 2016 sale averaged \$11,049. In addition to the sale, the operation markets semen domestically and in 12 countries.

“I make it a point to talk to many of our customers personally,” says Charles. “They are extremely happy with the results they get when using our bulls. Nothing speaks more loudly or boldly than satisfied customers.”

Off-the-farm ventures

The Herbsters also own North American Breeders Inc. in Berryville, Va., where 20 of their bulls are collected. Charles is committed to ensuring the legacy of the bull stud’s founders, Tim and Jean Schofield. North American Breeders is known for its semen collection practices and superior-quality semen.

The Herbsters have owned the Conklin Co. Inc. since 1992. Conklin has five divisions

of products, including Fastrack direct-fed microbials. Celebrating 30 years in the marketplace, Fastrack supports feed efficiency and appetite for all classes of livestock. The company also markets agriculture products that encompass the AgroVantage System — a world-class crop management program that maximizes profits and increases yields. Herbster Angus Farms uses the Conklin AgroVantage system to raise corn, soybeans, wheat and dairy-quality alfalfa hay.

In addition to agriculture, Charles is passionate about America. He was chosen to serve as the national chairman of the Agricultural and Rural Advisory Committee for the Donald J. Trump presidential campaign. Charles works with a group of agricultural leaders and elected officials supporting the Republican presidential candidate. Charles and Trump have been personal friends for more than a decade.

Charles remains involved in both the Nebraska and national Republican Party and supports presidential candidates, national, state and local elected officials.

Angus Foundation

In 2014, Charles and Judy were named members of the Honorary Angus Foundation for their commitment to the Angus Foundation and the future of the Angus breed.

“I am grateful for the generosity of the heifer donors and their investment in the Foundation,” says Charles. “We are proud to incorporate their genetics into our herd.”

For the past four years, Herbster Angus Farms has purchased the Angus Foundation Heifer Package:

- 2016 — SAV Emblynette 5368, \$230,000, donated by Schaff Angus Valley, Saint Anthony, N.D.;
- 2015 — 44 Ruby 3839, \$175,000, donated by 44 Farms, Cameron, Texas;
- 2014 — EXAR Royal Lass 2068, \$120,000, donated by Express Angus Ranches, Yukon, Okla.; and

► 2013 — Pick of the 2012 spring heifer crop, \$110,000, donated by Connealy Angus, Whitman, Neb.

The 2016 Heifer Package was the second-highest-grossing donation in the 36 years the Angus Foundation has offered the opportunity.

Angus Foundation in action

“Through my projects and membership in the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) and the wisdom and guidance of my parents and Charles and Judy, I have learned about raising cattle, strategy and hard work,” says Miranda. “Charles was born and raised on this farm and he realizes the importance of youth being raised in agriculture. Both Charles and Judy believe in our future.”

Since she was old enough to “go along,” Miranda has been on the farm learning the industry. The teen has worked side by side with her parents and been involved in every aspect of the operation. Watching over her the past 16 years, Charles and Judy have seen firsthand the impact the cattle business has had on Miranda.

“You can not buy that experience; you earn it by doing it,” says Charles.

The passion for Angus that drives Miranda and other youth has inspired Charles and Judy to invest in the NJAA and, ultimately, support them through the Angus Foundation.

S. Truett Cathy, the founder of Chick-Fil-A, was a father figure and mentored Charles and Judy for more than 15 years. Truett lived by and instilled this philosophy in the Herbsters: “My riches are my family and friends. I try to store any material wealth in my hand, not my heart, so that I always feel free to give it away when the opportunity arises.”



Editor’s Note: For more information on giving to the Angus Foundation, visit www.angusfoundation.org.



► In addition to the Raithels and their daughter, Miranda, there are four other full-time staff members, including Judy’s father, Bob. Together they make sure things run smoothly at Herbster Angus Farms. Vice President Brittany Barker works with Charles marketing semen to their customers.