

THE WAY GRANDPA USED TO DO

Advice and an inborn passion form the foundation of Allen Brothers Cattle.

by Megan Silveira, associate editor

Down a dirt road, with a set of snow-capped blue mountain peaks in the nearby horizon, Justin and Logan Allen found their paradise. When the ranch property in Baker Valley, Ore., became available, childhood memories called.

“Our grandpa was a cattle rancher for most of his life,” Logan explains.

Though their father embraced the life of a farmer, the siblings remembered days spent following behind their grandfather as he visited cattlemen on the West coast and attended livestock sales. Blaine Allen was a rep for Western Video Market, and sparked a passion in his grandsons that led to Logan asking a simple question in 2009 — right after he and Justin got their hands on a bit of good ranching ground.

“I thought, ‘Oh, maybe I should buy some bred heifers,’” he says.

Call it luck, fate or the good Lord’s intervention, but a neighbor offered the boys a group of 45 bred heifers. The commercial females came back to the homestead, and Logan and Justin split the ranching duties down the middle.

“That’s kind of where we started from,” Logan says. “Just grew as fast as we could grow. We’d throw all our money back in — all the money we made on [those females].”

Always looking forward

For about five years, that task was more than enough to keep the brothers and their families busy. Justin and his wife, Cassi, and Logan and his wife, Raelin, invested in both land and livestock.

The original property now serves as home base for

operation, and those 45 females grew to a herd of 1,000. As the numbers went up, Justin says they found their herd becoming a sea of black-hided animals.

Artificially inseminating (AI) a large group of commercial females to a registered bull resulted in a successful calving season. The calves hitting the ground were the type of animal the brothers liked.

“Just to see what one bull could do — we really started to get excited about it,” Logan remembers.

Excitement led to expansion.

The first registered females arrived in 2016. Today, 200 of the total herd are registered Angus.

“We just wanted to make a good, functional cow, and I think that Angus is probably the best place to start,” Justin explains.

The brothers wanted to buy bulls and breed for cattle that weren’t just good to look at. They wanted an animal that could thrive in all types of country, standing on a set of feet and legs that any cattleman could admire.

“We just want good, functional cattle. Big-bodied cattle that are easy-doing and good-footed,” Justin says of their needs as commercial cattlemen.

It’s a desire they saw reflected by other producers in the area.

“I think that’s what a lot of commercial ranchers around here are wanting, and they’re not finding them,” Logan adds.

So, instead of just searching for that ideal Angus semen, Justin and Logan started to produce bulls of their own. Lessons learned during their time in the commercial business served as the basis for this shift, and the pair started selling 40-50 bulls private treaty

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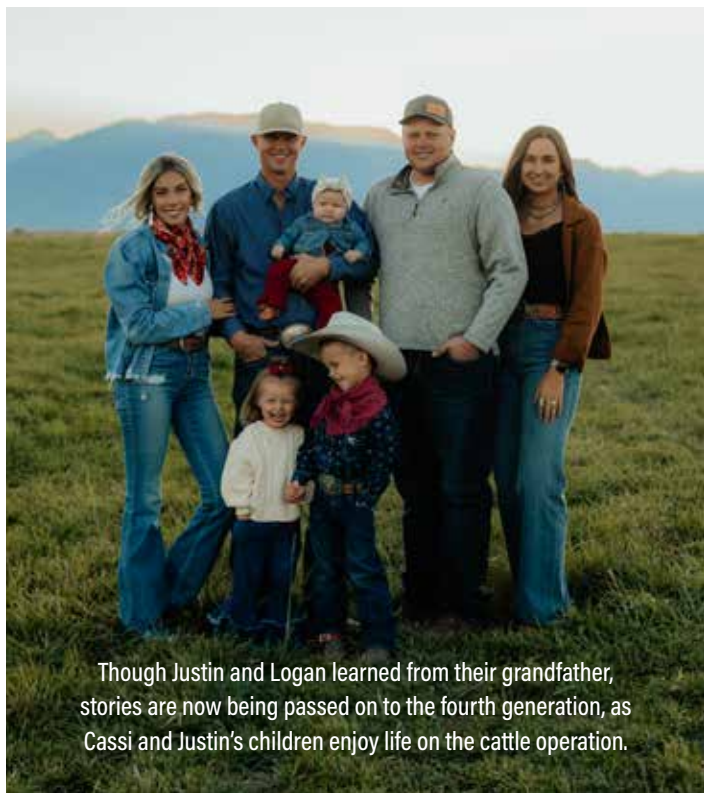
Raelin (from left), Logan, Justin and Cassi work side by side to keep the Oregon herd running.

each year.

As the demand for registered Angus genetics proved itself, Justin and Logan kicked around the idea of hosting their own sale. Construction started on facilities suited to house such an event. Barn walls went up, and plans for corrals and display pens were drafted. When they found out in 2022 there was an opening for a spring weekend the following year, Justin says they decided to take a leap.

“Dates are hard to come by in March when everyone is selling,” he explains.

While he admits their families would have preferred two or three years to prepare rather than 365 days, they



Though Justin and Logan learned from their grandfather, stories are now being passed on to the fourth generation, as Cassi and Justin's children enjoy life on the cattle operation.

marked their calendars and dove in headfirst.

“We had to push hard to get everything done,” Logan adds, now chuckling at the fact that those corrals and display pens weren’t finalized until two weeks prior to the event.

But construction wasn’t the only preparation necessary. In the past, the operation had never needed a marketing plan. An even bigger challenge was that no one in the family had planned an event like this before. Cassi realized there was just one thing to do: pray.

And pray a lot.

“You’re never really ready, right?” she told the family. “You either do it, or you don’t.”

So, they did.

The first step was to assemble a team: managers, auctioneers, communication specialists and more. In the months leading up to sale day, a website was developed, lot pictures taken, a sale book put together and mailed out.

The only thing left to do was plan for the day.

“We were stressed out for sure, with it being our first one,” Justin says. “We talked to a lot of the other breeders and took a lot of their advice as far as how the sale runs.”

That advice paid off. They welcomed guests the morning of the auction with a breakfast before selling 72 registered Angus bulls.

Raelin says the family is grateful for customers and mentors as they look back on that inaugural event. It is thanks to the input of others that they’re able to make the sale an annual tradition, she adds.

Learning from others isn’t new to the Allen brothers, however. It’s a trend they’re proud to say stretches throughout not just their careers as cattlemen, but their entire lives.

Their father has always been a source of knowledge, and friends of generations past remember the Allen name

PHOTOS BY KALEE DALKE. COURTESY OF AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION.

from their grandfather and have reached out to support the newest of the family to enter the cattle industry.

“This is a big ranching community, and my grandpa had a good reputation,” Justin says. “He knew a lot of people and was a really good man.”

It’s their grandfather who’s responsible for the hearts Justin and Logan have for cattle. The brothers aren’t just businessmen, they’re true cattlemen.

“It’s not just about buying or selling bulls,” Logan says, thinking of the people who’ve invested in his family’s operation. “A lot of [customers] are our friends.”

Even prior to last year’s sale, the Allen brothers personally deliver bulls to buyers, for the simple truth that they love to catch up with the people who matter most to them. Throughout breeding season, Justin and Logan continue to pick up the phone and check on their customers.

It’s all part of a philosophy they learned while growing up: chase quality. In all that they’ve done, Justin says they’ve never tried to cut corners, and they’ve always thought long-term.

“There [are] a lot of easier ways to make money than cattle,” Justin admits. “I think it all starts with passion though ... if we didn’t have a passion and love for the cattle, we would’ve failed for sure. When you’re passionate about something, it’s easy to work hard.”

The mindset takes grit, but the brothers wouldn’t have it any other way. It’s the way their grandpa used to do it, and it’s the way they’ll continue to do it. 