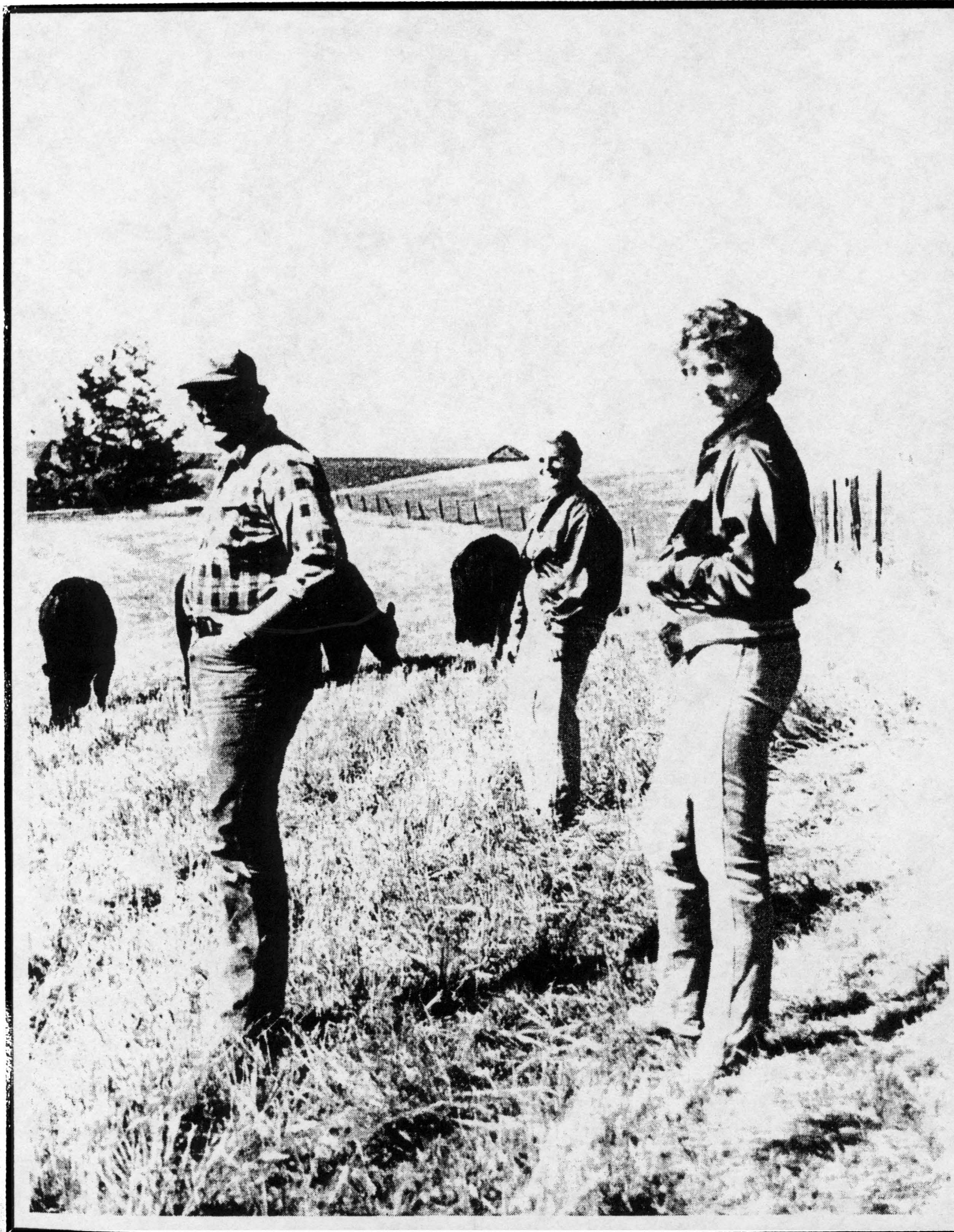


Fall calving complements an active show program



The Camas Prairie Angus operation is family run and includes Bob, left, who handles most of the breeding and management decisions, Mrs. Rylaarsdam and his sister Marilyn, right, who is in charge of the show string.

Putting a finger on what makes a family operation successful is tricky, especially when you have to consider personalities and relationships.

But one ingredient that must always be present in the "formula for success" is the ability for the family to work together for a common goal.

At Camas Prairie Angus, near Grangeville, Idaho, the Rylaarsdam family members Marinus, Tina, Bob, Marilyn and Chad Paluh are striving to produce quality Angus seed stock. And it's evident that this family has that necessary ingredient to reach their goal.

Involvement in the cattle business began when Marinus and Tina purchased a small group of purebred Angus cows who later became a foundation for a commercial herd. As Bob and Marilyn's interest in the cattle grew, the commercial herd was phased out and replaced with registered Angus cattle.

Females from Hazelbaker 44 Ranch, located on the prairie; Lettunich Bros., Payette, Idaho; and Jay N Bee Ranch, Bonners Ferry, Idaho; provided the operation with a base from which to build.

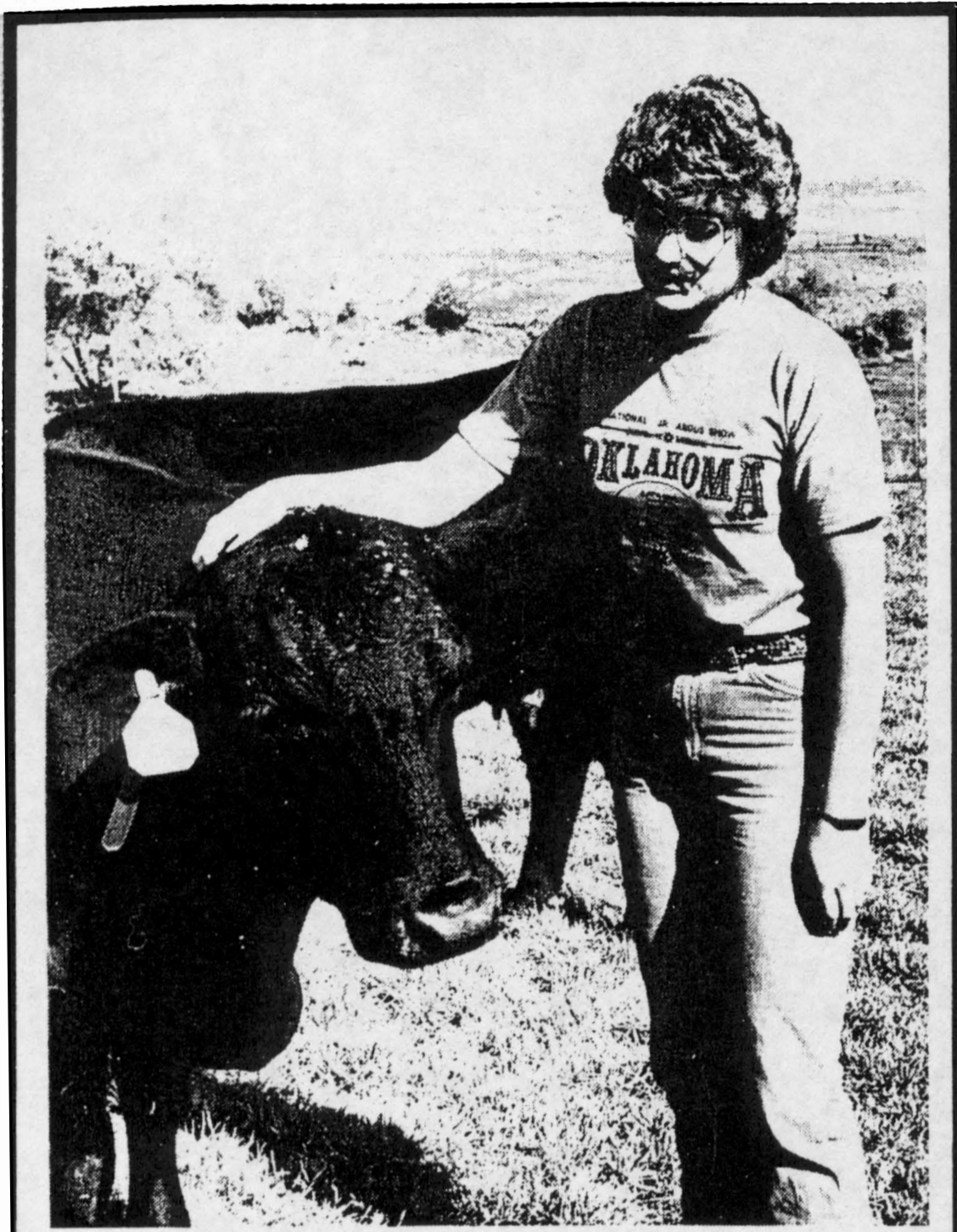
Much of the ground work and research that went into the establishment of this herd was done by Bob, who, according to the female members of the family, can memorize and recall just about anything.

"Bob is a pedigree whiz," Mrs. Rylaarsdam says. "He really studies pedigrees and can tell you most anything you'd like to know about a particular cow or cow family."

Equipped with this ability and the knowledge to visually select cattle, Bob has made many of the choices for the cow herd. Bob, who knows each animal by sight as well as pedigree, explains their objectives for the Camas Prairie program.

"We have selected cattle based on individual quality and pedigree. Our goal is to have a cow herd that is uniform in type and trait. We want them to have plenty of frame, strong maternal traits, eye appeal and a marketable pedigree."

As an example Bob mentions that although some of their original cows purchased from Hazelbakers



Over half of the Camas Prairie cow herd is on a fall-calving program. This enables the Rylaarsdams to rotate calving and field work. Unfavorable calving conditions in the spring were also part of the decision to move half the herd to a fall schedule.

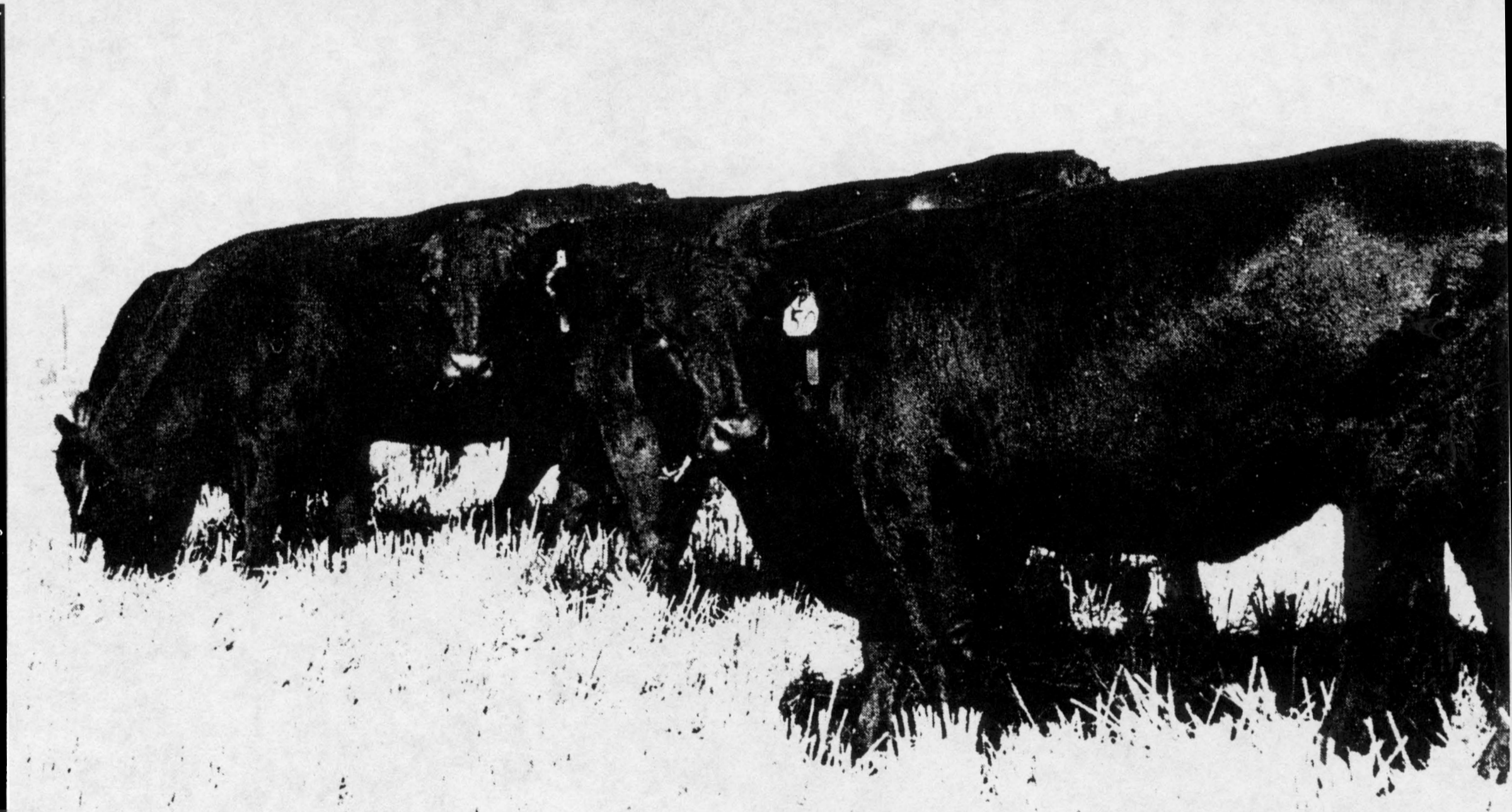
Marilyn, sporting a National Junior Angus Show teeshirt, was Idaho's representative to the Oklahoma event; 1986 will be her last year to participate in junior Angus activities.

were Canadian-bred, these females were chosen for their individual traits rather than family lines, and the lineage did not necessarily dictate which direction their breeding program followed.

As one would expect, in the ensuing years cattle with increased frame size, maternal

traits and performance have emerged and are now members of the Camas Prairie herd. And this is no accident. It has been accomplished through diligent culling and careful selection.

Bulls like Thomas Chaps, Sir Wms Warrant, Sayre Patriot and Thomas Elevation were important



Spring-calving cows graze on wheat stubble as part of the Rylaarsdam's grazing program. The feed is inexpensive and, with a mineral supplement, provides quality forage.



Showing cattle is an important part of the Camas Prairie program. Here Marilyn Rylaarsdam works hard on the show string in preparation for the Spokane National Stock Show.

sires in the building of the cow herd. Today, Greenbrae Chairman, Gold Strike and QLC Winchester are making their mark on the program. These bulls have continued to contribute frame size, the appeal and performance to the program that is now nearly 10 years old.

In those 10 years, artificial insemination has been utilized to a great extent with 95 percent of the cow herd now bred artificially.

With a large farming operation to contend with, the Rylaarsdam family has chosen to split their calving season in order to better utilize available forage and to spread the work load out over the year.

While not a common practice in many parts of the west, the family speaks highly of their fall calving program. On the prairie spring weather conditions are usually less favorable for calving than fall, which is one reason they manage their program this way. Split calving also enables the operation to sell bulls in the spring for commercial use that have an advantage over their spring-born contemporaries.

"Commercial cattlemen really like those long yearling bulls," Bob says, "They're heavier, more mature and are just better prepared to breed a larger number of cows than spring-born bulls.

"On the other hand, fall born females are harder to merchandise even if they are bred to calve in the spring."

Another reason that half of their 80-head cow herd calves in the spring is that to be competitive in the show ring it becomes necessary to have those spring calves. With the show ring a major part of their program, having spring calves has become a part of their management routine, like it or not.

Taking charge of the show string is Marilyn, who at age 21 is a veteran of the Northwest Junior show circuit. Over the past years she has led out many champions in both the owned and bred and owned divisions and has become a familiar face at junior officer meetings as well.

With 1986 marking the end of her junior eligibility, Marilyn plans

to continue showing Camas Prairie cattle.

"I really enjoy the work," she says. "I like to clip and it's always a challenge to prepare cattle for the show ring."

Serving as the family showman, each fall and spring Marilyn, with the help of other family members, takes cattle to several of the shows held in the Northwest including the Spokane National Stock Show and several Idaho fairs and field days.

In their spare time both Marilyn and Bob lead local 4-H clubs, lending their knowledge of cattle breeding and fitting to club members.

"Last year one of our club members had a steer that did well at our local show," Marilyn said. "What was so remarkable was that the steer actually had hair and was groomed. Nobody in our area had ever heard of rinsing and brushing cattle to grow hair and didn't realize the difference it would make. The boy who showed the steer was so excited about his project that he can't wait to get started this year."

While Bob and Marilyn may be more familiar to members of Northwest Angus circles, their parents Marinus and Tina are equally as involved in the cattle business at different levels.

Besides being a mother, Tina is often times chauffeur, cattle fitter, and definitely a first-class cookie baker.

It is the cooperation of the family members and their willingness to work toward a goal that is bringing success to the Camas Prairie program—a busy family to say the least but one determined to make its way in the purebred cattle business.

And while it depends on each member of the family to hold up their end, the Camas Prairie crew also works with other local Angus breeders to attract buyers to their market area. Every other year Camas Prairie bans together with Holthaus Brothers and Eckert Brothers, both of Cottonwood, to host a production sale.

Thinking small is just not the way at Camas Prairie and if determination and sheer hard work stand for anything, the Rylaarsdam family has set a course for success by working together.

"Commercial cattlemen really like those long yearling bulls," Bob says, "They're heavier, more mature and are just better prepared to breed a larger number of cows than spring-born bulls."