

# Each enterprise is part of the whole



**Martin and Mary Jorgensen**  
Jorgensen Farms  
Ideal, South Dakota

By Jim Cotton  
Editor

**B**eef has to fit the overall picture in Martin Jorgensen's schematic. As he and his family study their operation, they seek the comprehensive whole with each enterprise dovetailing with the others and contributing to greater growth than if standing alone.

Can a beef operation improve or complete the total revenue picture? Or does it draw down on the other resources and enterprises until they too are diminished? How much withdrawal from the "bank" can an integrated operation stand when other parts of the pie are crippled or compromised by one that may not justify all the time and expense?

The number crunching that goes on at Jorgensen's must be prodigious. Jorgensen Farms at Ideal, S. D., is a complex consisting of: three beef breeds operated as separate seedstock herds; a commercial cowherd; a farrow-to-finish swine farm of 150 sows utilizing AI and home-developed boars; selling commercial crossbred gilts; 5,600 acres of cropland; and a national frozen beef plant (see sidebars).

**Key to the whole** and each part is, oversimplified, cost efficiency. Every phase of every enterprise must be cost effective.

"We know cost efficiency is one of the big playing cards. It's the wild card in the deck and if you don't hold it once in a while, you're not going to be a player."

Though it might hint of a gambling streak, there's little left to chance around this firm. The risks are weighed and no one ignores the vagaries of weather, markets, or world events affecting the day-to-day and long-term planning.

But, when scanning the history and impact of Jorgensen Farms today, what emerges is tenacity. Tenacity to build, adjust, plan, wait, or forge ahead when the pieces are in place.

The forefathers here were stalwart men and women who gripped this hard and unforgiving land with a tenaciousness well-documented in regional history. They stuck, proved up, and stuck some

## First of all, the land . . .



more. Such formed the bedrock of enterprises like Jorgensen's. The profile beneath the surface is layered with a heritage of pioneer steadfastness, a respect for thrift and cost effectiveness, and for today, a view of world significance beyond the homesteaders' comprehension.

Theirs was a dawn-to-dusk existence confined to how far one could plow in a day. And though there were limitless horizons around them, they had to stick to making a furrow, a shelter, fencerow, or evening meal for that day. The world was far away and foreign and there was no time to be gazing off or neglecting one's work.

Each day he oversees his multifaceted operation, Martin Jorgensen becomes more convinced of the importance of a world view.

"I keep telling the boys -- you don't know what a fast track you're on. There's no backing out. We used to have boundaries that were almost county boundaries. Then we had state boundaries, then regional. Now we have world boundaries.

"If we don't hold onto our markets, some other nation will take what it can. We no longer have the isolation of the ocean. It's very easy for another country to ship grain to our own borders and take our markets. We need to be attuned to consumer response.

"Aquaculture is probably the most efficient means of producing protein. It's almost one-to-one. Chicken is the next step down at about one to one and a half. Pork is at two. The only hole card we have at the present time is that we're dealing with a ruminant. And how far are we from raising rabbits?"

Jorgensen learned about feeding and feed efficiency over 50 years ago when their beef history began with 16 feeders. That little package made enough profit to finance the fledgling cowherd.

A purebred Angus operation followed when the family found they could not achieve the productivity level they expected with local bulls. Henry Holzman of South Dakota State University put them on to a new concept called performance testing. With the help of Dr. Chris Dinkle of SDSU, they pursued it with increasing satisfaction.

Then came AI. Jorgensen bought AI interests in four high-performance bulls of the day: Rito N-Bar, Skylandmere 2058, Algoma Bardoliermere 48, and Algoma Bardoliermere 46. The foundation

Where the rubber meets the road is the popular and current phrase. During the earlier Jorgensen eras, there were likely similar expressions. The heartbreaking and backbreaking weren't relieved much by such capsules, but often a few choice words summed up a lot.

No silver spoons, then or now. Homesteaders were tested, and Martin (Sr.) and Gertrude (Klose) Jorgensen prevailed against the travail that measured them in the 1930s.

The Great Depression claimed many of their neighbors whose history has been swept away with the sands of the colossal wind and dirt storms of that trying time. Martin and Gertrude might have shoved on too, had they some place to go. Since there was no refuge, they weathered the drought, dust, grasshoppers, and total crop failures. Their homestead was lost, but eventually they were able to buy land for back taxes.

Staying power was all they had to rely upon, and it was forged deep in their immigrant roots.

Martin Jorgensen Sr. left Faaborg, Denmark, and immigrated to the United States in 1891 at the age of 12. His father was here waiting for him, his brother, four sisters and Mrs. Jorgensen. In 1891, the windswept expanse of the Dakotas -- 200 miles from the nearest railhead -- offered little for the faint of heart. Rugged constitutions were needed to whip the "west river" country.

**The family settled** in the White Lake, S. D., area where Martin hired out and attended school when possible for two years or so. In 1906, he homesteaded 160 acres near Murdo -- 100 miles from home. Drought drove him out.

His bride, Gertrude Klose, had filed on a homestead just south of the present site of Ideal. They were married in 1906 and are numbered among the early homesteaders of the state. A 12 x 20 dwelling was the first shelter. Forty acres of corn were broken by a walking plow. Poor crops and poor water stalked them incessantly.

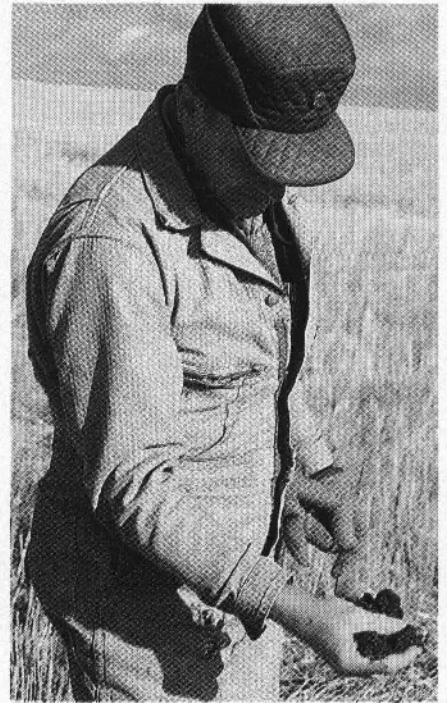
But they stayed, raised a family, and lived a full life. They bought their first tractor in 1910, their first car in 1915. They were instrumental in building the first school and telephone system in the local area.

Plagued as they were by adversity, the family seized upon each measure of progress to fortify their "staying power". The fortitude saw them through. Martin Jorgensen Sr. is named among the Eminent Farmers of South Dakota.

Surviving in South Dakota agriculture requires an intimate understanding of the land, the climate, and the plants that harmonize with Nature there. Conserving moisture is paramount. Summer fallow has been traditional, but no-till is proving its mettle on thirsty high plains. Less compaction, spongy tith, and lower input through fewer passes over the ground are payoffs.

The Jorgensen Farms encompass 5,600 acres of cropland. Four thousand acres are committed to no-till. Yields from no-till exceeded the average of the area. It's a departure from conventional agriculture, one that requires study and determination.

"I'm lucky I have two boys that have been through the ag college and are willing to come back and take a shot at it," says Martin of the farming operation



*"As we progress into more no-till, as we put more tith in the soil, more health into the plant food, we'll have more health in the animals. Won't it work that way over the long term?"*

and the other enterprises. For example, no-till challenges easy misconceptions.

**"You have to be committed to your chemical rotation. You have to know your chemicals and be aware of what you're going to plant next. And, you have to remember what chemicals you applied last year. You've got to have a long-range crop plan to make no-till work."**

Martin foresees the possibility of doing away with strip farming through no-till. The prospect of reducing chemical needs is also in the offing.

To improve tillage and reduce compaction, the company has invested in a crawler tractor, the new concept Caterpillar Challenger 65. While a general farming operation often requires several different sizes and types of power plants and tractors, the Challenger is now covering a large portion of Jorgensen's 5,600-acre grain enterprise. It achieves minimum slippage and fuel efficiency plus the compaction factor is impressive. Martin reports the big machine produces only 5.3 pounds of compaction per square inch whereas the human foot registers 8.0 pounds and a four wheel drive power unit can press down to 19-20 pounds per square inch.

Tools pulled include a 33-foot air seeder, a 36-foot Versatile blade plow, or a 35-foot chisel sweep. A 100-foot sprayer applies herbicide, and a 30-foot combine head harvests. A total of 2,500 acres were planted through the air drill this past season. Crops are milo, wheat, and oats plus silage and corn. Oats and wheat are usually a cash crop as it is too expensive presently to include in a growing ration.



"In the interest of water conservation," says Martin, "we normally plant less seed than locally recommended rates. No-till has allowed 25-30 inches more moisture depth to accumulate in the soil. That can be the difference between a crop and no crop. We know that from experience.

"People may read about no-till, they want to try it, but they may not be willing to make the commitment to it for the long-term. As a result, they have failures."

The main weeds encountered include foxtail, pigweed, pennycress, and kochia.

Jorgensen Farms are well-charted by computer. Besides keeping a running summary of costs through harvest, computerization also suggests the dimensions of fields to best utilize wide tillage, spraying, and harvesting equipment.

**Also harvested are 4,000 to 5,000 tons of cane silage for feeding the heifer calves and feeder calves throughout the winter. Cold-flow anhydrous ammonia is added to raise the nitrogen level. Four to five thousand large bales of hay are laid back for the cowherd if necessary. Alfalfa seed and both cool season and Western Wheatgrass seeds are harvested if conditions allow.**

Pastures are undergrazed to stave off erosion and leave feed when droughty conditions persist. The program has permitted an average stocking rate of seven acres per cow/calf pair.

What a contrast to 1891. Yet, it takes as much dedication and sharp observation to make the earth say "wheat" or "corn" today as back then. It's been bred to say "grass" for eons.

for Jorgensen Angus was laid. First layer was a performance program topped by a linebreeding approach. Martin points out "not all cattle can stand the genetic stress imposed by the level of linebreeding or inbreeding which we have achieved. Our Rito cattle have been able to stand

### **MARTIN JORGENSEN JR.**

*has been named, among other honors . . .*

*National Cattlemen's Assn. Businessman of the Year*

*President of the Beef Improvement Assn.*

*with brother, Don, BIF Seedstock Producers of the Year*

*Eminent Farmer of South Dakota*

*Owner, Historic Angus Herd by the American Angus Assn.*

*Master Pork Producer*

*Vice President, NCA Research and Education and Chairman of IRM Committee*

*He is also serving on Information Steering committee for NCA.*

*Member, South Dakota Industry Round Table*

*Martin has been a speaker and panelist at cattle conferences across the nation at the invitation of organizations in more than 40 states.*

up under intense linebreeding far better than the majority that are subjected to close matings." A study in itself.

The Jorgensen linebreeding program was not geared toward propagating specific pedigrees. Sought, instead, were the very top cattle on the basis of records. The superior breeders that emerged through the data were linebred cattle. As a consequence, pedigrees of Jorgensen cattle are flush with the influence of Rito N-Bar, Skylandmere 2058, Rito 707 of Ideal 533-70, Band 602 of Ideal 928, and Rito 149 of Ideal 808-72. As Martin points out, the dam of the calf is often also the dam of the sire and that both of the sire's grandsires and the dam's sire are out of the same cow.

Linebreeding is adhered to test the genetic pool for purity as well.

Outcrosses have been few on an experimental basis. Very little has been done with outside genetics. The interrelated genetics shows up in uniformity of the cattle overall.

Part of that uniformity and reproductive management comes through careful attention to calving interval across the cowherd as well as EPDs.

**Then come pelvic and scrotal measurements.** Martin and his crew have been taking scrotal measurements since 1971 and wishes he would have been aware of their importance earlier. Should comparison be made between two Jor-

gensen bulls, the one with the more favorable pelvic-scrotal measurement will move ahead.

"Pelvic measurements are somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 percent heritable, and I think it's one of the things the industry has overlooked. It can definitely be put in place and not sacrifice the growth associated with the calf."

Heifers are selected on pelvic measurements and birth weight EPDs. Martin's found 90 percent of the heifers can handle any bull they might breed to because of ample pelvic dimensions.

Most Jorgensen reference sires are not neutral bulls for birth weight, though not extreme with figures in the +6.1 to +8.7 bracket. The Jorgensen bull "1254" is one of those exceptional sires that pegs a minus 1.2 birth weight EPD (.80 accu-



*Crested Wheat is a permanent component of the overall program and is important to AI pasturing.*

*Some of the cows pictured are of Eldorado breeding. "He really earmarks his cattle," says Martin. "He's an underrated bull though he's one of the top growth bulls. He's a tremendous bull for putting cows together."*

cy) and yet can offer a yearling weight EPD of +42.8. This bull, EE 30 1254 of Ideal 5254 960, has grown to a structurally sound and correct 2,700 pounds.

Martin says, "There's no two ways about it, you lose a lot of territory when you go with a minus bull." Yet, "1254" is one of those happy exceptions.

Calving performance is again predicted by computer sort and analyzed for difficulty after the fact.

**Continuity, reliability, and linebred** cattle with a performance purpose appears to be the Jorgensen trademark if one had to condense and assign a label. Breeding and selling cattle under the domain of a science has been possible to the Jorgensens through using EPD values. Three decades of perfor-

## The ultimate integration

Practicing what the folks at Jorgensen preach means putting intact males to the test. The foundation of their Dakota Lean beef business is the slaughtering of young bulls for beef at 12 months of age. No candidate for the Dakota Lean program is older than 15 months.

"Intact bulls will not be accepted industry-wide," Martin asserts. "It takes too much discipline. It works beautifully for us."

According to their study and research, they've found a 34 percent difference in efficiency favoring young bulls over steers. This observation considers the time of birth through delivery to the retailers. Feed for the Dakota Lean program is carefully weighed and tracked through computer records. Experience has shown a steer from highly selected genetics will cut out 54 percent after total trim. A young bull with the same genetics will cut out at almost 70 percent.

Bulls have presented no handling problems, according to Martin, if the pens are kept small in size with a 50-60 head capacity. Riding problems seem to be eliminated with this approach. "We've raised a lot of bulls, and we know what it takes to handle the disposition."

Another lesson from breeding and feeding toward the retail market concerns conformation. "Width is worth \$50 an inch and height is worth three cents an inch."

**What's really convincing** to the Jorgensen team is the advantage per carcass of the lean, young bulls over older, too heavily barked steers. Jorgensens report as much as \$248 difference is possible simply through improved cutability. Higher feed efficiency and fewer days to market add to the premium.

This is not a program for everyone, Martin advises, particularly as established marketing channels discriminate against bull beef, particularly young stock. However, if one is willing to make the effort and investment in slicing out a distinct and unusual market niche, there's opportunity.

Dakota Lean is not a Certified Angus Beef. It seeks quite a different clientele and recognizes it will likely always be a small force in the total marketplace. However, it wants to serve that small, active market well to derive the loyalty and repeat business it knows is there.

"We've tried to design the whole concept of Dakota Lean from the day the calf is born to the day the product is delivered

to the consumer. We're keeping it in a narrow scope of age, because age determines tenderness more than any one thing. It's documented regardless of the level of input you're working from, that it takes twice as much to produce a pound of fat as it does a pound of lean.

"So we don't want to get into that arena now; we've stayed clear out of it. We have just enough fat to flavor that meat.

"There's another reason," he continues, "— consistent flavor. We feed these cattle no less than 100 days. We're talking about feeding cattle that are six to seven months of age. Most of that energy intake during this young age goes into muscle development. The meat has a very fine texture, high flavor, and low fat. These are some quality controls we really insist upon. And this is something that is difficult to put across the entire industry because of all the variation the industry deals with."

Greg Jorgensen, president of Dakota Lean, emphasizes the rigid specifications applied to this type of beef. "We've severely tightened up the specifications on our cattle so there's not nearly as much variation as there would be from outside cattle. If we're seeing over \$200 difference in carcass value from one extreme to the other, it's hard to imagine what the variation would be on the kill floor of a typical mainstream packing plant."

**Consistency within** an unique product has been well-received. A direct mail campaign was undertaken a year ago, and mail orders have since climbed 30-plus percent. The company's brochure targets the people concerned with health — the active lifestyle and health-conscious segment. "This group, according to research, represents 52 percent of consumers who have health concerns and are willing to pay the price."

One client is LaCosta of Carlsbad, Calif., a premier and sophisticated health spa. Dakota Lean has been advertised in health magazines and at dietary conferences. Such exposure commands a dear price, but telling the specification beef story has been convincing enough to those restaurants and spas catering to the diet conscious to justify the expense.

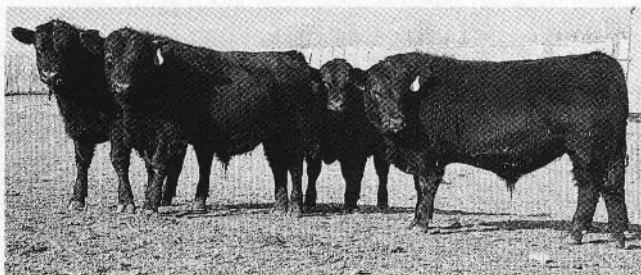
To verify its claims, the company had to have the product tested before it could advertise such on the label.

Analysis showed the beef contains 34.5 milligrams of



The ration is typically 30 percent whole corn with the balance being high moisture grain -- 28 percent -- and then wheat and oat straw. Bloomy haircoats and structural development toward soundness and efficiency have been traditional "eye" gauges. EPD values are ultimate tests for Jorgensen bulls offered as seedstock.

The firm also participates in American Angus Assn. program for proving young sire progeny.



mance evaluation with no deviation has created an enviable combination: EPD data with linebred pedigrees. This allows access to not only high levels of performance but offers additional linebred predictability as well.

Maximum EPD levels are not the main goal. The resources are not lush, and the cattle have been bred with limitations in mind. Creep is not even considered, not once since adopting an aggressive performance posture more than 30 years ago. A 45-day calving

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cholesterol in a three-ounce serving. Cholesterol typical of other sources of protein: turkey, 59 mg.; cooked chicken, 73 mg.; and white fish, 59 mg. According to Jorgensen, the American Heart Association's standard recommendation is 73 mg.

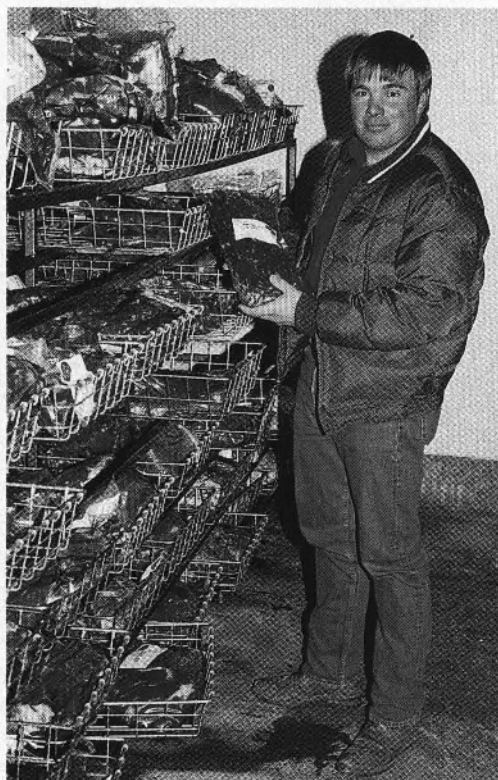
"See what we can do with beef? We can develop new products by being innovative."

The product may strike some as being different. Others find it distinctive. Mrs. Martin Jorgensen (Mary) advises new customers to not be put off by the dark color in the Cryovac packaging. It will "redden" when opened. Of special importance to note is the reduced cooking time. Much of the Dakota Lean hamburger is furnished by 90-percent lean and takes only three minutes on the grill for each side of a quarter-pounder. "It takes 30-percent less cooking time without the fat. We include a recommended cooking schedule in shipments."

Dakota Lean frozen beef can be delivered anywhere in the continental U. S. within 24 hours. Federal Express and United Parcel Service Air Express are utilized.

**Naturally, such a product finds no channel in the traditional markets. It must make its own. The process has been both revealing to the Jorgensens plus it confirms their suspicions that waiting on buyers and depending on averages does nothing to improve one's chance of survival out there.**

"We ought to be fighting for our turf in this competitive world," Martin claims. The spark behind Dakota Lean can be traced to at least one instance where Martin and Greg were offered an average price for a pen of cattle that were 12 to 13 months of age. The packer buyer was concerned about dressing percent.



*Greg Jorgensen is president of Dakota Lean Meats, Inc., a small corporation of several producers banding together to produce genetically superior cattle through Jorgensen bloodlines. The plant near Winner, S. D., is federally inspected.*

*The beef falls below the American Heart Association's guidelines for fat, cholesterol, and calories. Target market is toward the health conscious. Angus, Simmental, and Charolais slaughter cattle are sources, and sire lines that have special carcass merit will be identified.*

*The corporation's board of directors includes beef producers, a meat packager, marketing experts, and a physician specializing in allergies.*

This added fuel to the flame. Tired of hearing Jorgensen cattle needed another 30 days in the feedlot spurred the inception of "our own plant". Tired of sending cattle to town on the packer buyer's judgments, the Dakota Lean principals decided to strive toward uniformity in slaughter weights. The right step here could enhance consumer acceptance, ultimately, by presenting customers with beef that was not overly fat.

He cites hogs being sold at 245 pounds yet with the potential of growing to 800 pounds if the industry (and the consumers) didn't object. Chickens are killed at 37 days of age and find market acceptance. Today's shoppers don't ask, "How plump is that broiler?"

The goal was "for once, be priced on actual red meat difference," Martin points out. "We've got to come to that someday, because right today, all of our cattle are graded, handled, and priced on averages. It's the only barometer our low-cost and high volume processing methods have to maintain a consistent product."

Wider appearance and acceptance of branded products should have a pronounced influence over time, in Greg's opinion. "The branded products are going to eliminate the need for USDA grading," he thinks. "That was its purpose in the first place, to establish some means of standardization. Federal inspection was there for health and safety reasons."

"If there's more red meat in one animal than another, let's get paid for it," Martin says of specification marketing. "Our whole industry is being penalized for dealing on the averages. We're bypassing all kinds of opportunities for efficiency in the beef industry."

season is observed with heifers phased in 20 days ahead of the cowherd.

The heifers will weigh 850 pounds in the middle of May when they're ready to catch. The program includes synchronization and an AI breeding period of 30 days typically. Grain supplement is kept quite low as the Jorgensens have found these replacements seem to milk better if not overfed or fleshed up.

Computer search picks the EPDs and those replacements that possess desirable numbers. "We actually develop the breeding schedule by computer and employ computer matings using EPD values," Martin says. "Pelvic measurements and birthweight EPDs go into heifer selection."

One of the very persistent realities is the area's environment and climate. It's always in the background, a force that can move to center stage and trap the unprepared. Consequently, cattle adapted to the area and its worst performance are essential. They are the least cost approach. Feed conversion is a frontier, says Martin, one who speaks with experience both on the range and in the feedlot.

"Not enough emphasis has been exerted in this direction. It is a heritable trait and valuable to realize profit projections. Averages work but do contain wide variables within." Especially in a realm as difficult and expensive to measure as feed conversion.

"Using our native grasses, no creep,

and our own feed, we can bring these cattle to slaughter at a year of age with carcasses weighing 650-700 pounds, exactly what the packers want. Ideally, what do you want to change that for?

"If you look at the whole picture of costs and returns, that's what the industry is going to have to come to. We're going to have to get off this business of producing 26-27, even 20-month-old calves and trying to compete with a 37-day-old chicken or a 150-day-old pig."

He speaks of his genetic pool as one of many across the country where such economies and efficiencies are achievable. In fact, the 1987 National Angus Sire Summary reveals Jorgensen-bred bulls have helped spur the breed towards that kind of impact. National Angus Carcass Evaluation indicates 22 percent of the bulls reported were Jorgensen Ranch sires. Twenty one percent of the herd-sires with yearling EPDs over 60 pounds trace to the Jorgensen program. Thirty thousand bulls were evaluated. Martin attributes discipline, continuity, and well-defined goal-setting as responsible for such long-term significance.

Slicing 6, 8, or more months off the typical slaughter timetable begins with the cowherd. Plus that cowherd has to be in constant production or the process loses momentum, the chain becomes broken, and the flow is disrupted. Cows have to wean well, breed back as predicted, and function with a minimum reaction to climatic variations.

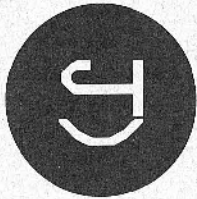
"They've got to be genetically put together so we don't have fallouts." He thinks feed efficiency and easy fleshing are probably synonymous in their broadest sense.

"We've got to have cattle that will keep a little bit of flesh on their backs," he continues, "or you don't get these cows to respond in the summer through the breeding season. We've got to really discipline ourselves to that. We've got to be very careful not to maximize anything."

"Angus works for us under all conditions. If you watch your selection, you can keep condition on these cattle better than you can any other. It's so important. If we were to get into a very adverse situation, these Angus cows can hang together better." Twelve-hundred-pound cows are clearly the rule at Jorgensens.

Young cows don't run with the mature cows. Though they're bred for their second calf, young cows will continue to be kept separate and calve separately. They will join the base herd after they've placed two calves on the ground.

## IRM's implications are far-reaching



Martin Jorgensen is chairman of NCA's National IRM Coordinating Committee. IRM stands for Integrated Resource Management, a concept that isolates problems and combines solutions towards better management.

IRM's first national leadership conference was staged in late November, 1988, and the event provided unparalleled exposure to its approach of applying coordinated information toward more profitability.

All factors influencing an operation are brought into play through IRM formulae and mechanics - agribusiness sources, financial experts, and production expertise from extension and university personnel. It's expected IRM will be applied nationally with each state tailoring the procedures and inputs to its set of conditions.

"IRM is going to revolutionize the directions of extension," Martin predicts. "That's where it really took shape and had been kicked around for quite some time. It wasn't really isolated and put on an identifiable course."

Martin explains IRM was originally titled Integrated Reproduction Management. "I became involved with it while chairman of an NCA research and education subcommittee. Through the course of a couple years, a few of us could see roadblocks unless we recaptured it."

"So we, along with Darrell Wilkes (NCA staff member) and Dr. Larry Corah of KSU extension, pushed hard for that amendment." This effort and other study produced a National IRM Coordinating Committee. Its effort in turn was devoted toward standardizing the different approaches across the states and to link the concept together. "Future programs could include dairy, swine growers, and sheepmen."

"It's a known fact that for every dollar funding for research coming out of USDA for animal agriculture, there's about \$10 for plant science. We thought we could level the playing field by joining hands. Ultimately, a lot of our research is interchangeable."

"There's work that's going to be contributed by our veterinarians, our bankers, agri-business experts, and extension specialists, and it will all be interchangeable. It all boils down to a recordkeeping system. Nothing complicated, nothing magic, just bringing it out into the open in a coordinated effort."

"There's some urgency behind it. We can either do this or bow to the conglomerates. We can bow to the introduction to a new way of life - we've got that much at stake. We have to re-focus, we have to envision what we can do for ourselves helping each other. It involves integration, conglomerates, world markets."

One of the basic tenets of IRM is projecting income toward meeting budget plans. "You either do it or you reduce your budget. You build your budget after you find out where your projections are. People make all kinds of plans but forget to keep within that perimeter of their projected income. That's what IRM addresses - help toward tying all these inputs and information together."

"We do that basically to give them the advantage of getting rebred. A lot of growth happens from two to three years of age."

**Staying tuned to the environment** becomes more important as inflation subtly or directly edges costs of production upward. The margins have to be measured periodically. The Jorgensen team is concerned with adaptability and the least cost application to the total net revenue picture. Low pressure grazing and no-till cropping where adaptable are key cogs. Practicality and applied common sense test every step toward the beginning and ending of a project.

Marketing three breeds, for example, would not be feasible for many. Just management style and personality would create a three-pronged nightmare for oth-

**"Our cattle have told us that productive, growthy cattle will be of great volume, great length, and great soundness."**

ers. But Jorgensens wanted to provide long-term and sophisticated commercial producers with the rotations they needed. The management is made complex because of the different reproduction response of Angus, Simmental, and Charolais. Jorgensens have experienced what Martin calls "fallouts" because of low energy. "Again, it's adaptability and knowing your limitations.

"There's a shift in mindset," he points out. "Easy fleshing cattle hold the playing field very well when compared with thinner-rinded cattle. There can be a vast difference under harsh conditions. You don't want to put your cows in that condition, but in this country you can't help it sometimes."

Even broad differences within the Angus breed are becoming apparent as bulls and lines are compared. He cites one side-by-side evaluation of a Jorgensen-bred bull with a son of a nationally-known sire at a feed test conducted by the University of Missouri-Columbia. Feed efficiency scores were 5.4 for the Jorgensen influence against 12.7 for the other.

"We've established this kind of Angus

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*Bryan Jorgensen with some of the day-to-day operation at the Farms. "Buying bulk fertilizer, feedstuffs, and petroleum has become an integral part of our profit picture."*



*Kim Vanneman is now computer coordinator for the operation. Mary Street, a former employee, accomplished a vast amount of programming for the Farms when it first began computerization. Satellite transmissions of market data are received and updated throughout the day.*



*New technology is employed wherever it's practicable and cost effective. Here a solar-powered fence controller proves its worth and has earned a place in the total management scheme.*

