

Faith From Deeds

Angus breeders support local FFA chapter with five years of proceeds from a lot in their production sale.

Story & photos by Kasey Brown, special projects editor

“I believe in the future of agriculture with a faith born not of words, but of deeds.” Any member of the National FFA Organization has learned those words, and they inspire action. In this case, FFA didn’t teach the words, but is benefiting from the deeds.

The parents of two FFA alumni, Kenny and Janyce Hinkle of Hinkle’s Prime Cut Angus, Nevada, Mo., have donated the entire proceeds of one of the lots in their spring production sale to benefit the Nevada FFA Chapter for the last five years.

The proceeds go to help the FFA chapter build its Nevada AgriScience Center. Advisor Bryan Gast explains that all of the advanced agriculture classes at Nevada are offered for dual credit with Missouri State, and the animal science and agronomy classes needed more lab space.

So, the chapter acquired 20 acres from the school across from the school buildings to build a research center and provide more educational and hands-on experiences.

Future of agriculture

“Ultimately, a career center is about teaching kids skills and knowledge that they need, so when they graduate, they are either ready to go right off into postsecondary education or ready to go right into the work force,” Gast says. “We hope those kids,



The Hinkle family includes (front row, from left) Elias; Easton; Kenny, holding Ean; Janyce, holding Rhett; (back row, from left) Courtney; Blake; Trevor; and Emily.

whatever their choice may be, are ready to do that.

“We have the opportunity to offer those programs and activities to help them better their knowledge and



Jim Hagale of Sawyer Creek Angus has bought the FFA lot the last several years because he believes in FFA’s benefits for youth.

get that hands-on experience that agricultural education has been built around,” he continues. “This bridges the gap and gives practicality to their education.”

With the donated cattle, the center teaches students about improved pastures and cattle management. The students are learning about herd health, artificial insemination (AI), ultrasound technology, genetic selection and economics, in addition to the day-to-day care required.

With the cattle across from the school, Gast says the operation serves as a showpiece to community members who aren’t involved with agriculture.

“We continue to educate and advocate for agriculture,”

Gast says. “Even though we are in a rural area, there are plenty of people who don’t understand ag. They are our consumers.”

Kenny Hinkle also believes in ag education and advocacy. Last fall, he organized a trip to Dodge City, Kan., and the Hy-Plains Feedyard for 35 of his partnering producers, including Nevada FFA Vice President Braden Ast. There, they learned about why genetic selection matters in the end product and about sustainability efforts through the Hy-Plains Education and Research Center. The event gave them tools to talk about ag with consumers.

These aligning goals are why Hinkle enjoys supporting the

FFA chapter. He serves on the advisory committee and plans to continue supporting the chapter. He said instead of just giving the FFA chapter money from the sale, he designated the FFA lot in the sale to give attention to the FFA chapter.

Money from the Hinkles' donated lot has been used to improve grass pastures, to buy fencing supplies, and to offset expenses to send students to leadership camps and educational contests. There are plans in the works for a new building, and future funds from community support will go to that. Gast says the chapter is fortunate to have a great support system from the community.

The FFA students appreciate the support given by the Hinkle family. The officer team serves the meal at the education event the day before the sale and the lunch during the sale.

Ast says the chapter really benefits from the Hinkles' support. The monetary contribution is an obvious answer, but he adds to that friendship, networking opportunities, producer connections, forward-thinking genetics and learning opportunities. He adds that Janyce "sets their heads straight" and always gives great encouragement. He appreciates discussing Trevor's and Courtney's FFA experiences to determine his own future.

Ast says he works with Hinkle on weekends and during school breaks and appreciates the learning



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opportunities in cattle production. He owns a small herd of cattle, all from Hinkle genetics. His involvement with both FFA and 4-H have helped prepare him to be part of the next generation of cattlemen.

For the past three years, including this year, Jim Hagale of Sawyer Creek Angus and president and COO of Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's, has bought this FFA lot, he says, because of the opportunities FFA offers young people. He and his wife have six children and 13 grandchildren. Though none of them were involved in FFA while living in Springfield, Mo., his three daughters showed Arabian horses. Through this they learned responsibility. He notes it is



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important that young people learn that there are winners and losers in life. Winning requires hard work.

The first year the FFA lot was offered, Hagale says he didn't realize it would benefit the FFA, but he quickly decided that he would help. The last two years, he purchased the heifer designated to benefit the FFA chapter. He also donated both

heifers along with last year's lot, a bred heifer, to the FFA chapter's herd. This year's lot was a bull, and he also donated the bull to the FFA chapter.

"The cattle every year are better than before. The genetics at Prime Cut Angus are terrific," he says, noting that the cattle will help advance the FFA chapter's herd. "I give a lot of credit to these young people. They do good things instead of sitting behind an electronic device."

"FFA is a terrific organization. There are so many issues with young people today, and FFA teaches time management, discipline, respect and value for life, and work ethic. Not

many organizations cover all of those bases," Hagale adds.

Hinkle says Prime Cut Angus began building piece by piece and works for continual improvement and growth. While he wasn't in FFA, both of his children were, and they have returned full-time to the ranch. The lessons taught by FFA have remained, and Prime Cut Angus shows that it believes in the future of agriculture. 