



In Pursuit of Predictable Performance

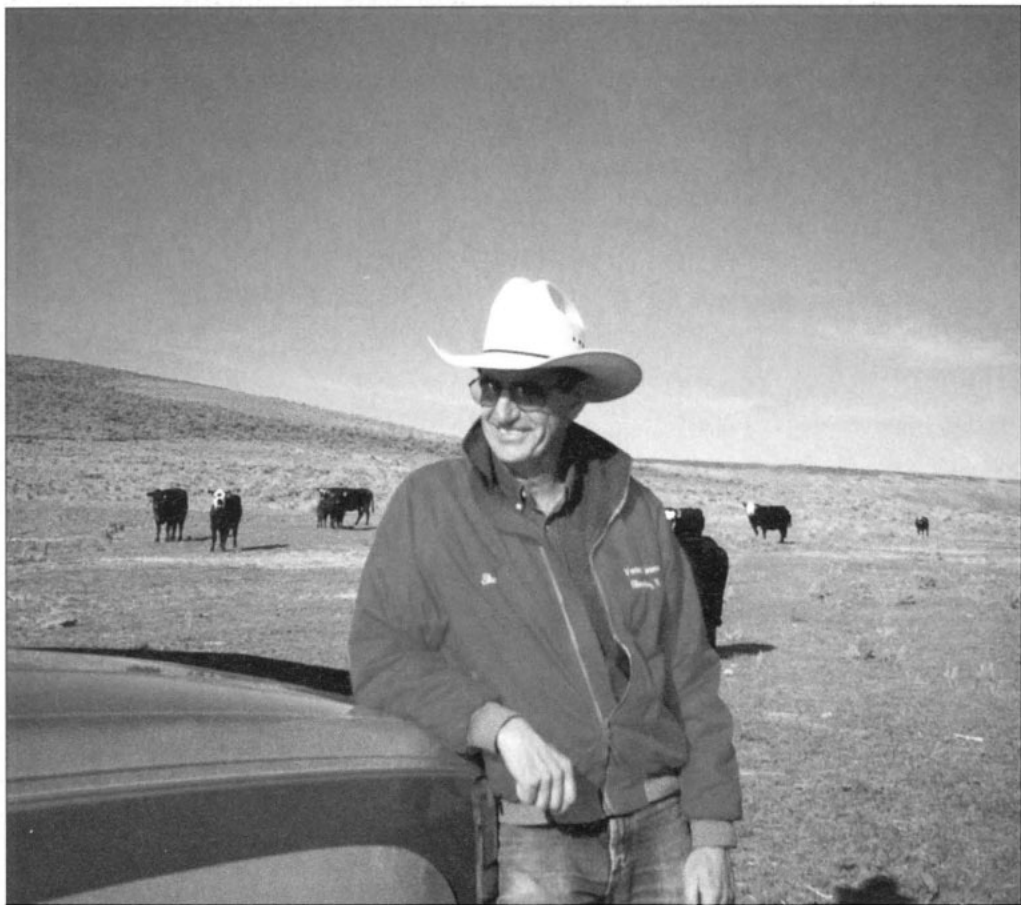
After Washington cattleman Harland Radomske discovered the Angus breed's strong carcass and maternal traits, he began converting his herd to black baldies during the mid-'80s. He purchased his first registered Angus bull in 1988. Then, a year later, he bought several purebred cows and began a registered Angus herd to complement his commercial herd at Venture Farms.

Since 1989 Venture Farms has increased its number of registered cows to the present 160 head. This is due in part to the intensified embryo transplant program developed during the past three years. Radomske explains the reason he has transplanted more than 125 embryos this spring is to produce the highest quality cattle as fast as possible.

From the time he began using Angus bulls, Radomske has been interested in sires which produce superior carcass traits without giving up any functional traits. He concentrates on developing quality carcass cattle which excel in the feedlot and grade USDA Choice or better on the rail.

Venture Farms uses carcass data as a guideline to produce purebred bulls for the commercial producer. "The intent of this data is to increase the predictability of performance in the feedlot and on the rail," says Radomske. "This helps us actively pursue the commercial producer's end product goal, which is always going to be beef.

"The future is clear. Uniformity in the end product is where we need to be headed



Washington cattleman Harland Radomske says a uniform end product is where we need to be headed.

because the consumer demands it," he says.

This spring, Radomske collected carcass data on 77 steers sired by VDAR Traveler 722 and Rito 1B2. During the same time, he was breeding cows to collect data on several sons of each of these sires. One of 722's sons, Venture Forward, was sold to ABS for \$29,000 in the "Optimum = Profit" sale held this past March. Optimum Angus is a joint marketing program between Venture Farms and Dave Duncan's High Valley Ranch.

"Obtaining carcass data for sire evaluation takes a lot of effort, energy, time and expense," says Radomske. "You definitely have to have a real desire to gain more information."

This quality-conscious cattleman believes information is essential in improving quality. This philosophy is the reason Venture Farms makes such a concentrated effort every step of the way.

"There are many forks in the road between conception and the processing plant where errors could happen," Radom-

ske says. "You have to watch and record it all carefully."

Radomske's determination in seeking more data and information about carcass traits was tested earlier this spring when his data collecting program hit one of those proverbial forks in the road. While instructions were given to keep the steers' ID tags in the ears, the tags were removed the day after he delivered them to the finishing lot.

Rather than lose two year's worth of data, he decided to DNA test the 77 steers as well as their dams and sires to re-

STORY BY KAY DEE CATLIN

gain all the lost data. They drew blood on the pen of steers and their dams and used the sires' semen samples to properly identify the progeny. Radomske says it was worth all of the time and effort retrieving the two years' accumulated data.

Confident the benefits outweigh the challenges of collecting carcass data, he advises any purebred producers interested in collecting carcass data to have their own commercial herds. He adds, however, "If you don't have the large numbers needed to provide carcass data, then find a commercial producer who is willing to go through the hard work and effort it takes to obtain the information."

A by-product of carcass data collection for Venture Farms has been selling and retaining the high quality AI-sired commercial heifers. Radomske be-

lieves this may be an incentive for a commercial producer to cooperate with purebred breeders in the carcass data collection process.

The foundation of Radom-

ske's progress in the Angus business has been his drive and determination toward producing quality through quantities of information. The American Angus Association/Certified

Angus Beef Program carcass data collection program has given him access to the data needed to gain increased performance predictability.

AJ

◆ P O S T C A R D ◆

Carr Foods — This Anchorage, Alaska, supermarket chain became the first licensed CAB Program retailer in Alaska in August 1993.

Yaohan USA — This seven-store chain, based in Los Angeles, is the only licensed retail store in the United States focused on Japanese consumers. It has been licensed since January 1993.

Lehr's Greenhouse — This San Francisco fine dining establishment uses an in-house dry aging process to enhance its Certified Angus Beef™ product. It has been licensed since 1987.

O'Kane's Irish Pub and The Warehouse Restaurant — Both these Monterey, Calif., eateries have been licensed since 1990.

Claim Jumper Restaurants — An 11-restaurant chain based in Irvine, Calif., it's one of the largest volume chains. The restaurants have been licensed since 1992.

American Hawaii Cruises executive chef, Stafford T. Decambra, Honolulu, Hawaii, is the western region finalist for the 1994 Certified Angus Beef National Culinary competition.



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