

# Angus Members Honored at BIF

*Angus-affiliated individuals were honored at the Annual Beef Improvement Federation Research Symposium and Convention June 18-21, in Brookings, S.D.*

*by BIF communications*

## Seedstock Producer of Year

The Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) presented Hinkson Angus Ranch, Cottonwood Falls, Kan., the BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year Award. This national award is annually given to a producer recognizing their dedication to improving the beef industry at the seedstock level.

Hinkson Angus Ranch is located in the Flint Hills region of east central Kansas, 12 miles southeast of Cottonwood Falls. This

region is the largest portion of the tallgrass prairie left in North America. The ranch was purchased in March 1984, when Frank Jr., wife, Marilyn, and children, Trey and Tyla, moved from West Texas with 90 head of registered Angus cows. These cows stemmed from the original registered herd started by Frank Sr. in 1959 near Lazbuddie, Texas.

Today, Hinkson Angus Ranch is owned by Frank Jr. and his son, Trey, who is the fourth generation on the ranch and manages the daily operation. Hinkson Angus consists

of 5,500 acres of owned and leased land. They calve registered Angus cows in the fall (200 head) and spring (175 head). An additional 1,000 commercial heifers are purchased each year, with the majority coming

from Hinkson bull customers.

The focus of the operation is to produce practical, balanced-trait seedstock that will work at an optimum level in all phases of the beef industry. Over the years, the Hinksons have been early to adopt new advancements

and technology. A small herd of registered Charolais cows was added in 2017, in response to the needs of some of their commercial customers to add terminal genetics. The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) nominated Hinkson Angus Ranch.

## Pioneer Award

Jerry Wulf, Morris, Minn., was presented the BIF Pioneer Award.

The award recognizes individuals who have made lasting contributions to the improvement of beef cattle, honoring those who have

had a major role in acceptance of performance reporting and documentation as the primary means to make genetic change in beef cattle.

In business for more than 60 years, the Wulf operation spans across Minnesota, South Dakota and Nebraska, and is partners with Riverview LLP, a dairy enterprise. Wulf Cattle manages 2,000 registered Angus, Limousin and Lim-Flex females, finishes 100,000 head of fed cattle annually; and has a 12,000-head grass stocker operation in western South Dakota. The operation ranks among the Top 25 Seedstock Producers with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA).

"Jerry is an industry icon, a visionary and a leader," says Joe



Hinkson Angus Ranch, Cottonwood Falls, Kan., was named the 2019 BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year. Pictured are (from left) Burt Rutherford, *BEEF* magazine, award sponsor; Marilyn and Frank Jr. Hinkson; and Lee Leachman, 2018-2019 BIF president.



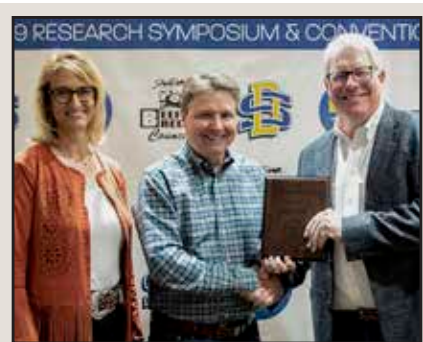
Jerry Wulf (center), Morris, Minn., receives the Beef Improvement Federation Pioneer Award. Pictured with Wulf are Joe Epperly (left), Wagonhammer Ranches, Albion, Neb., and BIF board member; and Lee Leachman (right) 2018-2019 BIF president.

Epperly, Wagonhammer Ranches, Albion, Neb. “He has taken every goal of the Beef Improvement Federation in objective selection and made it a practical reality. For more than 50 years, he has been on the cutting edge of the beef industry, and I can think of no one more deserving of the term ‘pioneer’ than him.”

An industry leader in the development of expected progeny differences (EPDs) and indexes, Wulf has contributed a tremendous amount of data toward the development of the first docility EPD in the beef industry at the North American Limousin Foundation (NALF). They were some of the first to collect large quantities of feed efficiency data and worked closely with NALF staff to produce an across-breed feed efficiency index for in-house selection as well as customer information.

## Ambassador Award

Eric Grant, Saint Joseph, Mo., was recognized with the BIF Ambassador Award. This award is given annually by BIF to a member in the media for his or her efforts in spreading the news of BIF and its principles to a larger audience.



Eric Grant (center), Saint Joseph, Mo., receives the BIF Ambassador Award. Presenting the award are Sherry Doubet (left), American Salers Association executive vice president, and Lee Leachman, 2018-2019 BIF president.

With more than 30 years of experience in communications and advertising, Eric Grant is the founder of Grant Co., which offers a unique blend of media, public relations, communications and advertising services for many clients with deep roots in agriculture.

Before launching his own company, Grant worked for the American Angus Association for 10 years, first as manager of Creative Media. In 2009, he was named the Association’s director of public relations, and finally served as the president of Angus Media. Prior to his time at the American Angus Association, Grant served as assistant editor for the National Cattlemen’s Association, senior contributing editor for *Farm Journal/Beef Today*, and contributing editor for the *American Cowboy* and *Range* magazines. His award-winning photography and articles have appeared in more than 100 publications around the world.

As president of Angus Media, Grant oversaw all Association communications, advertising and public relations efforts; the business of two leading publications, *Angus Journal* and *Angus Beef Bulletin*; and the special services division devoted to expanding breeder advertising opportunities. In addition, Grant brought the breed’s national advertising campaign fully in-house for the first time in more than 50 years, and helped establish the annual Angus Convention.

## Baker/Cundiff Honors

Fifth-generation Angus breeder Madison Butler, Vincennes, Ind., was presented BIF’s Baker/Cundiff Award.

The annual Frank Baker/Larry Cundiff Beef Improvement Essay Contest for graduate students



Madison Butler, Kansas State University, was presented the BIF Baker/Cundiff Award. Pictured (from left) are Megan Rolf, K-State associate professor and BIF board member; Butler; and Lee Leachman, 2018-2019 BIF president.

provides an opportunity to recognize outstanding student research and competitive writing in honor of Frank Baker and Larry Cundiff.

Butler is working on her master’s degree in animal breeding and genetics at Kansas State University (K-State). Her essay was titled “Review of Genetic Studies of Bull Fertility.” Butler served a year as Miss American Angus and was a member of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Board of Directors (NJAB).

Each year, winning essays are selected and published in the annual BIF Research Symposium and Annual Meeting Proceedings. Each winning author receives a \$1,000 scholarship.

Baker is widely recognized as the “Founding Father” of the BIF. He played a key leadership role in helping establish BIF in 1968 while he was chairman of the Department of Animal Science at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL).

Cundiff retired after 40 years as a research geneticist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service. He was the research leader of the genetics and breeding research unit

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at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center from 1976 until 2005. Cundiff has not only designed, conducted and published some of the most important beef breeding research of the 20th century, but has also led in the transfer of new technology to the beef industry through his continued work in BIF and his presentations made across the nation and around the world.

## Roy Wallace Scholarships

Angus members Benjamin Crites and Taylor Nikkel were presented BIF's Roy A. Wallace Memorial Scholarships. These scholarships were established to encourage young men and women interested in beef improvement to pursue those interests as Wallace did, with dedication and passion.

The graduate student award was presented to Benjamin Crites, Lexington, Ky. He completed his master's degree and doctorate at the University of Kentucky (UK) in reproductive physiology. Crites' master's project focused on incorporating gender-sorted semen into fixed-time artificial insemination protocols for beef heifers and cows. Currently, Crites is continuing his education at UK with Dr. Bridges, working on a doctorate in reproductive physiology. Their lab is evaluating the selenium form regulation on fertility in beef cattle.

During Crites' graduate studies, he also served as a beef extension associate at UK. Along with networking with producers, extension agents and extension specialists daily, this position allowed Crites to become involved in the UK Integrated Reproductive Management Farm program, an extension project that assesses the impact of stimulating long-term

behavioral changes in management practices that are designed to increase reproductive performance.

"The experiences I have acquired in extension and research activities thus



Benjamin Crites, Lexington, Ky., and Taylor Nikkel, Maple Hill, Kan., were presented Roy A. Wallace Memorial Scholarships during the BIF annual meeting and symposium. Pictured with Crites and Nikkel (center) are Norm Vincel (left) and Brian House (far right) of Select Sires, Inc.

far at UK have provided an outlook for my future endeavor," Crites says. "Regardless of where I may end up, I would like to combine my passion for cattle reproduction and genetic improvement with the opportunity to assist producers in hopes to increase their overall efficiency, productivity and profitability."

After graduating from UK, Crites plans to pursue a career in academia as an extension specialist or as a professional embryologist in the cattle industry.

Taylor Nikkel, Maple Hill, Kan., is this year's undergraduate winner. She will graduate from K-State in May 2020 with a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics.

During her time at K-State, Nikkel has taken opportunities to learn more about agricultural policy and law. In the fall of 2018, she attended the Agriculture Future of America (AFA) leadership conference, which helped her connect with peers who had similar interests in pursuing a

career path of agricultural policy.

This past semester, Nikkel interned with the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.

"The opportunity was the next step to further exploring the agricultural policy world," Nikkel says. "I am so grateful to learn from our nation's policy-makers."

This summer, Nikkel accepted an opportunity to work with Farm Credit Mid-America as a government and legislative affairs intern. Upon completion of her bachelor's degree, she plans to pursue a law degree that will allow her to better analyze and understand legislation that affects the industry.

"My career plan is to stay in the industry and to utilize my knowledge and experience to serve and lobby for America's farmers and ranchers," Nikkel says. "I hope that by continuing to learn and make connections, I will one day be able to help convey their needs and wants to our nation's lawmakers."

The Roy A. Wallace Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Memorial Fund was established by Select Sires to honor the life and career of Roy Wallace. Wallace, who worked for Select Sires for 40 years, served as vice president of beef programs and devoted his life to the improvement of beef cattle. He became involved with BIF in its infancy and was the only person to attend all of the first 40 BIF conventions. He loved what BIF stands for — bringing together purebred and commercial cattle breeders, academia and breed associations, all committed to improving beef cattle. 