

# Giving More for the Next Generation

*Yon Family Farms gives back with donation of heifer package.*

*by Peyton Schmitt, Angus Communications*

Many in the Angus business would tell you it's a family affair. Family-run, generations-old operations are common — the norm, even. Yon Family Farms has a slightly more unique story. A first-generation operation in Ridge Spring, S.C., Kevin and Lydia Yon have raised their kids in tandem with raising Angus cattle.

"Our children have actually gotten to grow up with the farm," Kevin says. "They were right here when we were putting in the first fence post."

Since that first post in 1996, the operation has evolved. Today, Kevin and Lydia work alongside their three children, Sally, Drake and Corbin, who each returned to the farm after attending college. The Yons host a spring and fall production sale, selling around 425 registered Angus bulls and 200 females annually.

## Dedication to the breed

The farm's focus is to provide high-quality, value-added cattle to satisfied customers. They aim for their customers to believe that honesty, quality, service and value are synonymous with their name.

The Yons know their customers prioritize cattle that excel in

calving ease, docility, structural soundness and the ability to wean a heavy calf that will capture Certified Angus Beef premiums.



"We'd love for every animal we produce to be able to meet all of those criteria," Lydia says. "It's a tall order to fill, but that's our goal when we breed a cow: that she's going to produce a calf better than she was, and that can go out and do all these things for their owner — whether it be us or somebody else — down the road."

It's this emphasis on quality and

family that made them the perfect candidate to donate the 2024 Angus Foundation Heifer Package female. The

heifer, Yon Sarah K1233 (AAA \*20450734), is a maternal sister to both Yon Top Cut G730 (AAA \*19476453) and Yon Saluda (AAA

+\*20336998). Yon Sarah K1233 is safe in calf to Yon Toccoa F1054 (AAA +\*19306162), with an anticipated due date of March 21, 2024.

"It was very humbling for our family to even be asked to donate the heifer package to the Angus Foundation," Kevin says. "The Sarah cow family is one of those families here at Yon Family Farms that has done extremely well."

As they've built their herd, the Yons placed emphasis on developing strong maternal traits. Kevin says they strive for cows that get bred, calve unassisted and take good care of their calf.

"They should stay good-footed; they should stay good-uddered; and they should be good cows," Kevin says.

The Yons' operation has been a primarily closed herd for the past 25

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years, capitalizing on cow families that thrive in their environment. The family says it's been gratifying to see cattle that have worked for them perform well in other parts of the country. It's this regional adaptability, coupled with exceptional performance, which makes the Sarah cow family unique. Kevin explains that beyond excelling in maternal traits, these females provide value when it comes to capturing carcass premiums.

"A little added bonus has come along on the carcass side — the Sarah family seems to transmit marbling through their offspring," Kevin says. "The Sarahs have been tried and true here at Yon Family Farms, and have done well in other places."

Beyond their eagerness to offer a female with a proven pedigree, the Yons are eager to give back to the Angus Foundation with their donation.

"We feel incredibly fortunate to have the Yon family offer this bred female from their proven donor, Yon Sarah D668," says Jaclyn Boester, Angus Foundation executive director. "The Yon family is a testament to our mission, having participated in many opportunities supported by the Angus Foundation themselves. We can't thank them enough for their dedication to the future of our breed."

Kevin and Lydia point to their children as one of the main areas they've felt the Angus Foundation's impact. Growing up in the Angus business, the Yon siblings were exposed to many opportunities through involvement in the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA).

From participating in the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) to attending the Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) and Raising the Bar conferences,



The Yon family (from left) are Jillian, holding Sullivan; Corbin; Sally Harrison and Zoe, Kevin, holding Jace Harrison; Lydia; Elloree; Drake, holding Addison; and Nicole.

Sally, Drake and Corbin gained experiences shaping them as young Angus breeders.

"They went to any LEAD or Raising the Bar that they possibly could," Kevin says. "They made some of their best friends across the country and learned so much and matured and developed leadership abilities."

When they went on to college, each responsible for financing their own education, the Yon children found support through Angus Foundation scholarships. Lydia emphasizes the sheer extent of the assistance provided to youth.

"They don't just give two or three scholarships, as a lot of organizations might offer," she says. "They give scholarships to so many deserving youth — it's amazing what the program entails."


As each child returned to the farm, however, the family has still found value in Angus Foundation programs. From attending Beef Leaders Institute to applying cutting-edge research findings, the Yons emphasize the countless ways they've benefited from the Angus Foundation's mission to advance education, youth and research.

"It's made our farm better, just through the educational opportunities and the ongoing

research that the Angus Foundation can fund," Kevin explains.

The sale of the heifer package benefits the Angus Fund, which provides unrestricted funding for a variety of programs supported by the Angus Foundation. Beef Leaders Institute, LEAD conference, Angus University and several ongoing research projects are among the numerous efforts funded by the Angus Foundation.

"We'll never repay what the Angus breed and the Angus Foundation has given to us," Kevin says. "But we appreciate the opportunity to just try to give back just a little."

The Angus Foundation Heifer Package will sell Friday, Jan. 5, 2024, prior to the start of the 85th National Angus Bull Sale during Cattlemen's Congress. The sale will start at 2 p.m. CST at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds in Oklahoma City, Okla. 

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*Editor's note: For more information about the 2024 Angus Foundation Heifer Package, contact Boester at [JBoester@Angus.org](mailto:JBoester@Angus.org) or visit [www.AngusFoundation.org](http://www.AngusFoundation.org).*