

## 2021 Angus Foundation Heifer Donors: Everybody's People

*With a reputation for genuine loyalty to their customers, Benoit Angus offers pick of heifers to headline 2021 Angus Foundation Heifer Package.*

*Story & photos by Karen Hiltbrand, American Angus Association*

Shouts reduced to a calm as the auctioneer's gavel came down for the last time of the day. With a bang, the final lot at the 31st annual Benoit Angus Bull Sale sold. The ringman tipped his felt hat and warmly thanked the winning bidder.

As the day's accounts were settled, the crowd dispersed; transportation was arranged; and Jeff Mafi, American Angus Association regional manager, delivered a firm handshake congratulating Everett Benoit and son Doug on another successful bull sale.

Everett and Bonnie Benoit of Esbon, Kan., have built a reputation of being "everybody's people" by offering quality bulls since their first sale in 1990. From Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and across the country, the Benoit's customer base now spans far and wide.

It is because of their dedication to producing high-quality Angus genetics and their genuine loyalty to

their customers that Mafi asked the Benoit's if they had interest in donating the Angus Foundation heifer package.

"After their bull sale I asked Doug, and he immediately agreed," Mafi says. "They were honored to be able to donate the heifer pick."

### Six heifers

It was the pick of a neighbor's herd from which Benoit Angus got its start, Everett says. Though a man of few words, people listen when Everett speaks.



“I used to work for an Angus neighbor. He let me pick six heifers from his herd in 1961,” he explains. “In ’69 he sold out, and I got to pick out 15 cows, and that is where I got started.”

In the beginning, Everett built his cow inventory and bull battery with the hopes of helping commercial cattlemen find success, no matter their end goal.

Brick by brick, or bull by bull, he strategically built his herd, choosing bulls like the Maximillian bloodlines.

“A bull that changed us the most is a bull we call Stacker from John Hamilton in Montana,” he says.

Bulls such as Rolling Rock Scotch Cap 1483 and HA Power Alliance 1025 were the main sires that helped to improve the cow herd in the early 1990s. More recently, the Confidence Plus bull from Connealy Angus has been a major contributor, Doug adds.

Early on, Everett quickly built a reputation for his bulls through success at the Beloit Bull Test.

“When Dad was at the Beloit Bull Test, he got such a good reputation for what his bulls could do, and so we’ve built on that,” Doug says. “He started it all, and he is the one who should have all recognition for what has happened here.”

The bull test’s sale every spring offered a vehicle to sell some bulls and to create interest in what they were selling at home private treaty. Eventually the Benoit’s got big enough to have their own sale.

## The first sale

“Our first sale was in 1990, and we said, ‘We’ll do this for 10 years.’ That was 31 years ago,” Bonnie says. “I’ve told [Everett] several times that he’s lied to me.”

At their first sale, Bonnie made the meal, where she prepared and carried

beef, baked beans and potatoes all the way from Mankato, Kan., to serve around 250 people.

“We were so proud we had that many people at our first sale,” she says.

Since then things have changed a bit at Benoit Angus, but their loyal customer base has remained the same, assures Mafi.

“They are really good folks that have a great customer base and a loyal following,” he says. “They have a really impressive set of females and genetics, and the membership throughout the country relates to them simply because they offer a product that every cattleman can relate to. From turning in data to characterize their genetics and

produce the most predictable product — they do a really impressive job.”

Thankfully, through the uncertainty of 2020, they were still able to host their annual sale and supply their bull customers with the genetics they have come to know and trust.

“We have so many good customers in the 100-mile radius of our town, here in Esbon, that come back every year,” Doug says. “It is those commercial guys that really keep us going. We appreciate them so much.”

Today Everett, Doug and Chad Benoit work together on the ranch near Esbon. They calve 400 cows every spring, and 80-100 heifers. Every year at their sale, they offer

*Continued on page 92*

“We have so many good customers in the 100-mile radius of our town, here in Esbon, that come back every year. It is those commercial guys that really keep us going. We appreciate them so much.” — Doug Benoit





150 Angus bulls. In the last few years, they have offered a few of their top heifers.

"They help prove their genetics by feeding cattle, turning in carcass data, enrolling in MaternalPlus®, and by turning in mature cow weights," Mafi says. "They are real students of breed improvement, and it is reflected in their genetics."

In addition to the cattle, Chad and Doug oversee 3,000 acres of farm ground, consisting of mainly corn and beans.

"Chad and I have never been around a person who works as hard as Dad does, and he has worked hard his entire life for everything he has," Doug says. "He started from scratch and built it up to where it is.

"Mom keeps everybody together," he adds. "She is the backbone of our operation."

## Due time

"After our bull sale, Jeff came up to us and asked if we would be interested in donating, and we

# ANGUS Foundation

Youth | Education | Research

definitely said 'yes' right away," Doug says. "The Association has given us so much. We appreciate that, and we wanted to give back. We weren't involved showing when we were little, but we know how important the junior association is."

Everett and Bonnie say they know from their five children, their grandchildren and their great-children the importance of investing in the future, specifically the youth.

The 2021 Angus Foundation Heifer offering is a unique opportunity, thanks to the generous donation by the Benoit family. This offering grants the winning bidder the chance to select a female from the entire heifer crop of Benoit Angus. The package will be offered for sale Friday, Jan. 8, 2021, to kick off the National Angus Bull Sale to be hosted during the Cattlemen's Congress in Oklahoma City, Okla. The proceeds of the sale will generate unrestricted funds to support

educational programs and scholarships.

The reputation of the Benoit family program is proven through the success of their commercial customers with their females and bulls.

Using sires like their GAR Discovery son EMAN, SydGen Enhance, BUB's Southern Charm AA31, GAR Inertia, GAR Ashland, SAV Rainfall 6846, Connealy Confidence Plus, E&B New Addition and E&B Plus One, combined with their powerful cow families like E&B 6807, Traveler 61 and E&B Erica 174, the Benoit family has built their program on a powerful foundation.

The selflessness and evident work ethic of the Benoit family embodies their commitment to not only serving cattlemen and women, but also the Angus Foundation's mission of education, youth and research. **AJ**

*Editor's note: Karen Hiltbrand is a communications specialist for the American Angus Association.*

