





HERE COMES THE *Bride*

Precise Cattle steps into new territory as they host their first auction.

by Megan Silveira, assistant editor

The date has been set, the invitations sent out, the preparations made.

The bride is eager for the big day — her black hair has been brushed until it shines and, if you ask Ian McClure, she's even “got her lipstick on.”

Yet this isn't your typical wedding. The bride isn't too concerned about her table manners, and she prefers to walk on four legs instead of two. She doesn't know who the groom is yet, but she knows she'll be leaving the altar with a new place to call home. The officiant won't be attending, but an auctioneer will be leading the ceremony.

The real celebration is the inaugural auction for McClure and his family at Precise Cattle in Watkinsville, Ga.

“It's all kind of like a wedding day,” McClure explains of the preparation required to host an event like this for the first time.

The operation will offer an open house and dinner the night before the auction, and the main attraction will start the next day at 12:30.

“I'm just excited to see everything come to fruition,” adds Lauren, Ian's wife. “It's going to be a little nerve-wracking, but overall I think it'll be exciting.”

AN ANGUS ENGAGEMENT

Ian didn't grow up involved in the livestock industry, but often found himself dreaming of owning a herd of cattle.

“I've always loved animals,” he says, “and I was just always intrigued by cattle.”

After owning Precise Custom Homes for 18 years and Precise Landscape and Design for 23 years, he still found his mind returning to thoughts of livestock.

He originally purchased SimAngus and Charolais cattle, but after discovering what *The Business Breed* stood for, he made the transition to a herd of registered, black-hided cattle.

“We closed in on the Angus breed because of the representation and clientele base and the standards,” Ian explains.

As Ian's pride in representing the Angus breed has grown, so has his herd. Today, the couple manages 300 registered cows.

The view of a big, black-hided female out on green grass is one Ian and Lauren believe can't be beat. Ian says his Angus cows check the boxes for what he likes phenotypically without sacrificing anything on paper or in terms of performance.

“At the end of the day, I want front-pasture cattle,” he says. He lists his ideal cow as being deep, soggy and powerful — cows that have their lipstick on. “It's just about the look, and that's just what I like.”

The cattle herd is more than just strictly business for this family, however. Ian and Lauren have two daughters: Ava, 13, and Emma, 1. All four find themselves at peace in

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the pasture and spend many evenings out checking cattle together.

“There’s a peace about looking at cattle,” Ian explains. “It’s a time to be able to slow down and just relax.”

THE BIG DAY

Lauren says it was back in February after attending another auction that Ian came home and told her it was time to make the leap and host their own sale.

“Some of my friends were starting to ask; and it was at a point where we had built for so many years, and I had finally bred the cattle that I was wanting to,” Ian says.

Knowing her husband’s dedication to excellence, Lauren was just as eager to commit to hosting an auction. She says Ian had been taking all the steps needed to reach this level — he just needed that final push in the right direction. Then all they had left to do was pick a date.

Once the calendar had been marked, Lauren says the phone calls began. With this being the first sale either of them had put on, she says they turned to a support team to get the ball rolling.

Sale managers, breeders, friends, family — the McClures say they were overwhelmed by the encouragement and help they’ve received along this journey.

“It’s like learning to put together the pieces of the puzzle,” Lauren says.

Looking back on the preparation, Ian says there isn’t much he would change. He has a list of steps he followed from the beginning that he claims have kept him on the straight and narrow.

First, he says breeders should consult a good sales manager before pulling the trigger. Besides knowing the ins and outs of the livestock marketing world, Ian says a sale manager can help decide if an operation’s ready to take the leap.

The next challenge arose in identifying which cattle should be sold. Ian says it’s a delicate balance between providing quality genetics but also ensuring an operation will continue to grow once the gavel has fallen for the final time.

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Precisely WHAT PEOPLE WANT

Lauren McClure has a full schedule — she helps her husband, Ian, on their Angus operation in Watkinsville, Ga., works at the local hospital as a radiographer and raises two beautiful daughters.

As if that wasn't enough, she's found a new passion thanks to Precise Cattle. For the past two years, Lauren's sold meat to local families and restaurants from their cattle operation.

As the family was first getting started in the Angus business, they had a bull that didn't pass a semen test. Ian took him to be processed, and when the meat came back home, they knew this was a product worth sharing.

"Instead of taking that animal to the stockyard, I got the idea, 'Let's utilize that animal to its full potential,'" Ian explains.

She and Ian gave meat to friends, family and clients. When people came back wanting more, they ran with the idea. The operation is currently presold all the way to January 2022.

"It's grown little by little," Lauren says. "I just like to do it. I like seeing the look on people's faces after they've received their order."

This isn't just a side hustle for the family. It's become a way to proudly represent the Angus breed and pull back the curtain for consumers.

Ian and Lauren invite clients and chefs to their home to show them all sides of the cattle industry — what it takes to get an animal from the farm to the table.

Ian says it's a unique opportunity for people. They've had visitors touch a cow for the first time at their home and taken the chance to teach them about the work that goes into producing a high-quality end product. Oftentimes during these visits, Ian says he pulls out his phone and opens American Angus Association's app, going so far as to break down expected progeny differences (EPDs) for guests.

At the end of the day, Ian and Lauren find this new business venture as a way to promote the Angus breed and build relationships with people across the country. Serving up an educational experience is just a bonus.



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— IAN McCLURE



“We looked at each individual cow, heifer and pair. I wanted something to sell that represented me and what I’ve worked for and what I stand for,” Ian says. “Our goal for this sale and all future sales is to provide some pretty elite animals.”

Then comes the timeline with the livestock. Ian says there’s an art behind picturing cattle. From the proper feeding program beforehand to clipping and even posing, picture day was a whole new experience for the team at Precise Cattle.

Marketing an event like this is another hurdle, and one that Ian passes all credit for to Lauren and their sale manager.

Lauren runs the operation’s communications efforts, handling all social media accounts and the website. Ian and their two herdsmen, Danny Padilla and James Henson, handle the livestock.

“He works on the outside, I work on the inside,” Lauren explains with a smile.

The final puzzle piece in this inaugural auction has been preparing for the day of the event.

Standing at the top of the green hill where he and Lauren were married and where the auction

will also be hosted, Ian eagerly images the setup for the upcoming sale. Though the auction block isn’t yet in place on the hill, Ian can already picture fellow Angus producers standing in the same spot, surveying the cattle he’s proud to offer.

“It’s not just the cattle,” he says. “We want to interact with people. We want people to know us.”

This auction is hopefully the first of many for Precise Cattle. The McClure family is eager for the future and has plans to continue to grow their Angus herd, making progressive strides in the industry.

“I want to be the best,” Ian says. “I want to always constantly improve. That’s the name of all my businesses.”

As the big day approaches, the nerves are certainly setting in. Still, both Ian and Lauren are letting the excitement and anticipation of the sale reign supreme.

The pair can’t wait for producers to say “I do” to the chance to take genetics from the herd at Precise Cattle home. **AJ**