

Never Give Up



Realizing that persistence pays off, a junior Angus member strives to reach his goals.

by *Stephanie Veldman*

“You’re too young,” is a phrase John Langholz has heard a lot the last few years. He was told he was too young to compete at the state fair after he won his division with an Angus heifer at the county fair in 2000. The next year he won the Angus cow-calf pair division with the heifer he had shown the year before, but he was still too young to go to the state fair.

In Minnesota, youth have to earn the right to participate at the state fair by winning at the county level. The rules also require competitors to complete the sixth grade to be eligible. John had just completed fifth grade.

“I won two years in a row and still wasn’t old enough to go,” John says. “It was disappointing.”

John and his parents, Willie and Mary Langholz, live on a farm outside Lake Benton, Minn. His father says that even though John was disappointed about not showing at the Minnesota State Fair, he worked extremely hard with his animals and didn’t give up.

“Pipestone County has a really tough fair,” Willie says, adding that Shorthorn breeder Herm Myer’s daughters and granddaughters had won the cow-calf pair division 14 consecutive times. John’s 2001 win broke the streak. But John was too young to go to the state fair. Myer’s granddaughter replaced John in the state fair lineup and stood reserve champion cow-calf pair over all breeds.

Fair results

In 2002 John showed in the cow-calf pair division for the second time, showing the same cow, at the Pipestone County

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62

► **Above:** John Langholz (right), Lake Benton, Minn., says it is important to work with his cattle every day during the summer so they are ready to show. His father, Willie, watches as he sets up his bull, Fortune of War.

► **Right:** John has qualified to go to the Minnesota State Fair three times; however, the first two times he was too young to compete. The rules require competitors to complete sixth grade to be eligible. The second time he qualified, he had just completed fifth grade. “I won two years in a row and still wasn’t old enough to go,” he says.



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Never Give Up CONTINUED FROM PAGE 61

Fair. His persistence paid off when he won again and was finally of the age to compete at the Minnesota State Fair.

"We were pretty excited about going," Willie says.

At the state fair John won the Angus cow-calf pair division, then supreme champion over all breeds. The cow he showed, LFA Tonka 2 29, is a March 1999 daughter of CS Double Fortune 357.

"She's not a real striking cow, but in the cow-calf division they judge on how she produces, and she has always produced a good calf. She has a good udder, and she really milks. The calves really grow on her," Willie says.

"I nicknamed her Miss Congeniality because she has a bit of an attitude," John says. "She likes to go where she wants to, though she does show really well."

Show philosophy

The Langholz family moved from Rochester, Minn., to the 270-acre farm by Lake Benton in 1989. Willie bought his first three Angus cows in 1992 to start his herd. "I had some cattle when I was younger. They weren't Angus, but I wanted to start with something good and go from there," he says.

Because of their relative inexperience with raising cattle, the knowledge learned from their neighbors has been essential, especially when John decided he wanted to learn how to show.

"He's been adopted by four guys; we call



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE VELDMAN

"When he gets out of school he is in charge of taking care of his animals," John's dad says. "There is nobody that is involved in those cattle other than John, and that is what makes it so much fun when he actually wins."

them the 'four uncles,' Willie says. "They have really helped us in the cattle business."

Morrie VanHoecke, Pipestone, Minn., taught John how to trim and clip. Gregg Butman from Cottonwood Angus Farms, Pipestone, taught John how to set up his animals. John Schmidt, Schmidt Herefords, Pipestone; and Dean Stoltenberg, Diamond S Cattle, Jasper, Minn., also provided help.

John says he has done well in the showing, but he doesn't always come in first, or even second.

"Our philosophy is we go with what we raise, and we go to have fun," John says.

That philosophy has been tested at more

than one show. "One year in Fargo (N.D.) I placed last in every class I was in," John says.

John is very meticulous about working with his cattle every day during the summer so they are ready to show.

"I just do basic stuff like washing and blowing them out every day and tying their heads up every day," he says. He also practices walking them and setting them up.

"When he gets out of school he is in charge of taking care of his animals," Willie says. "There is nobody that is involved in those cattle other than John, and that is what makes it so much fun when he actually wins."

Other interests

While he is not busy showing and working with his cattle, John has developed another hobby — photography. He says he enjoys taking pictures of landscapes and cattle. For Christmas last year, he received a Cannon Rebel® camera with interchangeable lenses.

"It is something I like to do in my spare time," he says. "In 4-H I had it as a project."

John wasn't able to attend the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Louisville, Ky., this year, but he was able to participate in the photography contest judged prior to the event.

He won first place in the junior landscape category. "I was very surprised," he says. "It was one of those 'at the moment' pictures, and I was able to take it."

He says he plans to continue to enter the contest as long as he has a good picture to submit.



PHOTO BY CARA BIEROTH

► All animals that John shows are born and raised on the farm. "Our philosophy is we go with what we raise, and we go to have fun," he says.