Three Honored at Repro Meeting

Spare, Dockter and Larges recognized for contributions to advancement of reproductive technology at 2017 Applied Reproductive Strategies in Beef Cattle Symposium.

*by **Angie Denton,** Kansas State University*

The Beef Reproduction Leadership Team honored two individuals with its Service to Industry award and bestowed its first-ever Pioneer Award Aug. 29 during the Applied Reproductive Strategies in Beef Cattle (ARSBC) Symposium in Manhattan, Kan.

The Service to Industry Award recognizes outstanding contributions by individuals working in the artificial insemination (AI) industry toward the application or increased use of AI and estrous synchronization by beef producers. Recognized in Manhattan were Randall Spare of Ashland, Kan., and David Dockter.

Randall Spare

Spare has dedicated more than a quarter century as a veterinary practitioner educating his clients relative to the value of genetic improvement through AI and estrous synchronization.

"Veterinarians making an impact in the areas of AI and estrous synchronization among commercial cow-calf producers are unconventional thinkers," says Mark Gardiner of Gardiner Angus Ranch, Ashland. "Dr. Spare continually stresses the importance of client goals, total health and wellness, market access, as well as risk tolerance in the context of accelerated improvements through AI and synchronization. Randall Spare has a true stake in his client's success. He has made the effort to have skin in the game by using all of this technology on his own operation, before applying it on theirs."

Under Spare's leadership, the Ashland Veterinary Center (AVC) offers comprehensive reproductive services in a four-state area surrounding Ashland. Today, the AVC team offers turnkey reproductive services. From semen sales, AI, fetal sexing and palpation, Spare is responsible for AI and synchronization of 10,000-20,000 commercial females per year.

"From the first interaction with a client considering AI and synchronization, Spare is motivated to assist in accessing a value-added market. AI and synchronization schemes simply serve as a starting point for clients determined to make herd improvements," Gardiner adds. "AI and synchronization enable a client to take advantage of market timing. To further accelerate progress, Dr. Spare encourages clients to add genomic testing as a benchmarking tool, adding to the precision and progress of an AI and synchronization program. Any client willing to embrace Spare's enthusiasm for herd improvement through AI and synchronization will ultimately increase the opportunity for profitability and farm-to-fork sustainability."

David Dockter

David Dockter has served the AI industry for 55 years and is currently a reproduction specialist/beef sales representative for Minnesota/Select Sires Cooperative Inc. in the state of North Dakota.

"David has played an integral role in the adoption of new technologies in AI and synchronization throughout North Dakota as they became available," says Brian House, Select Sires vice president and beef program manager. "His dedication to his customers is unmatched, and the success of his customers has truly been his passion throughout his career. Few in our business can claim to have reached as many individuals as David. Having taught hundreds of AI schools and thousands of individuals, David takes his responsibilities very seriously with not only great teaching techniques, but follow-up after the training."

In recent years, David has represented World Wide Sires in Kazakhstan, providing

►Randall Spare (center) of Ashland, Kan., receives the Service to Industry Award from Stan Lock (left), Republic, Mo.; and Brian House (right), Select Sires, Plain City, Ohio.

►David Dockter (center) Mandan, N.D., receives the Service to Industry Award from Lock (left); and House (right).

► Marvin Large (seated, center) and the late Arlene Large, Imperial, Neb., were presented the first Pioneer Award from the Beef Reproductive Task Force. Pictured at the awards presentation are (seated, from left) Sandy Large, Regina Pederson, Marvin Large, Myra Large, (standing, from left) Larry Rowden, Travis Chrisman, Kevin Large, Stuart Pederson, Dean Large, Joe Large, Dale Large, Ryan Large and Willie Altenburg.

training in AI technique and synchronization in a growing market. While some may view this as a challenge, David views this as another opportunity to spread the "gospel" of AI to producers that are eager to learn.

"The enthusiasm that Dave gives to the beef industry is second to none," says Kris Ringwall, Dickinson Research Extension Center director. "Dave knows more people, more cows and more individual producer programs than anyone I know. His dedication not only to his job, but to the people he serves is extremely high. You can always count on Dave to give a helping hand."

Marvin and Arlene Large

The Beef Reproduction Leadership Team presented Marvin and Arlene Large its inaugural Pioneer Award, which was created to recognize outstanding contributions toward reproductive tools, technology or service that has broadly benefited the U.S. beef industry.

Subsequent Pioneer Awards will be named the Marvin and Arlene Large Pioneer Award.

"No one may have contributed to the development and feasibility of fixed-time AI programs more than the Larges Breeding Barn," says Willie Altenburg, Select Sires beef development advisor, during the award presentation. "The breeding barn was in place when fixed-time insemination was a theory. It made fixed-time insemination a possibility."

Invented and produced by the couple, the Larges Breeding Barn was the tool needed by producers when results from fixed-timed AI protocols reached industry-acceptable levels. The availability of this breeding barn and the ease it brought to timed-AI has been attributed to the increased use of fixed-timed AI.

Today, Larges Breeding Barns can be found in 31 states, Australia, Canada and Russia. The family has sold a total of 497 barns, including 286 double-stall barns, 70 single-stall barns, 105 single-stall stationary barns, 20 double-stall stationary barns, four three-stall stationary barns, two barns to Canada, four to Australia and six to Russia/Kazakhstan.

During the awards presentation, Altenburg estimated more than 6 million straws of semen have been used to inseminate cattle in Larges Breeding Barns, which would represent 12% of all semen sold during the past 25 years, according to the National Association of Animal Breeders (NAAB) and custom semen sales.

"The breeding barn has been a game changer for AI business growth in the last 25 years," he said.

More than 340 producers, veterinarians and representatives from the AI and pharmaceutical industries were in attendance at this year's ARSBC. The Beef Reproduction Task Force, together with the national Beef Reproduction Leadership Team, work to promote wider adoption of reproductive technologies among cow-calf producers; educate cow-calf producers in management considerations that will increase the likelihood of successful AI breeding; and educate producers in marketing options to capture benefits that result from use of improved reproductive technologies.

The group's mission is to optimize the productivity and improve the profitability of cow-calf operations by facilitating the adoption of cost-effective, applied reproductive technologies. The goal is to educate beef cattle producers on sustainable reproductive management systems to maintain U.S. leadership and competitiveness in the world beef market.

For more information about this year's symposium, visit *www.appliedreprostrategies.com.*