

# 2016 U.S. Livestock Industry

## Leader of the Year

Wyoming Angus rancher Jim Jensen presented prestigious award during the NWSS.

by *Shelby Mettlen*, assistant editor



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LUCKY 7 ANGUS

**F**ourth-generation Wyoming cattleman and owner of Lucky 7 Angus in Boulder, Wyo., Jim Jensen was named the 2016 U.S. Industry Livestock Leader of the Year during the National Western Stock Show (NWSS). Jensen and Lucky 7 Angus were presented the honor Jan. 15 during the National Western Rodeo in Denver, Colo. The award is jointly sponsored by NWSS and the Green

Family Foundation, which has been recognizing livestock industry leaders since 1946.

Jensen heads the family-run operation that dates back more than 120 years. Despite his experience within the livestock business, Jensen says he was surprised to have received the award. He considers Lucky 7 Angus a working ranch that focuses on an out-of-the-

box approach to proving their bulls to customers. Jensen's slogan "Cowboy Bulls" might clue customers in that the ranch provides some of the toughest bulls in the industry.

Lucky 7 Angus began when Jim's great-grandfather, James, emigrated from Denmark to the Boulder, Wyo., area in 1895. The first winter proved to be a struggle in a



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region infamous for its snow and bitter cold. James would clear snow with a shovel to provide access to grass for his three horses and seven cows. He was a cattleman who put others before himself and strove to be the best at what he did, according to the family. That goal remains the driving force for his great-grandson to this day.

On the wall of the main office at Lucky 7 headquarters hangs a plaque that reads, "Our goal is to have the most profitable customers in the livestock industry." Jensen has made great progress in achieving this goal, and his accomplishments prove it.

To protect the ranch's high-elevation breeders, Jensen was among the first to create minimum standards for pulmonary arterial pressure, or PAP, testing. He set a benchmark of 90% of bulls tested at 7,200 feet having a PAP score of 44 mmHg or below. These minimum standards were implemented to ensure all high-elevation breeders have an accurate test to help guard against brisket disease. In addition, Jensen was one of the early breeders who implemented a GrowSafe® Feed Efficiency Test System into his seedstock operation, leading the way to profitability through feed-efficient genetics.

Jensen says Lucky 7's real-ranch approach to raising bulls has given him the opportunity to provide a four-year guarantee on all the bulls they raise. Nestled in a valley in one of the coldest parts of the country, Lucky 7's cows and bulls roam more than 10,000 acres during the summer and remain on pasture when it's -40° F.

"We don't trim any feet. We let them endure all those tougher conditions and really put those bulls to the test," Jensen said. "We're trying to make our customers more profitable by proving those bulls early and producing bulls that are more durable."

He says those harsh conditions are what led to "huge increases" in feed efficiency in Lucky 7's bulls, which prompted him to implement the GrowSafe system.

Jensen's leadership in profitability has propelled the family ranch to grow from a 350-cow operation 21 years ago to a 2,300-cow operation today. Jensen's commitment to the livestock industry is honored by his acceptance of the U.S. Industry Livestock Leader of the Year Award.

"We have a great team at Lucky 7 Angus, and I am honored to have been chosen to receive such a prestigious award," Jensen said.

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► Jim Jensen of Boulder, Wyo., is presented a plaque representing the 2016 Livestock Leader of the Year Award.



► Above: Lucky 7's cows and bulls roam more than 10,000 acres during the summer and remain on pasture when it is -40° F.



► Left: Jensen's leadership in profitability has propelled his operation from 350 cows to 2,300 cows.