

2008 Cattle Industry Annual

Yolo Named ESAP Winner

by Joe Schuele



Yolo Land & Cattle Co. was named the national winner of the 2008 Environmental Stewardship Award during a Thursday evening reception at the 2008 Cattle Industry Annual Convention and NCBA Trade Show. The Hank Stone family, owners of Yolo Land & Cattle Co., were initially chosen in summer 2007 as the regional winner to represent the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's (NCBA's) Region VI.

The award program, which is sponsored by the National Cattlemen's Foundation (NCF), NCBA, Dow AgroSciences, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, is now in its 17th year.

"This year the selection of a national winner was extremely difficult, with six strong applications vying for the national award," explains Iowa cattleman Dave Petty, chairman of the selection committee. "All of these stewards are operating in difficult environmental conditions, and they are going above and beyond. It gives us great pleasure to award the Stone Family, who has been operating for generations, as this year's national winner. Their commitment to the cattle industry and preserving their land, speaks volumes about the operation's commitment to conservation."

"Recognizing the importance of

sustainability has allowed the family to collaborate with multiple local, state and national groups to restore hundreds of acres of grasslands, riparian habitat and stock ponds with California native flora," Petty added. "Yolo Land & Cattle Company has served as leaders in the industry and a model of innovation. By placing large portions of their land into conservation easements, the family ensures the future of the operation for generations to come."

A sampling of the projects that Yolo Land & Cattle Co. has implemented include a vegetative management plan (VMP), rotational grazing, grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands and invasive weed control. Partnering with the California Audubon Society and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the company created the largest VMP in the state of California for the purpose of conducting annual spring grass burns and fall brush burns on a total 45,000 acres.

"Environmental stewardship and conservation are at the forefront of our industry, as shown by these six regional winners," says Bob Josserand, chairman of the NCF Board of Trustees. "This year's national winner, the Hank Stone Family of California, is a great example for others to follow. I have no doubt that they will continue to be strong proponents of conservation and serve as excellent role models for producers across the country."

"The long-standing commitment of the Stone family to preserve and protect

► **Above:** Yolo Land & Cattle Co.'s commitment to the cattle industry and to the preservation of their land won the 2007 Environmental Stewardship Award.

their land has allowed the family's ranch to increase productivity while protecting the environment," Petty says. "We are very pleased to recognize them."

For additional information on Yolo Land & Cattle Co., contact the NCF at 303-694-0305 or visit www.nationalcattlemensfoundation.org or www.beefusa.org.

The Environmental Stewardship Award has recognized the outstanding stewardship practices and conservation achievements of U.S. cattle producers for almost two decades. Regional and national award winners are honored for their commitment to protecting the environment and improving fish and wildlife habitat while operating profitable cattle operations. For information or to nominate a cattle operation, visit <http://esap.beefusa.org>.



Editor's Note: This article is adapted from a release provided by NCBA. For additional information or the original release, contact Joe Schuele at 270-987-4783 or jjschuele@beef.org or visit www.beefusa.org. This article is one of many covering awards presented during the convention. For additional coverage, visit www.4cattlemen.com. This web site provides online coverage of the event provided by Angus Productions Inc. (API), publisher of the Angus Journal and the Angus Beef Bulletin. The site is made possible through sponsorship by Salt Creek Ranch of Memphis, Texas. For more information contact Shauna Rose Hermel, editor, at 816-383-5270 or shermel@angusjournal.com.

