

A photograph of three men wearing cowboy hats, looking upwards with expressions of surprise or awe. The man on the left wears a white hat, glasses, and a blue blazer. The man in the center wears a white hat and a blue blazer. The man on the right wears a dark hat and a dark quilted jacket. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor arena or event.

the **WIREE**

Western Livestock Journal®

SECTION TWO
SPRING 2026

FORMERLY CATTLE MARKETING

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BAR **Dominion** 464M

Reg: +*21272338

DOB: 09-28-2024

SIRE:

Basin Deposit 6249
Basin Jameson 1076
Basin Joy 9140

DAM:

Connealy Clarity
Ankony Miss Bell A 064
Ankony Miss Belle 9097

- A no-holes elite calving-ease prospect that can improve nearly every economically relevant trait with no major production weaknesses to breed around. He is the #1 son of Basin Jameson in the breed for \$Combined Value
- DOMINION is equally impressive in person where he excels at the ground with tremendous foot quality and skeletal design. His dam is a massive made, high-capacity female with an impeccable udder structure and ideal teat design.



CED			BW		WW		PRODUCTION			MATERNAL			MANAGEMENT			CARCASS			\$VALUES								
YW	RADG	DMI	YH	SC	HP	CEM	MILK	MW	MH	\$EN	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	PAP	CW	MARB	RE	FAT	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C			
+15	+5	+95	+165	+30	+1.87	+5	+120	+13.2	+13	+31	+102	+5	-39	+25	+36	+31	+04	+88	+1.80	+1.37	-.029	+99	+104	+135	+121	+257	+432
3%	35%	3%	3%	20%	90%	55%	30%	30%	10%	20%	20%	45%	95%	25%	10%	2%	30%	3%	2%	10%	4%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	



Wilks **Warrior** 3715

Reg: +*20753062

DOB: 08-23-2023

SIRE:

Connealy Confidence Plus
Ingram Heisman 0566
RB Lady Denver 167-453

DAM:

G A R Home Town
DBA Rita 1034
Pine View Rita E093

- WARRIOR is an outlier in the Angus evaluation to combine elite rankings for \$C with docility, growth, foot angle, claw shape, and teat and udder structure.
- His \$200,000 dam has earned her mark as one of the highest revenue generating females in breed history, and WARRIOR is the stoutest made, heaviest muscled son to date with excellent design and quality structure.



			PRODUCTION						MATERNAL					MANAGEMENT				CARCASS				\$VALUES					
CED	BW	WW	YW	RADG	DMI	YH	SC	HP	CEM	MILK	MW	MH	\$EN	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	PAP	CW	MARB	RE	FAT	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+4	+2.7	+86	+147	+29	+1.62	+5	+4.9	+10.9	+4	+29	+71	+5	-22	+27	+39	+39	+2.33	+102	+1.99	+1.08	+0.075	+92	+89	+161	+119	+280	+455
70%	80%	10%	15%	25%	85%	50%	75%	60%	85%	30%	45%	40%	65%	15%	15%	15%	75%	1%	1%	10%	95%	10%	10%	1%	1%	1%	1%



Pine View **Affirmed**

Reg: +*20642098

DOB: 11-28-2022

SIRE:

Poss Rawhide
Poss Ratified
Poss Rita 5116

DAM:

Baldrige Pappy
Pine View Rita J61
G A R Sure Fire 187

- Expressively made Ratified son that has added length and extension. He's wide topped, thick ended, and has an excellent disposition.
- He's double-digit for both CED and CEM and offers a rapid growth pattern. He's solid across his management traits and consequently has a top 1% breed rank for \$M and top 1% for Combined Value.



PRODUCTION										MATERNAL					MANAGEMENT				CARCASS				SVALUES				
CED	BW	WW	YW	RADG	DMI	YH	SC	HP	CEM	MILK	MW	MH	\$EN	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE	PAP	CW	MARB	RE	FAT	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+10	+1	+84	+135	+25	+77	+1	+38	+13.6	+15	+28	+48	+1	-10	+21	+53	+50	+69	+71	+1.44	+1.01	+0.071	+108	+98	+125	+92	+217	+389
20%	25%	15%	30%	60%	20%	90%	85%	25%	3%	40%	80%	80%	30%	45%	70%	65%	40%	20%	10%	20%	95%	1%	3%	10%	10%	10%	2%

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WEDNESDAY WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Butcher Cows.....	8:30 a.m.
Cow-Calf Pairs/Bred Cows	11:30 a.m.
Feeder Cattle	12 p.m.

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WEDNESDAYS: MAY 20 · JUNE 17

SATURDAY: JULY 25



CALL TO CONSIGN TO THESE WESTERN VIDEO MARKET SALES:

May 20 – Cattlemen's Livestock Market, Galt, CA
CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE: MAY 12

June 12 – WVM Headquarters, Cottonwood, CA
CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE: JUNE 4

July 13-15 – Silver Legacy Casino Resort, Reno, NV
CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE: JUNE 25

August 10-11 – Little America, Cheyenne, WY
CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE: JULY 23

September 15 – Haythorn Ranch, Ogallala, NE
CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 7

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ON *the* COVER

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Whether you choose home delivery of the weekly print edition or access the paper online, *WLJ* is the only weekly ag publication you need to succeed. *Western Livestock Journal* (ISSN 0094-6710) is published weekly (52 issues annually, plus special features) at 6021 S. Syracuse Way, Ste. 103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111. Web address: www.wlj.net. Email: editorial@wlj.net or advertising@wlj.net. Subscription rate (U.S. subscriptions): 1 year for \$55. Periodicals postage paid at Englewood, CO, post office and additional mailing offices. Rights reserved.



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UPCOMING AUCTIONS

MAY 19	SCHOOL'S OUT LIVE VIRTUAL EQUIPMENT AUCTION	AUGUST 5	PRODUCERS LIVESTOCK VIDEO AUCTION	OCTOBER 13	HEART OF THE FALL EQUIPMENT AUCTION
MAY 21	LIVEAG FORT WORTH VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION	AUGUST 13	LIVEAG VIDEO AUCTION CODY, WYOMING	NOVEMBER 12	LIVEAG FORT WORTH VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION
JUNE 11	LIVEAG FORT WORTH VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION	AUGUST 18	EARLY FALL PRE-HARVEST EQUIPMENT AUCTION	DECEMBER 10	LIVEAG LAS VEGAS VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION
JUNE 25	LIVEAG VIDEO AUCTION SHIPSHEWANA, INDIANA	SEPTEMBER 10	LIVEAG FORT WORTH VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION	DECEMBER 15	END OF YEAR EQUIPMENT AUCTION
JULY 23	LIVEAG VIDEO AUCTION BOISE, IDAHO	OCTOBER 8	LIVEAG FORT WORTH VIDEO LIVESTOCK AUCTION	KEY EQUIPMENT AUCTIONS COMMERCIAL CATTLE AUCTIONS	



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PRESIDENT'S DESK



BUILD TRUST AND BE CONSISTENT

The current climate for marketing cattle is one of the most peculiar that any of us have ever seen. On the heels of the highest-grossing bull sale season and a multi-year positive run in the cattle market, it seems as though marketing cattle has never been easier. However, this couldn't be further from the truth. Just because the rising tide lifts all ships, doesn't mean that the ship with holes in

its hull won't take on water.

Concluding the spring bull sale season, as the data suggests in the recap included in this magazine, you can see that it was a fantastic year. While this was the case for many, there were still sales that struggled and many that didn't perform well. We have to step back and ask ourselves, why?

Quite simply, agriculture is one of the most relationship-driven industries that comes to mind. As Warren Buffet once said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it." How we treat our customers and how we act in a moment of conflict can determine not only the direct business, but also the potential business with anyone in that customer's network.

"If you believe business is built on relationships, make building them your business," Scott Stratten writes in his book "UnMarketing." This is ideal for moving forward. We are often thinking about our bottom lines and how we will make ends meet to get to the next year. It's so easy to forget what gets us the business next year.

I liken this to marketing commercial cattle as well. We often don't know it, but we are building relationships with every buyer in the room when we sell groups of cattle, be it on the video or at the sale barn—they are the same. Having cattle prepared to sell is crucial to success. It may not pay off this year, but it will in the next few years with consistency and dedication to providing a product that multiple people want.

This is one of the main reasons why value-added programs have been so successful. We are fielding this question every single day right now: are they worth it? And the answer is a resounding yes! Probably more so this year than ever! What does being willing to add value to your commercial calves in a market like this say about you and your cattle? Trust me, it says a lot and will be said louder when days aren't as good.

In a world of uncertainty, becoming certain and consistent is key. "If you want to build better business, you must build better relationships. Relationships are crucial to developing the business you hope to achieve," Curtis Jenkins writes in his book "Vision to Reality." Having your cattle prepared for sale day can equal hundreds of dollars per head in this market. Every added dollar is worth it.

We've tried to employ relationships as the focal point at *Western Livestock Journal*. We are grateful for all our relationships and appreciate all the feedback, support and trust over the years. Please enjoy this edition of *The Wire* and have a wonderful spring and summer!

Logan Ipsen

President, *Western Livestock Journal*

Western Livestock Journal®

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MAY 20

Consignment Deadline:
May 12

Cattlemen's Livestock Market
Galt, CA

JUNE 12

Consignment Deadline:
June 4

WVM Headquarters
Cottonwood, CA

JULY 13-15

Consignment Deadline:
June 29

Silver Legacy Casino Resort
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IT'S MORE THAN A BREAKTHROUGH.

Exzolt™ Cattle-CA1 (fluralaner topical solution)

A first-of-its-kind FDA conditionally approved pour-on
for **New World screwworm** and **cattle fever tick**.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION: Not for use in humans. Keep out of reach of children. Accidental exposure may cause skin and eye irritation. Highly flammable. Keep away from heat, sparks, open flame or other sources of ignition. Use only for the prevention and treatment of infestations caused by New World screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) larvae (myiasis) and treatment and control of cattle fever tick (*Rhipicephalus microplus*) in beef cattle 2 months of age and older and replacement dairy heifers less than 20 months of age. Not for use in bulls intended for breeding 1 year of age and older, dairy calves, and veal calves. Cattle must not be slaughtered for human consumption within **98 days** of treatment. If cattle are continuously exposed to temperatures at or above 60°F after product administration, then cattle may be slaughtered for human consumption 44 days after treatment. Violative residues may result if cattle are exposed to temperatures below 60°F after administration and are slaughtered at 44 days. For complete safety information and product dosing instructions, refer to the product label.

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Exzolt™ Cattle-CA1 (fluralaner topical solution)

Antiparasitic

50 mg of fluralaner/mL

CAUTION: Federal law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

Conditionally approved by FDA pending a full demonstration of effectiveness under application number 141-617.

It is a violation of Federal law to use this product other than as directed in the labeling.

DESCRIPTION: Exzolt Cattle-CA1 (fluralaner topical solution) contains fluralaner, an antiparasitic of the isoxazoline class. Each mL of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 contains 50 mg of fluralaner.

The chemical name of fluralaner is (±)-4-[5-(3,5-dichlorophenyl)-5-(trifluoromethyl)-4,5-dihydroisoxazol-3-yl]-2-methyl-N-[2-oxo-2-(2,2,2-trifluoroethoxy)ethyl]benzamide. Inactive Ingredients: pyrrolidone, isopropyl alcohol, l-menthol, propylene glycol dicaprylate/dicaprate, FD&C blue No. 1, FD&C yellow No. 5.

INDICATIONS FOR USE: Exzolt Cattle-CA1 is indicated for the prevention and treatment of infestations caused by New World screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) larvae (myiasis) and treatment and control of cattle fever tick (*Rhipicephalus microplus*) in beef cattle 2 months of age and older and replacement dairy heifers less than 20 months of age. Not for use in bulls intended for breeding 1 year of age and older, dairy calves, and veal calves.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION: Exzolt Cattle-CA1 is a ready-to-use topical formulation intended for direct application to the hair and skin in a narrow strip extending along the dorsal midline from the withers to the base of the tail (see Figure 1). The recommended rate of administration is 1 mL/44.1 lbs. (1 mL/20 kg) body weight, which is equivalent to 1.13 mg of fluralaner for each pound (2.5 mg/kg) body weight. Effectiveness has not been evaluated in cattle with wet hides.

Recommended site of administration:

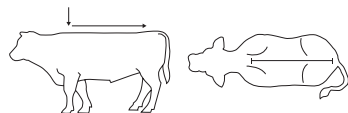


Figure 1: Recommended location for the topical application in a narrow strip along the dorsal midline from the withers to the base of the tail.

Administration of the product with 250 mL and 1L bottles with built-in dosing chamber:

To ensure administration of a correct dose, body weight should be determined as accurately as possible, and accuracy of the dosing volume should be checked before administration. Round the dose up to the nearest volume increment on the dosing chamber, which goes up in 2.5 mL increments.

The table below can be consulted to assist in the calculation of the appropriate volume which must be applied based on the weight of animal being treated.

Body Weight (Pounds)	Dose Volume (mL)
220	5
330	7.5
440	10
550	12.5
660	15
770	17.5
880	20
990	22.5
1100	25
1320*	30

*Add 2.5 mL for each 110 pounds above 1320 pounds of body weight.

Practice the Administration and Overfill Reduction Instructions a few times to become familiar with operating the package before dosing animals.

Step 1

On first use remove cap and peelable seal from the dosing chamber.



Do not remove cap from the bottle.

Step 2

Dosing chamber



Hold the bottle upright and at eye level while slowly and gently squeezing the bottle to fill the dosing chamber to the selected mark.

Step 3



A small amount of liquid will remain on the walls of the chamber, but the chamber is calibrated to account for this.

Avoid squeezing the container section while the solution is poured from the dosing chamber.

If the dosing chamber is overfilled follow the Overfill Reduction Instructions below:

Step 1

Re-apply cap to dosing chamber and tighten.



Confirm the cap is tight.

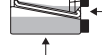
Step 2

Transfer Tube
Air Pocket



Step 3

Hold the bottle horizontally to allow product to cover the end of the transfer tube inside the dosing chamber.



Step 4

Squeeze and release the bottle repeatedly. Product will return to the bottle through the transfer tube.



Administration of the product with 5L bottle with an applicator device: These bottles are designed for use with the Simcro Breeze™ Applicator Device (30 mL). This applicator device and delivery tubing (sold separately by Simcro as a kit) should be used with the 5L bottle. The 5L bottle is supplied with spigot cap attached to dip tube for its use with the applicator device. A strap is also included for use of the 5L bottle as a backpack.

To ensure administration of a correct dose, body weight should be determined as accurately as possible, and accuracy of the dosing volume should be checked before administration. Round the dose up to the nearest volume increment on the applicator device, which goes up in 1 mL increments.

The table below can be consulted to assist in the calculation of the appropriate volume which must be applied based on the weight of animal being treated.

Body Weight (Pounds)	Dose Volume (mL)
220	5
440	10
660	15
880	20
1100	25
1320*	30

*Add 1 mL for each 44 pounds above 1320 pounds of body weight.

Assembly, Disassembly and Cleaning Instructions for the 5L bottle with applicator device:

Step 1

Follow the applicator device manufacturer's assembly directions. Connect one end of the delivery tubing to the connection point on the dosing applicator.

Step 2

Remove the transit cap and protection seal from the 5L bottle and replace with spigot cap attached to dip tube. Tighten spigot cap to bottle and attach other end of delivery tubing to the spigot cap. Do not discard the transit cap until the contents of the 5L bottle are completely used. Please refer to Figure 2 for the assembled 5L bottle with applicator device.

Step 3

Keeping the 5L bottle in an upright position, gently prime the applicator device per the included manufacturer's instructions, checking for leaks. With the applicator device in an upward position, expel all visible air from the barrel and confirm that product is visibly expressed from the tip of the applicator device so that it is free of any residual air.

Step 4

Follow the applicator device manufacturer's directions for adjusting the dose.

Step 5

When the interval between uses of the applicator device is expected to exceed 1 week, take off the entire spigot assembly (delivery tubing connected to the spigot cap with attached dip tube while still connected to the applicator device), from the 5L bottle. Return any unused product remaining in the applicator device and in the delivery tubing back into the 5L bottle. Raise the spigot cap with dip tube attached and place the tip of the applicator device into the 5L bottle. Discharge the remaining product from the spigot assembly into the bottle. Place the transit cap onto the 5L bottle to close it. Submerge the dip tube in warm, soapy water. Flush warm soapy water through the delivery tubing and through the applicator device, followed by flushing them with clean water and allowing them to dry. Once dry, store the entire dosing assembly (applicator device, delivery tubing, spigot cap with attached dip tube) in a safe, clean place until next use. Refer to the manufacturer's directions for maintenance of the applicator.

WARNINGS:

WITHDRAWAL PERIODS AND RESIDUE WARNINGS:

Environmental temperature affects the withdrawal period.

Cattle must not be slaughtered for human consumption within 98 days of treatment.

If cattle are continuously exposed to temperatures at or above 60°F after product administration, then cattle may be slaughtered for human consumption 44 days after treatment. Volatile residues may result if cattle are exposed to temperatures below 60°F after administration and are slaughtered at 44 days.

Not for use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older, including dry dairy cows; use in these cattle may cause drug residues in milk and/or in calves born to these cows or heifers. Not for use in beef calves less than 2 months of age, dairy calves, and veal calves. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminant calves.

USER SAFETY WARNINGS:

Not for use in humans. Keep out of reach of children.

This drug product is a skin and eye irritant; special care should be taken to avoid contact. Personal protective equipment should be worn, such as gloves, long sleeve shirt and pants, as well as glasses or goggles to prevent skin, eye and mucous membrane contact and/or drug absorption, while handling the product. In case of skin contact, wash with soap and water. If contact with eyes occurs, immediately rinse thoroughly with water. In case of accidental spill, immediately remove affected clothing and wash contacted skin with soap and water. In case of accidental ingestion, immediately rinse the mouth with plenty of water and seek medical advice.

Do not eat, drink, or smoke while handling the product. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water immediately after use of the product.

The product is highly flammable. Keep away from heat, sparks, open flame or other sources of ignition.

To obtain a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) or for technical assistance, call Merck Animal Health at 1-800-211-3573.

CONTACT INFORMATION: Contact Merck Animal Health at 1-800-211-3573 or <https://www.merck-animal-health-usa.com>. To report suspected adverse drug experiences, contact Livestock Technical Service at 1-800-211-3573. For additional information about reporting adverse drug experiences for animal drugs, contact FDA at 1-888-FDA-VETS or <https://www.fda.gov/reportanimaladverse>.

CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY

Mechanism of Action: Fluralaner belongs to the class of isoxazoline-substituted benzamide derivatives. Fluralaner is an inhibitor of the arthropod nervous system. The mode of action of fluralaner is the antagonism of the ligand-gated chloride channels (gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA)-receptor and glutamate-receptor).

Pharmacokinetics: The pharmacokinetic properties of a single 2.5 mg/kg dose of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 administered topically along the dorsal midline from the withers to the base of the tail to cattle that were not restricted from grooming are presented in Table 1 (n = 12).

Table 1. Mean (± standard deviation) plasma pharmacokinetic parameters of total fluralaner after a single topical administration of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 in male and female cattle in warm conditions (54–98°F).

Parameter (units)	Estimate
C _{max} (ng/mL)	127 ± 82.2
T _{max} ^a (day)	5(4–12)
AUC ₀₋₅₆ (day·ng/mL)	1570 ± 1220
AUC _∞ (day·ng/mL)	1590 ± 1230
t _{1/2} (day)	8.48 ± 1.84

^aAlthough total fluralaner (R+S) is reported, the S enantiomer is more abundant and active than the R.

^bMedian and range

C_{max} = maximum plasma concentration

T_{max} = time to maximum plasma concentration

AUC₀₋₅₆ represents the AUC from day 0 to day 56

AUC_∞ = area under the curve from the time of dosing extrapolated to infinity

t_{1/2} = half-life

TARGET ANIMAL SAFETY

Margin of Safety: In a margin of safety study, Exzolt Cattle-CA1 was well tolerated in 32 six to seven month old healthy beef cattle (16 males and 16 females). Study animals were administered 3.7, 11.1, or 18.5 mg/kg body weight (1X, 3X, and 5X the maximum anticipated labeled dose) of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 by topical application three times 42 days apart (Days 0, 42, and 84). Cattle in the control group (0X) were treated with green dyed sterile saline at a dose volume similar to the 5X treated group. General health observations were conducted twice daily from acclimation to the end of the 98-day study. Variables measured periodically throughout the study for each animal were body weight; physical examinations; neurological examinations; analysis of blood for hematology, clinical chemistry, coagulation, and toxicokinetics; fecal and urine analysis; and feed and water consumption. All animals were necropsied at the end of the study for gross and histopathological examination and select organs were weighed.

Test article-related application site reactions, including skin flaking/scuffing and scabbing were observed. These findings were dose-dependent in both incidence and severity. Reactions in the 1X animals appeared after the second administration. These reactions in the 1X group were cosmetic in nature and did not require treatment.

Female Reproductive Safety: In a reproductive safety study, Exzolt Cattle-CA1 was well tolerated in 200 healthy beef cows between the ages of 3 to 11 years old. Study animals were administered 11.1 mg fluralaner/kg body weight (3X the maximum labeled dose) of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 by a single topical application once during breeding (estrus; before timed-artificial insemination), early in the 1st trimester of pregnancy, during the mid-1st trimester of pregnancy, or in the 3rd trimester of pregnancy. Cattle in the control group (0X) were treated with green dyed sterile saline at a dose volume similar to the treated groups (3X). General health observations were conducted twice daily from acclimation to the end of the study at 30±2 days postpartum. Variables measured at start of acclimation and at the end of the study for each animal were body weight (including prior to each dosing) and physical examinations (including at parturition for offspring).

Reproductive safety parameters included conception rate, abortion rate, calving rate, live births, stillborn calves, perinatal death, premature deliveries, neonatal death, dystocia, ability of calf to stand, walk and suckle, and abnormalities. Three stillbirths and one premature delivery were observed in animals in the control group. One stillbirth associated with dystocia and one premature delivery were documented in cows treated with Exzolt Cattle-CA1. Six abortions occurred across three of the Exzolt Cattle-CA1 treated groups (2 out of 31 cows in the estrus-treated group; 2 out of 34 cows in the early first trimester-treated group; 2 out of 27 cows in the mid first trimester-treated group). One calf was found dead within 24 hours of birth in an Exzolt Cattle-CA1 treated cow. These events were considered to occur at rates typical for the source herd and unlikely to be test article related. Not for use in bulls intended for breeding over 1 year of age, as reproductive safety has not been evaluated.

Reasonable Expectation of Effectiveness: A reasonable expectation of effectiveness may be demonstrated based on evidence such as, but not limited to, pilot data in the target species or studies from published literature.

Exzolt Cattle-CA1 is conditionally approved pending a full demonstration of effectiveness. Additional information for Conditional Approvals can be found at www.fda.gov/animal/ma.

A reasonable expectation of effectiveness for Exzolt Cattle-CA1 for the prevention and treatment of infestations caused by New World screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) larvae (myiasis) and treatment and control of cattle fever tick (*Rhipicephalus microplus*) in beef cattle 2 months of age and older and replacement dairy heifers less than 20 months of age is based on results from the following foreign studies conducted in Australia, Brazil, and South Africa.

A. New World Screwworm (NWS) (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*)

Three effectiveness studies utilizing natural NWS infestations conducted in Brazil in 2018 are described below:

- Support for a prevention indication: This study evaluated prevention of New World Screwworm (NWS) myiasis in a surgical wound created seven days after treatment administration. Animals received either a placebo (n=6) or Exzolt Cattle-CA1 (n=6) on Day -7. Seven days later, two surgical incisions were made on each side of the body at the shoulder. Animals were housed outside to facilitate natural infestation of the wounds with NWS. Cattle were monitored twice daily for 10 days post-incision to assess the presence of eggs and larvae. A single topical application of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 at the dose of 2.5 mg/kg provided 100% prevention against myiasis for the length of the study.
- Support for a prevention indication: This study evaluated prevention of NWS myiasis in a castration wound created on the day of treatment with either a placebo (n=15) or Exzolt Cattle-CA1 (n=15). Animals were housed outside to facilitate natural infestation of the wounds with NWS. Cattle were monitored daily for 14 days post-surgery to assess the presence of eggs, larvae, and the progress of wound healing. A single topical administration of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 at the dose of 2.5 mg/kg provided 100% prevention against myiasis for up to 14 days following castration.
- Support for a therapeutic indication: This study evaluated the effectiveness of the product to treat a wound already infested with NWS. A surgical wound was created and left exposed to facilitate natural infestation with NWS. Three days later, after confirming the presence of live larvae, animals were treated topically once with either a placebo (n=12) or Exzolt Cattle-CA1 (n=12). A single topical administration of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 at the dose of 2.5 mg/kg achieved 90.9% effectiveness by the second day post-treatment and reached 100% effectiveness by the third day. No myiasis in treated animals was observed up to day 5.

B. Cattle Fever Tick (*Rhipicephalus microplus*)

Three dose confirmation studies conducted in Brazil and South Africa and a rain exposure study conducted in Brazil utilizing induced infestations of *R. microplus* were evaluated. These studies were conducted between 2018 and 2021. In each study, animals were individually housed and randomly assigned to control and Exzolt Cattle-CA1-treated groups. Exzolt Cattle-CA1-treated groups received a single administration at the dose of 2.5 mg/kg. A total of thirty animals were treated with Exzolt Cattle-CA1 across these four studies. The product demonstrated 100% effectiveness within the first week after Exzolt Cattle-CA1 administration. Length of consistent 100% persistent effectiveness ranged from 39 days to approximately 110 days post-treatment.

Thirteen field effectiveness studies conducted in Brazil and Australia utilizing natural infestations of *R. microplus* were evaluated. These studies were conducted between 2017 and 2023. In each study, animals were grouped housed and randomly assigned to control and Exzolt Cattle-CA1-treated groups. Exzolt Cattle-CA1-treated groups received a single administration at the dose of 2.5 mg/kg. Approximately 220 animals were treated with Exzolt Cattle-CA1 across these thirteen studies. The product demonstrated 100% effectiveness within the first week after Exzolt Cattle-CA1 administration. Length of consistent 100% persistent effectiveness ranged from 28 days to 70 days post-treatment.

C. Rain exposure study

One study was conducted to evaluate the impact of simulated rainfall post-treatment on the effectiveness of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 with cattle artificially infested with *R. microplus*. A total of 30 cattle (cross-bred beef bulls) were randomized to one of five groups with six animals each: Groups A, B, C, and D were treated with Exzolt Cattle-CA1 (2.5 mg/kg) and Group E with saline (equivalent volume). Groups A, B, and C were exposed to simulated rainfall at the following post-treatment timepoints: 6 hr, 12 hr, and 24 hr, respectively. Groups D and E had no exposure to rain. Percent effectiveness of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 was 100% in Groups A, B, C, and D up to 77 days. Rain exposure as early as 6 hr post-treatment did not affect the therapeutic or persistent effectiveness of Exzolt Cattle-CA1 in beef cattle.

HOW SUPPLIED: Exzolt Cattle-CA1 is available in 250 mL, 1L, and 5L bottles.

STORAGE AND HANDLING: Store at or below 30°C (86°F), with excursions to 40°C (104°F). Use within 6 months after first opening. Store the dosing applicator when loaded with product at or below 30°C (86°F) and use within 1 week.

Distributed by: Intervet Inc., (d/b/a Merck Animal Health), Rahway, NJ 07065

Formulated in New Zealand

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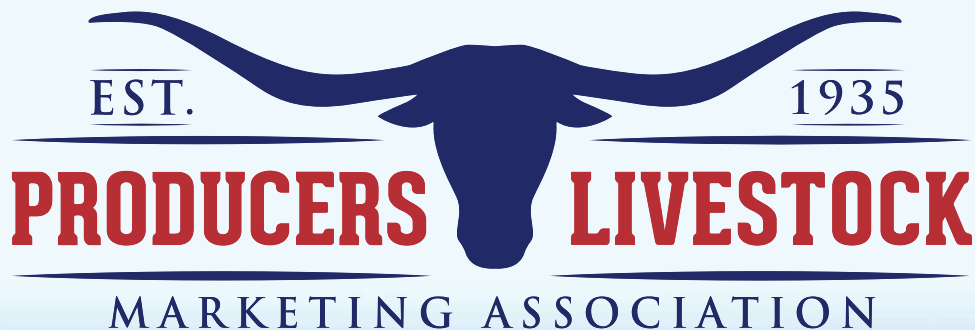
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CARVING A PATH *for* VETERANS IN AG

By Charles Wallace, *WLJ* contributing editor

Jeremy Clark didn't grow up on a ranch. He didn't inherit land, cattle or a family legacy tied to agriculture. What he did inherit was something less visible, a sense of service.

Raised in south Alabama by a single mother, Clark remembers always being drawn to livestock, even if they remained just out of reach. He saw cattle in neighboring pastures and horses behind fences, but owning animals of his own wasn't an option. That changed the day he turned 18.

Clark enlisted in the U.S. Army on his birthday and eventually earned a place in the 75th Ranger Regiment. Over nearly six years of active duty, he deployed four times, operating in some of the most demanding environments imaginable. He later continued his service in the National Guard before a series of injuries led to a medical retirement just shy of 18 years.

By then, the toll of that work had caught up with him.

"I was kind of broken, beat up," Jeremy told *WLJ*.

A RESET ON LIFE

While deployed to Syria, Clark and his wife, Heather, began discussing what life would be like when he came home. Their youngest son was dealing with serious health issues and could not tolerate store-bought meat.

"When I get home ... we'll get some land, and we will finally be able to get some cows," Clark recalled from their conversations.

When he returned in late 2021, the family followed through with

their aspirations. They sold their house and vehicles and moved into a camper. Their first four cows were then bought before the fences were even finished, and the operation began on just 15 acres.

From there, things grew quickly.



**"THE PROGRAM FOCUSES
ON HANDS-ON LEARNING,
EMPHASIZING THE
FUNDAMENTALS THAT MANY
TAKE FOR GRANTED."**

They added sheep, expanded their herd and began selling meat. Over time, that effort became C-4 Cattle Co., a family operation built out of necessity. The family had already been hunting, fishing and raising poultry, as that was what their son could tolerate to eat.

Today, they run close to 140 acres. Clark said Heather has been central to everything. With a background in zoology and veterinary work,

she handles much of the animal health side while also managing the administrative and paperwork responsibilities that keep everything running smoothly.

"It wouldn't be the same without my wife and kids," Clark said. "My wife's been a huge part of keeping everything on track and handling all the paperwork and admin side. Without her, we couldn't do this."

But the cattle business was only part of what they were building. It is a family-driven system that supports their children, shapes their daily life and now serves as the foundation for something bigger than their own ranch.

THE BIRTH OF VETS TO COWBOYS

As Clark settled into ranch life, other veterans began reaching out. At first, they just wanted to visit.

"Guys were like, 'Man, can I just come hang out? I want to be around the cows,'" he said.

Those visits turned into something more. At the same time, he kept hearing the same message at cattle meetings. The industry needed more producers. Farms were disappearing, and the average age of farmers kept rising. In Alabama alone, Clark said,

thousands of farms had been lost in recent years.

Clark began to see an opportunity and realized this was not just about land and money but also about knowledge. Clark saw that most agricultural programs are built for people who already have a foundation. They assume participants grew up around livestock or have access to generational knowledge.



That's not the case for many veterans.

"The biggest gap people were facing was learning the things that the third and fourth generation already knows," he said.

Simple, practical skills—how to load cattle, operate a chute, tag an animal or move livestock safely—often go untaught. Yet those are the skills that determine whether a new operation succeeds or fails.

Vets to Cowboys was built to fill that gap.

Clark started helping people learn how to set up small operations, walk through basic livestock handling and understand how agriculture works. The program focuses on hands-on learning, emphasizing the fundamentals that many take for granted. It also reframes agriculture as a viable career path for veterans—something Clark believes has been largely overlooked.

"There's nobody out there saying,

'Hey, come be a farmer,'" he said.

FOUR PILLARS OF THE PROGRAM

Vets to Cowboys is structured around four core areas: mental health, food systems education, workforce development and farm establishment.

The mental health component is central. Clark has seen firsthand how agriculture—particularly working with livestock—can provide a sense of purpose and calm for veterans adjusting to civilian life. On a ranch, the work is steady and predictable. It brings structure without the same level of stress.

"They've been fighting for 20 years, and then it's just over," he said.

The second focus is food education. Participants learn about everything from Beef Quality Assurance to processing and distribution, gaining a clearer understanding of the food system from pasture to plate.

The third is workforce development. Veterans get experience with equipment, construction and agricultural skills that can translate into jobs.

The final piece is helping those who want to become producers themselves. Clark walks them through the steps of building a herd and running an operation.

Clark believes veterans are a natural fit for agriculture.

The discipline and responsibility required in the military carry over easily. Livestock still need to be cared for every day. The work does not stop because you do not feel like doing it.

"Cows have to get fed every day. That mission has to come before my individual needs," he said.

The ability to adapt is just as important. Whether it is a broken tractor or bad weather, problems have to be solved quickly. Clark said that perspective can be especially

valuable in agriculture, where uncertainty is constant.

Clark saw that firsthand during a rare snowstorm in Alabama. While some producers lost animals, he relied on the same mindset he used in the military. He checked livestock every two hours, built fires and adjusted feeding. He did not lose a single animal.

“My discipline, my drive ... that directly related into me keeping my cows alive,” he said.

OUTREACH AND IMPACT

Despite its grassroots beginnings, Vets to Cowboys has gained significant traction. Clark and his team have leaned into outreach through social media, podcasts, local news and direct engagement with policymakers.

They’ve appeared on TV, connected with political leaders and shared their message wherever they can.

“We’re cold calling and sending our message out to anybody that’s willing to listen,” Clark said.

The impact of Vets to Cowboys is already tangible.

Clark points to one veteran, a retiree who moved to Alabama with 25 acres and a goal of raising cattle for his family. With Clark’s guidance, he built a herd and eventually sold calves to cover unexpected medical expenses.

When the check came in—more than \$7,000—it wasn’t just income.

It was validation. For Clark, that moment underscored what the program could achieve—not just for individuals, but for rural communities.

The goal is to grow beyond Alabama. Clark hopes others will build similar programs in their own states. Clark envisions a future where veterans are actively recruited into agriculture, where mentorship bridges the generational gap and where new producers help stabilize a shrinking industry.

At the same time, he sees the program as a way to address broader challenges—from mental health to food security.

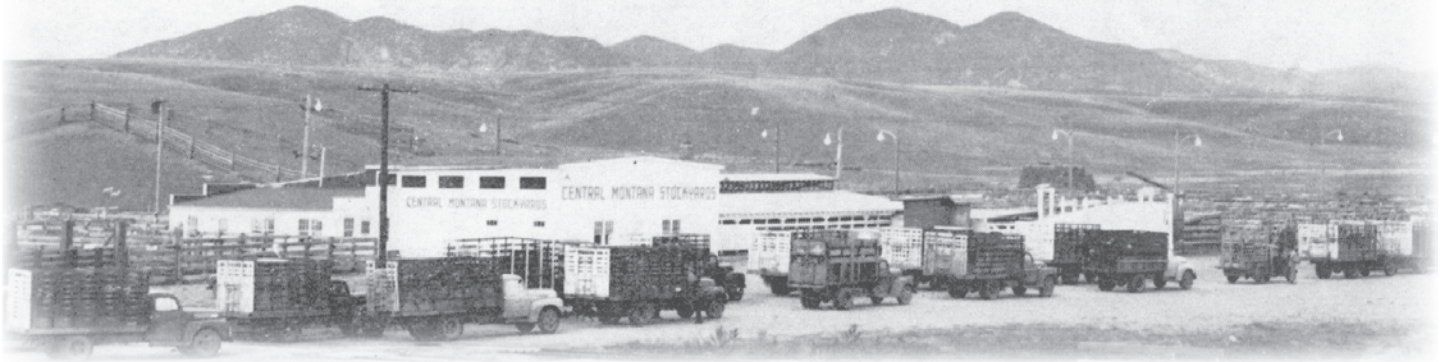
“We can help veterans, and we can help farmers,” he said.

Now, he’s working to make that path clearer for others. Because in his view, the next generation of cattle producers might not come from long-established ranch families. They might come from a different kind of background—one defined by service, sacrifice and the search for purpose after war. **W**



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE VETS TO COWBOYS PROGRAM, VISIT BOMBASSBEEF.COM/VETSTOCOWBOYSINC OR FOLLOW THEM ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM.

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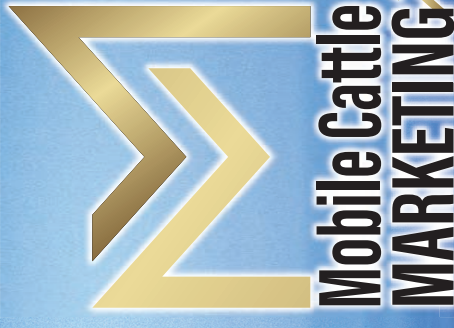
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MARKET ROUNDUP

January 1, 2026 - April 17, 2026

Dive into the Market Trends report data from WLJ-attended sales this spring, providing valuable insights for producers across the West.

Sales Summary

Gross cattle sales

\$299,818,920

+19% vs. same period last year

Bulls marketed

21,061

-11% vs. same period last year

Average sale price

\$11,610

+31% vs. same period last year

Females marketed

13,864

-2% vs. same period last year

Average sale price

\$3,987

+31% vs. same period last year

Sale Activity Heatmap

Less sold More sold

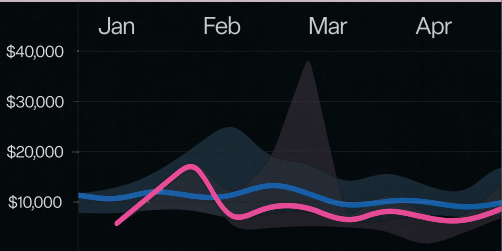


Spring
Sales
Data

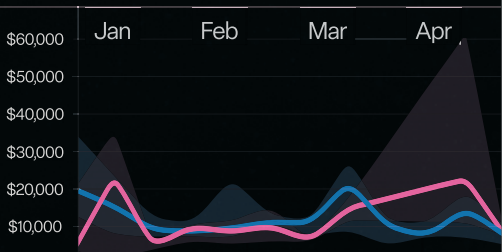
2026

Weekly price movement showing distribution shape over time, tracking the lowest, median and highest prices broken down by **bulls** and **females** for the top 3 breeds.

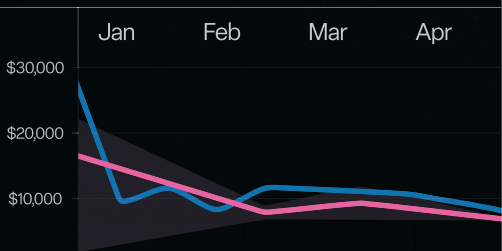
Angus



Hereford

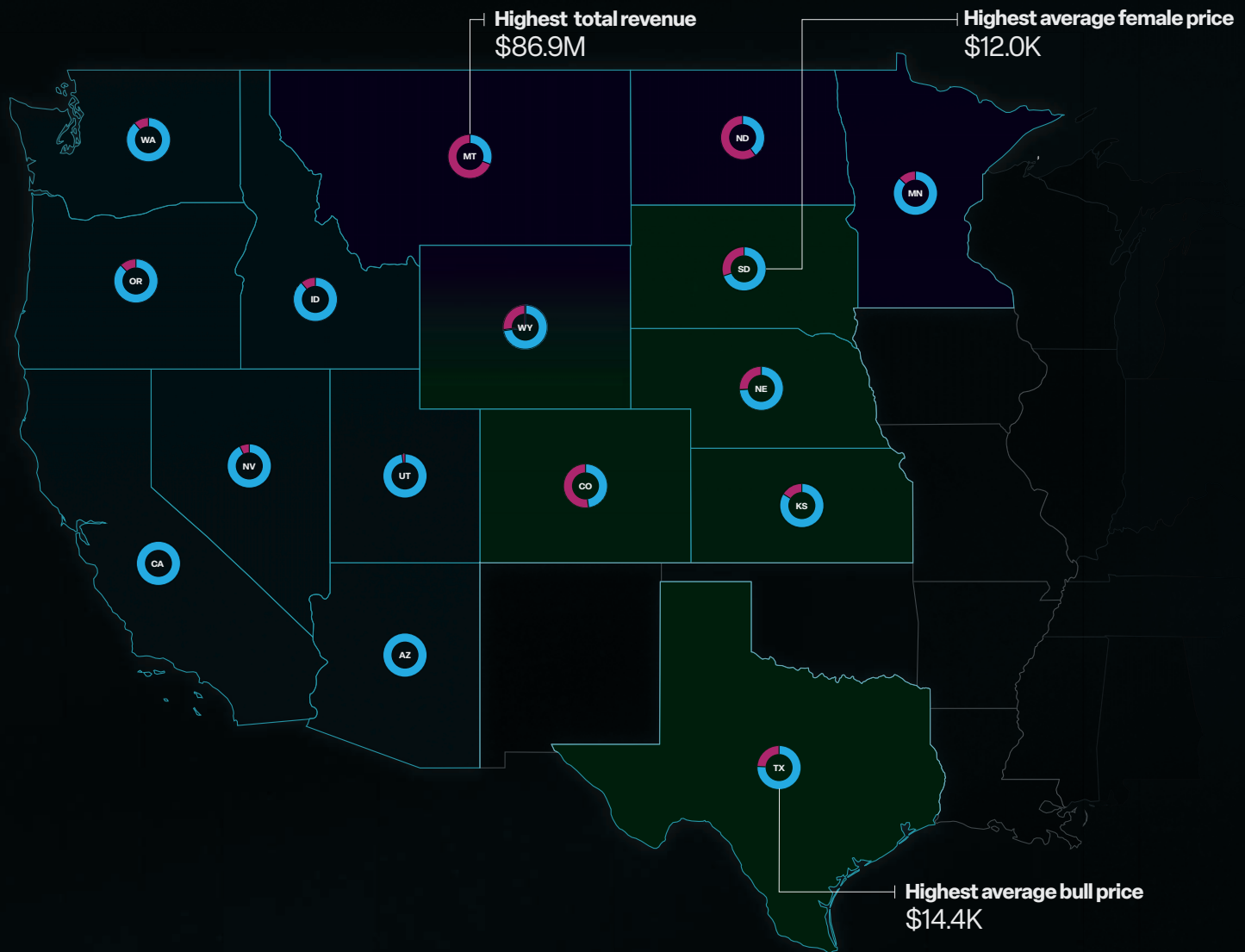


Simmental



WHERE THE MARKET MOVES

This map shows each state's share split between bulls and females. Northern and central interior areas trend more female-heavy, while the remaining western footprint shows a stronger bull mix.



Jared Patterson

WA OR ID UT NV CA

Marketing Breakdown

6,272 bulls averaging \$9,828

705 females averaging \$4,924

Total Revenue Marketed

\$64,797,398



Ty Groshans

CO S.WY NE KS NM SD

Marketing Breakdown

6,318 bulls averaging \$12,309

2,314 females averaging \$4,981

Total Revenue Marketed

\$89,297,462



Kevin Murnin

MT N.WY ND MN

Marketing Breakdown

7,646 bulls averaging \$12,016

10,645 females averaging \$3,693

Total Revenue Marketed

\$131,195,305



Jared Patterson

WLJ field representative

WA OR ID UT NV CA



The whole cattle marketing cycle has been outstanding.

This year's spring bull sale run in the West was one for the books. We always talk about the market trends, but I think those speak for themselves as the whole cattle marketing cycle has been outstanding and great for all of us.

A few things that really stand out to me this season was being able to travel the West and work with salt-of-the-earth type of people and cattlemen.



Kevin Murnin

WLJ field representative

MT N.WY ND MN



I picked a great year to start at WLJ.

I picked a great year to start at WLJ. The fall of 2025 and spring 2026 sale season was incredible! Record-breaking sales became a theme of the season traveling from sale to sale. Dry conditions early in the spring did not slow momentum across the territory. Commercial producers across the region took those record calf checks and reinvested into genetics in their cow herd.

We saw strong demand for quality genetics across the breeds. Calving-ease bulls to use on heifers really brought a premium across the country.



Ty Groshans

WLJ field representative

CO S.WY NE KS NM SD



If there's one thing that defines this industry, it's resilience.

The fall 2025 and spring 2026 sale seasons hit record highs once again. Last fall, commercial producers saw some of the best calf prices on record, along with strong prices for cull bulls, which encouraged many to send older bulls to town. That momentum carried right into sale season, where buyers showed up optimistic and ready to invest in new genetics.

Those conversations and relationships that are built in our travels will last a lifetime. I am so appreciative of our seedstock and advertising partners, the commercial cattlemen I get to work with, being able to evaluate genetics to match breeding program goals, and the sale crew I get to travel thousands of miles with every day. It's those memories that stand out to me the most and make each marketing season so special.

Region Highlights

Angus

60.37%
of total head

4,237
head sold

\$9,837
average price

SimAngus

12.65%
of total head

888
head sold

\$9,076
average price

Hereford

9.01%
of total head

632
head sold

\$10,654
average price

Bulls vs. Females

Head 89%  11%

Revenue 94%  6%

With the strong demand for calving ease and quality genetics, I think we are going to see some more heifers getting bred across the territory than in the previous few years. I am not sure if producers are necessarily going into herd expansion at this point, but they at least are starting to replace an aging cow herd across the northern U.S. It truly was a rewarding season getting to meet so many great people in this new role across Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota and western Canada this season. I look forward to continuing to work with everyone across this great region.

Region Highlights

Commercial

47.84%
of total head

8,750
head sold

\$3,457
average price

Angus

26.70%
of total head

4,884
head sold

\$11,394
average price

Hereford

9.96%
of total head

1,822
head sold

\$13,733
average price

Bulls vs. Females

Head 63%  37%

Revenue 83%  17%

One thing that really stood out this year was the demand for heifer bulls, especially those that offered a big spread from birth to weaning weight. At the same time, drought concerns and the devastating wildfires in Nebraska have been weighing heavily on a lot of ranchers' minds. Much of cattle country is still in need of rain, but if there's one thing that defines this industry, it's resilience. Ranchers continue to push forward, no matter the challenges.

Region Highlights

Angus

51.31%
of total head

4,458
head sold

\$12,405
average price

Commercial

14.91%
of total head

1,295
head sold

\$3,645
average price

Hereford

12.58%
of total head

1,093
head sold

\$11,674
average price

Bulls vs. Females

Head 73%  27%

Revenue 87%  13%

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MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS WHEN **REBUILDING** **THE COW HERD**

By Dr. Bob Hough, *WLJ* correspondent

As the nation's beef cow herd has reached a 70-year low—resulting in the industry receiving record prices for our product—our attention needs to consider how we rebuild our cow herd. The great news is we are producing the highest-quality beef we ever have, which has brought back consumer demand. Now the question is whether we will be able to fulfill this demand with U.S. product, which has no parallel in the world in terms of food safety, eating experience and palatability.

Another major consideration is maintaining the proper blend of beef products because proportionally, approximately 60% of consumer demand is in the form of grind, which necessitates the importation of wholesome lean beef to mix with domestic trim—both fed cattle and

cull cattle—that is being marketed at fatter endpoints than we have seen in recent history.

This is particularly the case as we see more cull cows being put on feed before being marketed. Ultimately, our base factory that is the U.S. cow herd must be built to perform in a wide variety of environments, whether that is the hot, humid Gulf Coast, fescue pastures of the Midwest, on the native range and long winters of northern Plains or arid range west of the Rocky Mountains. The bottom line is one size does not fit all.

CHALLENGES

A major challenge we are facing is drought and depleted aquifers. Our cattle feeding and packing industry has largely located itself along the Ogallala Aquifer and Platte River.

This aquifer appears to be stabilized in Nebraska and has even recharged some in a few places, although this year's record-warm winter and low snowpack in the Rocky Mountains region will not help that cause.

While the news is good in Nebraska, it turns to bad news in southwest Kansas and West Texas, where wide swaths of the aquifer have depleted more than 150 feet. Based on this depletion rate, it does not appear this region will be able to continue to support the cattle feeding industry at its current levels. Look for the whole system of feedyards, dairies, packing plants and crop production to retrack in this area and move north.

This will decrease total acreage of crop production, which will likely increase grain prices. If this hap-



pens, the practice of putting excessive fat on animals at the end of the feeding period will not likely pencil out anymore, and we should start marketing cattle at a more sensible body composition.

If whole body scanning gets implemented that will much more accurately assess fed cattle composition compared to our current USDA yield grading system, we can look for packers to put more discounts on these excessively fat cattle, which will put more focus back on red meat yield.

GENETICS OF THE CURRENT COW HERD

No matter how you look at it, Angus is the current driver of the commercial beef industry. Much of the demand for Angus is the result of more than 40 Angus branded-

beef programs overseen by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, and countless other Angus programs overseen by the Food Safety and Inspection Service's labeling process. This has put Angus in the driver's seat, even though there are very few of these products that actually require that the product is the result of Angus genetics.

Angus has fully embraced this leadership role, becoming the largest driver of our commercial herd's genetics, which their director of performance programs estimates is 70-80% influenced by the Angus breed. Angus breeders have utilized objective genetic measures and advanced reproductive technology to a tremendous extent. Of their 309,926 registrations last year, 74.8% were genotyped, 58% were from AI matings and 16% were from embryo

transfer. This has allowed them to make genetic change faster and more extreme than any other breed. With a motto of "supply the brand," they have traditionally emphasized production traits such as growth and carcass quality, while maintaining very acceptable calving ease.

This has separated Angus from the other breeds when it comes to growth potential and the carcass traits for marbling and carcass weight as Table 1 demonstrates. The directional change is impressive. Over the last 20 years, the average Angus Birthweight EPD has decreased 0.7 pounds, while Weaning Weight Direct and Weaning Weight Maternal EPDs combined have increased 39 lbs., and the average Yearling Weight EPD has increased 62 lbs.

However, an analysis of the Angus phenotypic trends printed in the *Western Livestock Journal* • 25

	BW (lbs.)	WW (lbs.)	YW (lbs.)	MM (lbs.)	Marb. (USDA scoring units)	REA (sq. in.)	BF (in.)	CW (lbs.)
Angus	1.7	71	126	26	0.92	0.79	0.019	61
Hereford	3.3	42.7	66	14.2	-0.1	0.49	-0.045	4.8
Red Angus	0.4	47.6	84.8	25.2	0.5	0.45	-0.019	19.2
Shorthorn	5.4	24.1	44.9	21.8	-0.07	0.63	-0.107	-2.3
Charolais	6	70	102.8	22.9	-0.12	1.5	-0.164	36.9
Gelbvieh	2.9	62.4	89.1	29	-0.21	1.23	-0.128	14.5
Balancer	1.2	64.4	98.1	30	-0.05	1.12	-0.098	21.5
Limousin	2.9	62.1	84.4	17.1	-0.34	1.63	-0.142	21.5
LimFlex	2.7	67.1	98.4	17.1	0	1	-0.082	28.5
Simmental	3.3	70.6	105.9	23.5	0.16	1.32	-0.121	32
SimAngus	2	68.2	106.4	24.3	0.34	1.47	-0.08	35.8

Table 1. Average EPDs for non-parent cattle when the 2026 USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Meat Animal Research Center's across-breed adjustment are applied to the major Bos taurus breeds for birthweight (BW), weaning weight (WW), yearling weight (YW), maternal milk (MM), marbling score (Marb.), ribeye area (REA), backfat (BF) and carcass weight (CW).

THE ROAD TO PROFITABILITY LIES IN OPTIMUMS WITH CATTLE THAT ARE GENETICALLY CUSTOM FIT FOR A PRODUCER'S OPERATION'S UNIQUE MATRIX OF ENVIRONMENT, FEED RESOURCES, MANAGEMENT AND MARKET.

American Angus Association's (AAA) Sire Summary, and the genetic trends for antagonistic traits like mature weight and \$Energy, should give producers reason to pause. Over this same 20-year period, the expressed phenotypes for birthweight have decreased by 2 lbs. However, birthweight is positively correlated with both weaning weight and post-weaning gain, so generally the combination of low birthweight and high growth is achieved through shorter gestation length, which is potentially undesirable if taken to the extreme.

An analysis of the average Angus adjusted weaning and yearling weights reported by birth year in the Angus Sire Summary demonstrates that the increased genetic potential for growth is not being expressed. So, while the average Angus' genetic potential for weaning weight has increased 39 lbs., the average expressed weaning weight submitted to the AAA has only increased by 6 lbs. and 4 lbs. for bulls and heifers, respectively.

On yearling weight, the average phenotype reported to the AAA has only increased by 1 lb. for bulls and has lost 1 lb. for heifers, so the 62-lb. increase in yearling EPD is not being expressed. Meanwhile, the genetics for mature weight has increased by 47 lbs. and \$Energy is upside down by -26. This would be in line with the western commercial databases, which also have shown no increase in weaning weights over the last 20 years.

The study released in 2021 of mature cow weights of the various breeds at the 34,000-acre U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, NE, showed that Angus had the heaviest mature weight. This work involved records on 5,156 cows, which collectively had an average mature cow weight of 1,430 lbs. across the breeds.

Angus were the heaviest breed group, and when compared to Angus, the average mature cow weight expressed in pounds for the other major breeds was the following: Herefords, -38.5; Red Angus, -98.6;

Shorthorn, -132.4; Charolais, -19.6; Gelbvieh, -145.4; Limousin, -95.3; and Simmental, -73.5. Although there are significant differences in mature weight between breeds, it is important to remember that cow size taken alone is not a proxy for efficiency, and breed differences can be leveraged when designing a crossbreeding system.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The data indicates that our current cow herd is genetically weighted to the benefit of cattle feeders and packers, and not to the financial benefit of the cow-calf producer. It is apparent the genetic potential of the cows has outstripped many producers' environment and feed resources. It is time for a paradigm shift, or the next drought—which much of the country is in right now—will again devastate our cow herd. Therefore, our industry needs a better balance between the cow-calf producer, feedlot and packer, where every segment has an opportunity to be profitable when the market stabilizes.

There are many that are advocating that the industry moves to an 1,100-lb. cow, but this falls into the trap of the “one size fits all” mentality, and the market signals for larger carcasses. Factually, efficient and inefficient cows come in all sizes, and cow size and production poten-

tial should be determined by each cow-calf operation's unique matrix of environment, feed resources, management and market. The result is operations that are only divided by a fenceline will have different requirements for the genetics of their cow herd to optimize their unique situation. These differences in genetic requirements become even more magnified when talking about operations in drastically different environments.

Whatever the genetic answer is for a particular operation, the genetics for production traits must be in sync with resources which allow for those genetics to be expressed and the cow to breed back. Reproduction and getting a live, healthy calf on the ground is overwhelmingly the most important trait.

Heterosis and breed complementarity are also powerful but underutilized tools. In addition, the use of terminal sires allows producers to run more moderate cows and still produce calves with high carcass weight potential. There are many workable systems from the tried-and-true F1 (red or black) Angus-Hereford baldy cow, the simplicity of just using SimAngus, and the maximum heterosis and productivity of an F1 Tiger Stripe (Brahman-Hereford cross) cow along the Gulf Coast bred to a

terminal (red or black) Angus sire. However, it is important to remember that there is tremendous variation within breeds, which must be taken into account when analyzing breed complementarity.

SUMMARY

It is said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting different results. Therefore, rebuilding the cow herd that mirrors the one that got decimated in the past drought is setting ourselves up for failure. However, that appears to be the direction reflected in many commercial producers' bull-buying preferences this past spring, where more extreme traits often rose to the top.

Pioneer performance breeder George Chiga used to say that Mother Nature has little use for extremes, or freaks, as he called them, and will generally kick back when traits are taken too far. The road to profitability lies in optimums with cattle that are genetically custom fit for a producer's operation's unique matrix of environment, feed resources, management and market. As former president, general and Angus breeder Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, “The middle of the road is all of the useable surface, while the extremes right and left are in the gutters.” 





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Q&A

WITH

Bill Sproul

Ranching the land, not just the cattle

By Hannah Jackson, *WLJ* copy editor



These days, rancher Bill Sproul starts his mornings with a cup of coffee, watching the sun rise over his ranch near Sedan, KS. He has slowed down from the peak years of his operation, when he was managing over 3,000 cattle across roughly 18,000 acres, but the way he manages the land has not changed. Sproul has spent a lifetime building a philosophy rooted not just in cattle, but in the land itself.

Sproul was born in Washington and moved with his family to Oklahoma when he was 11 years old. There, he grew up on a small dairy farm and attended a one-room schoolhouse before later attending Oklahoma State University, where he earned a degree in animal science. Even then, he knew the dairy business was not what he wanted.

"I didn't want to milk cows," he told *WLJ*. "I just wanted to be a cowboy."

After college, Sproul spent years moving from place to place, working in Kansas, Texas, Missouri and California, building experience and trying to find his footing in agriculture. In 1979, he and his wife, Peggy, bought their first farm near Kansas City. To make the farm payments, Sproul took a job with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, working in Leavenworth, KS, and later in California.

"We started out at 11% interest, and before we got it paid off, it was over 20%," Sproul said. "It took about eight or nine years."

With the land paid off, Sproul returned to agriculture full time. He farmed, ran sheep and cattle, built starter

yards and began grazing cattle for others. By 2003, he'd grown the operation, sold out and moved south to the Flint Hills near Sedan to begin again.

When he bought his current ranch, it was in decent shape, but trees had begun to take over parts of the prairie. Over the next decade, Sproul focused heavily on clearing those trees, estimating he cut and piled around 30,000 of them to restore the grassland. At the time, he was still operating under the same mindset he had always known; one focused on production. That began to shift when he was introduced to "A Sand County Almanac" by Aldo Leopold. Leopold's concept of land ethics changed how he viewed his ranch. Instead of seeing land as something to own and use, he began to see it as something he was a part of.

"Now I'm community-based conservation," Sproul said. "I do everything for the benefit of the community."

That philosophy shows up in how he manages day to day. He feeds cattle on the ground instead of in troughs, moving them across the ranch to spread nutrients. He relies on fire to control woody species and maintain prairie health. He also keeps stocking rates low, allowing the land to recover and build resilience.

Over time, Sproul found that focusing on the land first did not hurt his bottom line. It improved it. Today, he is in a position to step back and enjoy what he has built, both on the operation and in the condition of the land itself. For Sproul, however, the most important part is not what he leaves behind physically, but what he

passes on.

"This land is not ours to own," he said. "It's just our turn."

WLJ: What does "community-based conservation" mean to you?

Bill Sproul: My definition of community-based conservation comes from Aldo Leopold. When you view land as a commodity, then you own it. You bought it, you paid for it, you pay taxes on it. You can do anything you want with it. You can plow it, farm it, cover it up, work it away. It's a commodity. It's just dirt.

But when you view land as a community, then you start to learn to love and cherish land, and you are part of the community. I do everything for the benefit of the community. I'm part of the community, and plants are part of it and cattle are part of it. All my decisions are made based on what is best for the community, not any one thing, just the whole as a whole.

WLJ: What management practice do you rely on most to support that approach?

BS: Grassland needs disruption to flourish, and fire is the tool that provides that. Fire is the one trump card that Mother Nature gave the prairie to keep the woody invasion out. For the prairie plants, their growing points are below ground, and woody species, their growing points are above ground. So when fire comes through, it burns those trees and brush off, but the grass just comes right back. That's how you manage prairie. You use fire to control those woody species and keep the land in grass.

You don't have the kind of intense fires we used to have because of houses and people, but you still use it as a tool. You burn it, you set those woody plants back, and you keep the system functioning the way it was designed to. If you don't use fire, that prairie will turn into a forest. Fire, along with regenerative grazing, is what keeps it a grassland.

WLJ: What is the biggest challenge you're dealing with on your ranch today?

BS: Invasive species. Sericea lespedeza (Chinese bush clover) is the biggest one. It wants to be the only plant on the playground. We've used chemicals, fire and non-traditional grazing. You can burn it off, and that first regrowth, the first 30 days, is actually highly palatable.

But after about 30 days, the tannin levels increase. Any cow that grazes it will get a stomachache and quit grazing it. Then she grazes the native plants around it and keeps them suppressed, while Sericea lespedeza takes off. It pulls moisture and nutrients away from the rest of the plant community. Then it goes to seed, and that seed can stay viable for years. Once it's there, it's

extremely hard to get rid of.

The newest threat is Old World bluestem. It reminds me of sericea in 1994. But nobody has it high up on their radar. So now is the time to figure out how to stop it before it becomes what sericea is today.

WLJ: What would you say to those who believe conservation comes at the cost of production?

BS: How you take care of the community below ground grows the plant community above. The better you take care of the root system and the soil, the more forage you produce. And the more you grow above ground, the more cows you can support, and the more money you make. So to me, the better you take care of the soil and the plant community, the better your operation performs. It's not separate from production. It drives production.

I've been successful, but more money all the time was never my focus. Wealth is life. Your quality of soil, your quality of water, that's where the real wealth is. Everything else is just dollars. You've got to have money, but it can't be the No. 1 driver. If you manage the land right, the production follows. Maybe 1,000 cows isn't the answer. Maybe 200 cows and managing something for somebody else is. If the land is healthy, it will produce. That's where it all starts.

WLJ: When you think about your legacy, what matters most to you?

BS: I'm leaving my legacy by teaching my children and grandchildren land ethics. Then they'll teach their grandchildren, and that way land ethics goes on and on and on forever. My legacy is to teach. Not only teach your children, but teach your grandchildren that this land is not ours. It's our turn to take care of it. It belongs to the children and the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren. [W](#)



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YOUTH SPOTLIGHT



At nearly 8,000 feet above sea level just outside Steamboat Springs, CO, a young seventh-generation rancher is pursuing an ambitious goal of building her own show cattle program from the ground up.

“My goal is to raise good-quality show cattle for the youth of the industry and to give back to the industry that has taught me so much,” 16-year-old Makinly Long of Oak Creek, CO, shared with *WLJ*.

Long grew up on her great-grandparents’ ranch in Colorado’s Yampa Valley, where the family runs about 100 head of commercial Angus-Hereford cross cattle. The family’s roots in agriculture on the Western Slope trace back to the westward expansion of the Centennial State.

While Long’s passion runs deep for the family ranch, her involvement in showing cattle in 4-H and FFA ignited a desire to start her own show cattle business, Long Show Cattle, which has now grown to about 20 head.

“I’ve been AI-ing my own cows and trying to influence the industry in my own way,” Long explained. “Advocating for agriculture and showing others what I’m doing and why I’m doing it has guided many of the decisions I’ve made to make sure that my program is successful and that I’m reaching my goals.”

Starting her own herd is rewarding, but it also comes with real challenges. The current agricultural economy can make it tough to manage input costs as a young entrepreneur.

“Everything costs money,” Long said. “Whether that’s the hay I’m purchasing, the water that is coming through the irrigation ditch, the electricity or the barn that I’m using, even the gas and trailer that I have to use to go to all of these shows and to get my name out there.”

Building a legacy IN THE **HIGH** **COUNTRY**

By Anna Miller Fortozo, *WLJ* managing editor

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT



To help offset those expenses and utilize ranch resources, Long works out a labor exchange with her grandfather, trading work on the ranch in return for support of her growing business.

“Does that take away from my own time with my herd? Yes,” she said. “But also, that allows me to have all the resources that I need to be successful.”

Though an only child, Long is surrounded by a large extended family, including many cousins, who form the strong foundation of her support system. “Having that big family, and also being on a long-term ranch, has been super helpful in getting me to where I need to be to achieve my goals,” Long said. “That support system has meant a lot.”

In addition to her time on the family ranch and growing her show string herd, she also stays active in her community through FFA and 4-H, livestock judging and playing for the local high school’s varsity volleyball team.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

With each show season that passed, as a youth showman, Long saw firsthand how much genetics influenced success in the ring. Determined to source cattle with the right traits for competition, her search led her to Casper, WY, where she connected with Jonah Wing of Wing Show Stock for her 4-H and FFA projects. In 2019, when the opportunity arose to purchase a high-quality heifer from Wing, Long seized it. That decision paid off when the animal won the county fair breeding show as a heifer and later twice more as a cow-calf pair.

“She really sparked my inspiration, and with my background in the cattle industry, I decided I wanted to

start my own show string,” Long said. “Every year now, I buy a heifer or two that is of premium show quality and has the genetics, and show them for the rest of the show year.”

Once fair season ends, the heifers go straight into production, helping to establish the foundation of Long’s herd.

After losing two promising calves to brisket disease, a condition caused by high-altitude hypoxia, Long became more focused on managing genetic risk within her herd.

“It pushed my program back a little bit because it started to open up my world to genetic mutations and looking for those genetic indicators,” she said.

Learning from these setbacks, Long became increasingly intentional about breeding decisions and herd management, including pulmonary arterial pressure (PAP) testing and culling calves with higher PAP scores to lower elevations.

This spring also marks the first calf crop out of cows Long AI-ed herself after earning her AI certification in 2025. After attending the certification program, as the youngest participant by several years, the experience sparked a new interest and opened the door to a potential career path. Originally planning to forgo college to focus on the family ranch and grow her own operation, Long is now considering pursuing additional certifications, including in-vitro fertilization.

“The set of calves that I have on the ground right now is the best quality I have ever had,” she said. “This year I have made exceptional strides in what I’m producing and also what I’m showing.”

Long has placed second in her class at the National Western Stock



Show for the past two years, giving her the opportunity to compete in a division against cattle from across the country. Throughout her entire show career, Long has been in her county's champion drive every year, apart from two years.

"Having these wins or successes might seem small, but overall, they have helped me grow in and outside of the ring and have molded me into the showman I am today," Long said.

Long plans to begin marketing her current set of calves soon, relying on exposure gained through shows to expand her network and build visibility for her operation. While social media marketing is not yet her primary focus, she also connects with customers through her platform as an L&L Show Feeds dealer, using it to share knowledge and promote her program.

As she builds her program and reputation in the industry, Long is also committed to giving back, ensuring that younger showmen have the guidance and support she has received.

"Looking back at my time in 4-H and FFA, I want to make sure that the kids in the same industry are going to have a great experience," she said. "I want to be there for the whole process, ensuring that not only are they representing my program well, but that they are having a rewarding experience."

Livestock judging coach Rod Wille further emphasizes Long's commitment to her endeavors.

"It's really refreshing to see someone like Makinly have such passion for the agricultural industry because it honestly is what means the most to her," Wille told WLJ. "Her

love, dedication and willingness to learn is second to none when it comes to her involvement on her family ranch in Routt County. I truly believe that Makinly has a very bright future in the cattle business."

Her dedication to helping the next generation mirrors the support she has received throughout her own journey. In the face of adversity over the past few years, including losing her dad, she credits family members and industry mentors as a strong support system.

"Without them, I would definitely not be who I am today," she said. "I would not have the courage or bravery to put my voice out there."

Long especially expresses gratitude to her mom, who has continued to support her over the years and in her new business endeavor. **W**

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CONTRA COSTA-ALAMEDA & SAN JOAQUIN-STANISLAUS COUNTY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

SATURDAY, May 23

ALSO SELLING CATTLE FROM THESE CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS: MERCED-MARIPOSA, SANTA CLARA, NAPA-SOLANO, MADERA, CALAVERAS, TUOLUMNE, FRESNO-KINGS, SAN BENITO & MONTEREY

FEATURING A SPECIAL SECTION OF NHTC-CERTIFIED, ANGUS-SIRED CALVES AS WELL AS A RED ANGUS AND CHAROLAIS SECTION

THESE EVENTS WILL INCLUDE SOME OF THE BEST CALVES CALIFORNIA HAS TO OFFER. WHETHER YOU ARE ENROLLED IN A SPECIAL PROGRAM OR NOT, THESE SALES ARE FOR YOU!

PLUS THESE SPECIAL SALES...

MAY MADNESS

TUES., MAY 12, 19 & 26

EVERY TUESDAY IN MAY IS A SPECIAL!

DEDICATED TO CONSIGNMENTS OF 50 HEAD OR LESS!

JUNE SPECIAL FEEDER SALES

TUES., JUNE 2, 16

TLAY FALL-CALVING FEMALE SALES

TUES., JULY 7 • SAT, AUG 1

TLAY STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE VACCINATION PROGRAM

Healthier calves from your ranch to our market

Elite Level

5 way viral (modified live) 2x

Clostridial 2x

Mannheimia / Pasteurella 2x

Dewormer

Weaned 45 days

2nd vaccinations given 30 days prior to sale date

Premium Level

5 way viral (modified live) 2x

Clostridial 2x

Mannheimia / Pasteurella 2x

Dewormer

Not weaned

2nd vaccinations given 30 days prior to sale date



WATCH LIVE AND BID ON LMAAUCTIONS.COM

May 20

CATTLEMEN'S LIVESTOCK
MARKET
GALT, CA
DEADLINE MAY 12

June 12

WVM HEADQUARTERS
COTTONWOOD, CA
DEADLINE JUNE 4

July 13-15

SILVER LEGACY CASINO
RESORT
RENO, NV
DEADLINE JUNE 25

**FOLLOW US ONLINE FOR WEEKLY SALE REPORTS AND NEWS ABOUT UP-TO-THE-MINUTE
SALE DATES AT WWW.TURLOCKLIVESTOCK.COM OR ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!**



TLAY REPRESENTATIVES

Max Olvera209-277-2063

Steve Faria209-988-7180

Justin Ramos 209-844-6372

John Bourdet 831-801-2343

Celeste Settrini..... 831-320-1527

Tim Sisil 209-631-6054

Jake Bettencourt ..209-262-4019

Travis Johnson209-996-8645

John Luiz 209-480-5101

Matt Miller209-914-5116

Bud Cozzi 209-652-4480

TURLOCK LIVESTOCK AUCTION YARD

209-634-4326 • 209-667-0811

10430 Lander Ave., Turlock, CA
P.O. Box 3030, Turlock, CA 95381

www.turlocklivestock.com

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SAVING OUR INDUSTRY, SECURING OUR FUTURE

You're fighting to keep your farm or ranch alive. But lack of access to land and labor, over-regulation and input costs threaten your livelihood and legacy.

That's why members of the Common Ground Coalition have come together on key issues. These livestock producers, marketers, feeders and allied industries are standing strong to preserve the livestock industry — and you can, too.

THE WHYS

- Save our farms and ranches
- Protect our land
- Build a legacy for generations
- Preserve rural America
- Secure the nation's food supply



JOIN THE MOVEMENT TODAY

Use the QR code or visit commongroundcoalition.net to sign up and stand with the Common Ground Coalition.

THE GOALS

- Achieve and maintain ag-friendly tax policy
- Make risk management tools more effective
- Improve access to labor
- Increase flexibility for livestock haulers
- Create support for young and emerging livestock producers

NOT ANOTHER ORGANIZATION

The coalition isn't after your time or money. It's simply a group of livestock producers, stocker operators, marketers, feeders and allied industry who believe they're stronger together.



COMMONGROUNDCOALITION.NET

11501 OUTLOOK STREET, SUITE #250 | OVERLAND PARK, KS 66211 | 800-821-2048



High Performance Bulls

Selling September 5th in Farmington, CA with Dunipace Angus.

Over 80 head of bulls, built for real-world use.

Featuring sons of **FF Rito Ambitious** and

EXAR Tomahawk 2836B

cattle with balance, structure, and longevity that hold.

Angus Verified Feeder Calves

1,000+ program feeder calves sired by Bar KJ bulls, along with proven sires from 44 Farms and Vintage Angus.

Selling July and August on **Western Video Market**

MSU GENETIC MERIT SCORECARD	
BEEF SCORE	142
FEEDLOT SCORE	136
GRID SCORE	136 
MATERNAL SCORE	
107	



From the bulls we build to the calves we market – it's all connected.

General Manager
Debbie Wise 661-293-0656

Keith & Jennifer Gardiner, Owners
Bakersfield, CA

Ranch Manager
Gracen Hayes 805-631-2326



Endovac-Beef
with Immune Plus



Superior Science. Smart Solutions.

At Endovac, we take a proactive approach to protecting animal health. By offering gram-negative cross-protection in a single product—powered by our exclusive immunostimulant, *Immune Plus*—our vaccine line sets a new standard in disease prevention and immune support. That means better health for animals, and a better bottom line for you.

Learn more about whole herd protection with Endovac-Beef at EndovacAnimalHealth.com.

