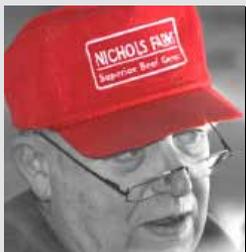




NICHOLS

NEWSLETTER

A few THOUGHTS



j. david nichols

Gary Moeller, the top dog at Ballards Black Island Resort in Baudette, Minnesota called regarding the winner of the "Fishing with Dave" contest. He proceeded to give me an update on the ice fishing at the Lake of The Woods. Minnesotans thrive on cold weather and often place propane burners under their beer kegs for their fun and games in the frigid outdoors.

That said Gary, came dangerously close to whining about the cold weather. The ice at Baudette was 42 inches thick and getting thicker. Normally it's 18 to 30 inches. The record is 48 inches, which Gary thinks they'll break.

Since 1880, historical data clearly shows that mother earth has had heating and cooling cycles of about 30 years. From 1970 to 2000 it was warming. Now we're in a cooling phase that's likely to last until 2030.

I find it interesting that the political class and their self appointed scientists' vernacular changed from "global warming" to "climate change" right on schedule.

While historical data proves that global warming and cooling have 30 year cycles, it also predicts human population will increase by 50% in the next forty three years.

About one-half of the worlds population lives in India, China, and the Island nations that surround or border them. In much of the last century their

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Walking C Ranch

The Entire Carlson Family is making it work through diversification

by Bob Hough



Petrea & Jake Carlson - Jim & Becky Carlson - Addy, Sarah & Colby Schuman

Walking C Ranch is the epitome of making a living off of a farm through innovation and diversification. Owned by Jim and Becky Carlson and operated by Jim and their son Jake, the Walking C is located in King City, Missouri, about 30 miles North East of St. Joseph, and their operation combines row crops, cattle, sheep and even a few hogs to make it work. According to Jim, "If one commodity is down in a given year another usually will be up filling in the gap." In all, they farm about 500 acres of row crops, run just over 100 commercial cows, have 40 purebred Katahdin ewes as well as selling feeder calves and some freezer beef and pork straight to consumers.

Always keen to learn more information, Jim has participated in beef cattle tours setup by The Extension Service to Texas, Colorado, Kansas, Illinois and Iowa. Jim related, "I learned a lot on those tours visiting purebred, commercial, back-grounding and feed yards. Things as small as a better mineral feeder we could build ourselves to big things like helping to design our breeding program." For the last ten years this has meant breeding both cows and heifers to Nichols hybrid and composite bulls. "When we toured Nichols, I was really impressed with the amount of data they had available on every animal, and I also really enjoyed talking to Dave (Nichols) and learning about his philosophies. I told him at the end of the tour that I would be back to buy bulls, which is exactly what I have done."

Jim really likes using hybrid and com-

posite bulls in his breeding program because they can be managed like a straight-breeding program while still retaining heterosis. "We get great breed up and productivity out of our crossbred cows and the extra vigor and growth of the (resulting crossbred) calves." And he should know, having tried numerous breeding strategies over the years. "Like most people in our area, we started with straightbred Herefords and then moved more towards Angus as the market signaled that was the direction we needed to move. We tried different crosses using some Charolais on the Angus based cows." He also got interested in Simmental Angus hybrids buying a few local bulls, but Jim related "they just didn't have the data," which was so readily available at Nichols.

"We have come such a long way in my lifetime," says Jim. "To buy a calving ease sire in the past, we used to look at an animal's head and shoulders. Now we have objective data that tells the real story. Don't get me wrong, I still like cattle with eye-appeal, but rely on the data to estimate the production potential of a bull." In terms of selection priorities, "We pay a lot of attention to calving ease, carcass traits and growth through a year. We like decent weaning weight EPDs but since we are back-grounding our calves, yearling weight EPDs are more meaningful to our operation. We appreciate that Dave is collecting ultrasound and genomic data to add accuracy and provide all the information we need to select bulls. We look for

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A few THOUGHTS

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greatest enemy was poverty and starvation. An American scientist, Norman Borlaug, saved nearly a billion lives in this region from starvation by breeding hybrid wheat and giving them foundation seed and teaching them how to grow it.

In contrast to the “Borlaug” era these countries have growing economies and are producing many of the products we buy every day. In the 2010 census the US had about 200 million people with a middle class standard of living. China had 100 million. It’s estimated by 2020, China could have three to four hundred million. India, Korea, and Indonesia will not be far behind. These countries have not bought into “global warming and climate change”. They are building nuclear power plants at the rate of one a month and a coal fired power plant every week.

As our EPA shuts down and/or refuses to issue permits to build new coal fired plants, we’re exporting coal to China, and erecting windmills with tax free money.

While this doesn’t bode well for most hard working Americans, the bright future for US agriculture and the industries that support it are almost unbelievable.

Currently we’re exporting about 30% of our beef. Much of it is going to Asia and Mexico. And it’s the Choice stuff. We’ve hosted numerous Certified Angus Beef (CAB) and US Meat Export Federation (USMEF) tours for beef purveyors from a multitude of foreign countries.

These capitalist salesmen and women want to learn more about the latest technology to improve beef’s quality. That’s why they chose to tour Nichols Farms.

Our bull customers/friends have always depended on us to adopt technology that will produce more pounds of pay weight that sell at higher prices and do it with less problems in the real world. Thanks to DNA tests we test for and eliminate many genetic abnormalities.

We have a wide selection of bulls for sale. With the market price of feeders and cull bulls, it’s a no brainer to sell your old bull and buy a “new and improved” Nichols Bull, that has 62 years of performance selection behind them.

BIVI Beef Bulletin



Set Your Calves Up Right

by Dr. Travis Van Anne

Controlling bovine respiratory disease (BRD) in young, naïve calves takes careful planning and management. Using a three-pronged approach, you can ensure your calves have the best chance to be healthy and thrive during the next phase of their lives — and help build your reputation for selling healthy, quality calves. I recommend using these three steps to help control BRD:

1. Minimize the exposure to diseases by reducing the risk of disease introduction through carrier animals and herd additions.

2. Reduce external stressors like handling and sorting, commingling, malnutrition, weather and weaning.

3. Implement a robust pre-weaning vaccination program, giving those animals the appropriate antigens at the appropriate time.

Preweaning vaccines start at branding, or even at birth on many operations. Oftentimes, we start at birth with a clostridial vaccine, like Alpha-7®, especially in areas where enterotoxemia is prevalent. Then, at branding (around 1–3 months of age), we give a combination BRD vaccine, like Pyramid® 5+ Presponse® SQ, which has no age restriction for calves.



Pre-Weaning Vaccine Timing

I recommend giving a viral vaccine that includes protection against IBR, BVD Types 1 and 2, BRSV and PI3. Additionally, I recommend that the vaccine contain protection against Mannheimia haemolytica, a bacterium known to cause fibrous pneumonia in calves.

We give a combination BRD vaccine to young calves to help prime their immune system to make a more complete immune response when they receive a booster shot 90–150 days later. Preweaning (preconditioning) time for calves normally starts at 30–90 days of age, which is when branding and/or turnout occur. A second dose of the vaccine is needed when the calves are 4–8 months of age, when they will respond more completely to the vaccine prior to or at weaning. Weaning is typically a more stressful time, so vaccinations 30 days prior to leaving the ranch, while calves are still on the cow, is advised.

The timing of the second dose of vaccine is critically important. I recommend giving calves a second dose of vaccine at least three weeks prior to weaning to give the calf time to create antibodies before the stress of weaning, shipping and commingling occurs.

It is important to give a respiratory vaccine like PYRAMID 5 + PRESPONSE SQ before calves leave your operation to help the next guy in line, whether it is a stocker operator or a feedlot. And, it will build your reputation as a supplier of healthy, quality animals that perform well and likely need fewer antibiotics. At the end of the day, preconditioning is an image the industry wants to support and display for our non-agriculture friends and consumers.

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Virgil Huseman Wins Black Island Fishing Trip

Virgil Huseman is going “fishing with Dave” after winning the drawing held February 1st.

Virgil was born and raised in Ellsworth County, Kansas, where he lives with his wife, Mary Jo. They are the parents of three children – Clayton, Mark and Ashley.

Virgil is a board member for the National Drover’s Hall of Fame and a

former director of the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, National Livestock and Meat Board and Kansas Angus Association. He’s been a member of the board of directors for First Bank Kansas, Salina, for many years.

He and his family has been recognized as the National Beef Improvement Federation Commercial Producer of the Year.

If you’ve got a “hankering” to go fishing with Lucky Virgil and Dangerous Dave, give Gary Moeller a call at 218-634-1996 or click on www.BlackIsland.com

—Walking C, continued from page one

the best bull(s) we can afford. We like to keep our cattle black and polled, and using the hybrids and composites, we are able to maintain 50 percent Angus in our cows, which serves as a base for maternal traits.”

A production season for the Carlson’s starts with calving in March and April with a small group of cows calving in the fall so they are able to fill freezer beef orders in the spring. The cows are rotationally grazed through the summer with calves being weaned around November 1st after they are done farming. They feed out about ten head for freezer beef and the rest are back-grounded till April when they are marketed. During the winter the cows go on to cornstalks and are fed hay or silage as needed. “One thing we have tried the last couple of years is cover crops that are grazed including turnips, radishes and rye grass. We think they have real potential to increase the grazing season into the winter with high quality feed,” Jim said.

After weaning, the calves go onto a silage, alfalfa hay and whole soybean ration. “We produce all our feed only buying minerals. On our calf ration, we shoot for two and half to three pounds of gain. We try not to get them too fleshy, so when we market them in April, they can go either back onto grass or straight into the feed lot. We sell our cattle at St Joseph Stockyard, usually topping the sale. They go into the ring extremely uniform really helping their marketability. Having the cash flow from the calves in the spring also really helps especially because we are absorbing so many expenses that time of year with the farming operation,” explained Jim.

The freezer beef business also does really well with a solid customer base buying either half or full carcasses. “We sell cattle on

a hot carcass weight basis having fed cattle ready in both the fall and the spring with the two calving seasons. Our customers really like our beef, and we think our attention to buying bulls with good carcass data has really paid off in this end of the business.”

Jim’s wife, Becky, works off the farm as a regional archivist for the Missouri State Archives, serving 19 counties. “The extra income is nice, but what really helps are the benefits like health insurance we get from her having the state job.” He also is very active in the community serving on the DeKalb County Soil and Water Board, the FSA Committee, and deacon at Orchid Cristian Church.

“In the end, it is all about making a living doing what you enjoy,” Jim emphasized. Through diversification and innovation that is exactly what the Carlsons are doing. Jim is proud to be the fifth generation on their farm in DeKalb County and looks forward to continuing the operation for generations to come.



Addy: Grandpa, why is that one calf white? Jim: Ask your mother.

Fourth-generation Spirit Lake farmer (center) is Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey. He’s flanked by Dave Nichols (right) and Ross Havens. “My first time to Nichols Farms” said Northey. He and Dave have known each other and have met frequently in the past. “I see a lot of cattlemen,” Northey said. “But this is a special place. The DNA data... the genetic improvement... amazing work is done here. It’s not just a bull on a hill. There is a whole story back of every bull.”

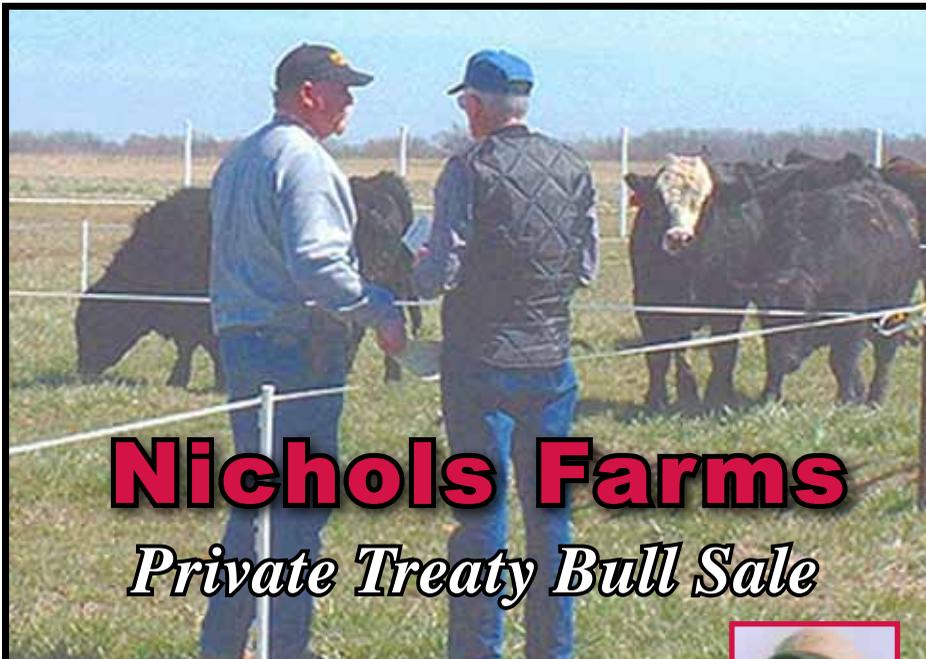
After 31 years, Nichols Super Systems R43 came home from Accelerated Genetics. Not in the flesh, but in spirit. Shortly after Don Trimmer presented his picture to the Nichols Team, he was “hung” on the wall. Super System R43 lived up to his name and was used to replace the hunters and jumpers of that era.



Not in the flesh, but in spirit. Shortly after Don Trimmer presented his picture to the Nichols Team, he was “hung” on the wall. Super System R43 lived up to his name and was used to replace the hunters and jumpers of that era.



Steve and Leslie Yardley, (right) Beaver, Utah ranchers spent an afternoon visiting Nichols Farms. “As we travel the country”, Steve said, “It’s refreshing and comforting to know there are still lots of people who share our beliefs on morals, politics, life, and breeding cattle.”



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Cowboys You Can Count On

Alex Antisdell grew up in Cass County, Iowa and graduated from Anita High School. He was on the “first team” of baseball, football, and track. But his first love was FFA. His peers elected him to be Chapter Treasurer. During summer vacations and after school, he worked for a local grain and livestock farmer.



Alex attended and graduated from Ellsworth Community College with a degree in Farm Management. After graduating, he worked for a well known Angus breeder.

After the untimely death of Bill Antisdell, Alex was recruited by Dave to join Team Nichols as the replacement heifer specialist. He’s responsible for the feeding, the A.I., the calving, and the care of them as yearlings and wet twos until their calves are weaned.

An Antisdell has worked at Nichols Farms every year since 1977, including his grandpa Gary, his dad Mike, his uncle Bill, and his aunt Cyndi.

Alex lives on the original Nichols home place where Dave grew up.

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The crude protein is supplied primarily by Biuret, an ADM Alliance Nutrition exclusive source of non-protein nitrogen. Biuret is released gradually in the rumen with a release rate similar to soybean meal.

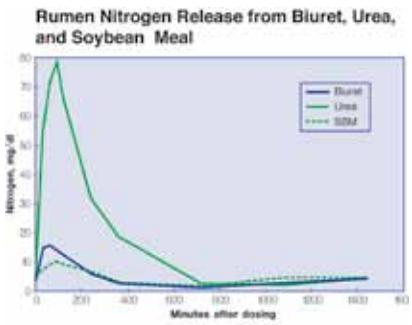
Why consider Roughage Buster? Forage quality, in terms of TDN and protein, decrease as the growing season progresses. Quality peaks in early summer and steadily declines



throughout the summer and fall. Protein supplements are thus needed during most of the year to meet the total protein requirements of cattle.

Once the supply of dietary protein used by rumen microorganisms becomes deficient, forage intake and digestibility drop. Cattle performance can subsequently diminish as a result. Supplementation with cost-effective Roughage Buster meets crude protein requirements and increases forage intake with a resulting positive effect on performance and body condition.

The slow ammonia release from Biuret favors efficient nourishment of rumen microorganisms, enabling more uniform and better breakdown and absorption of forage nutrients. Biuret also offers a wide margin of safety in comparison to urea.



Roughage Buster is available in three forms (bags, blocks and tubs) for convenience to fit any management system. Roughage Buster supplementation is a cost-effective way to help cows attain and maintain body condition by providing needed nutrients and enabling cattle to more efficiently utilize available forages.

LETTERS from you



From Don Laughlin, Director of Member Services American Angus Association

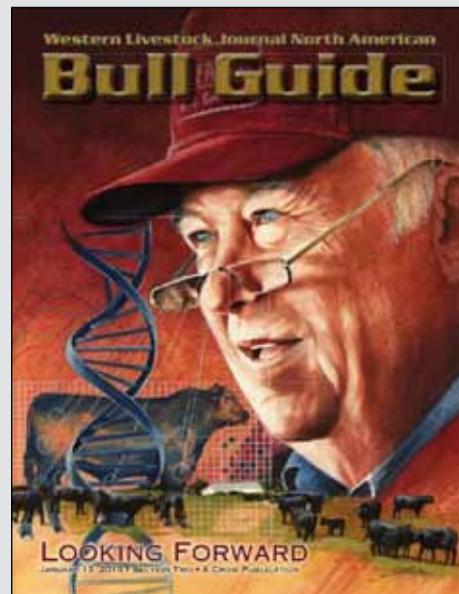
Dave, thanks for the great conversation yesterday. I really enjoyed our visit. It really brought out the fact that the “Nichols Farms Family” has been part of the fabric of the Angus business for 60 years.

From Ana Luisa Verba, Business Development Manager, Sysco, Cleveland OH

Dear Mr. Nichols, I just want to express my sincere gratitude for the **Passion** and **Dedication** you have for your operation. Now I know how much you care for raising the best quality beef in the industry through genetics, technology and innovation. Gracias! Gracias! You were the highlight of my CAB trip.

Eduardo Quirch, Quirch Foods, Miami FL

Thanks for the great experience at your farm. It was very productive for me.



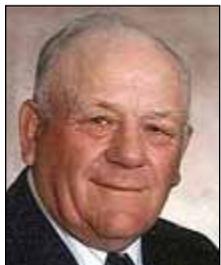
From Dr. Jeremy Taylor, Professor of Genomics, University of Missouri-Columbia

That is an AWESOME cover!!!! And a great story too.... You DA man Dave Nichols!!!

Jim Butcher, Gateway Simmental, Lewistown, MT

Dave, Just read your article in the Bull Guide from WLJ. What a great story! Would like to thank and congratulate you on your lifetime accomplishments and paving the way for younger producers like me to mentor. Have a great year. Thanks again.

Bill Ayers, of Green City, Missouri



Bill, 82, died January 29, 2014.

He and his son, Rick, had been a cooperated herd for Nichols Farms for decades. In all those years we never had a problem that Bill wouldn't

solve— as the gentleman that he was.

Bill's father passed away when he was only 15 months old. He was raised on a

very small farm. Bill's sole “safety net” was the love of his mother, his two sisters, and a caring community.

After graduating from high school he married Norma Downing. First he worked picking up milk for Producers Creamery and Milan Cheese Factory.

Later he and Norma bought a farm where they raised three children, including Rick, who will continue to produce Nichols Bulls.

Now, Bill is in heaven, astride his favorite Quarter Horse, watching his green grass and black cattle grow.

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