

Nichols Farms 1939 - present

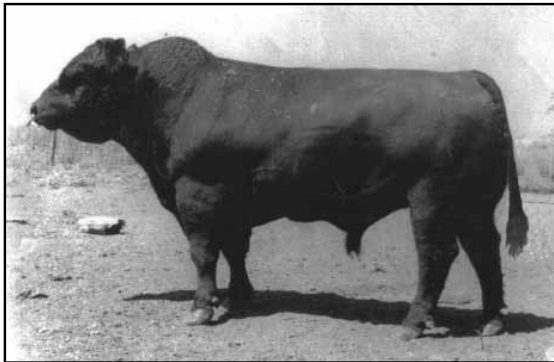


Dave & Lee "circa 1979"

In 1939 the world was suffering from an economic depression and on the brink of World War II. The cattle business is probably the last thing you'd associate with the 30's, but beef cattle were on the minds of Merrill and Gladys Nichols. That was the year they bought 240 acres of Adair County, Iowa farmland where they raised their four children, David - Edythe - Lee - Evelyn. In 1953 they and Dave (13 years old) started a purebred Angus herd. Merrill and Gladys were objective businessmen and with their sons, Dave and Lee, created a larger operation, Merrill Nichols & Sons. With their innovative sons Dave and Lee at the helm, they collected birth weight, feedlot rate of gain, and yearling weight on each/every animal. As cattle feeders, they realized the importance of carcass quality. In 1961 their bred and owned herd sire, Bell Boys Heir, earned the Certified Meat Sire distinction.

Merrill suffered a debilitating stroke in 1979 and died in 1987, but he and Gladys had taught their sons well. Merrill's goal-oriented example taught them to be innovators. In addition to the original purebred Angus — purebred Simmentals and specialized Nichols composite lines were systematically added.

Merrill Nichols & Sons was formalized in 1980 as Nichols Farms LTD. and included Dave's wife, Phyllis, and Lee's wife, Lillian, as managing partners. Lee's untimely death in 1982 resulted in Phyllis and Lillian assuming major responsibilities in the daily operations.



As the beef business evolved towards value based grid pricing and branded beef in the mid-90's, the beef industry turned to proven predictable genetics to improve lean yield and quality grades. The 50 years of the Nichols family finishing cattle served them well during this phase as they understood that genetic selections *must* include feedlot gain, feed efficiency and carcass merit in their breeding program. In this paradigm shift, Nichols Farms is recognized as the



Phyllis & Lillian "circa 1985"

leader in objectively measuring traits and marketing genetics which add real value to their customers cattle. Nichols Farms believed research and development were essential and participated in research projects with Iowa State, University of Missouri, Virginia Tech, University of Georgia, Cornell University, Kansas State and US MARC.

Ross Havens joined Nichols Farms in 1994 as Marketing Coordinator and to assist Nichols' customers' access to Nichols Value Added Programs. Nichols Farms sponsored and managed the first Genetic Source Auction in 1996 which took producers' Nichols sired calves and individually sorted them into predictable outcome groups. These sales were the start of the Nichols Genetic Source Auctions which have consistently been the high selling feeder calf sales during the week they were held.



Ross Havens

In 1998 Nichols Farms sold their first franchise in North Carolina. While franchising is common in other businesses, Nichols Farms was the first to adopt this business strategy in beef seedstock production and marketing. The franchises have extended Nichols Farms genetics inputs and value added programs to a multitude of commercial beef producers. Nichols Farms has franchises located in North Carolina, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Missouri.

Nichols Farms genetic inputs extend well beyond the United States. They have exported live cattle, embryos, and semen to 29 countries. Nichols Farms has grown from a 240 acre family farm into a national full service genetic provider in five states, because they set and lived up to tough standards, utilized science based technology, employed good people, and practiced aggressive marketing. In the 2010 NCBA published audit of registrations Nichols Farms was the third largest seedstock producer in the United States.



Barsa, Grand Champion Angus Bull
at Palermo - Argentina, South America
Sired by: Nichols Performa D162



Nichols Farms
Superior Beef Genetics

- Iowa Bull Test Center -