



Feeding Cattle and Seeing Resulting Carcasses Help Staudenmeyers in Breeding

■ Few Montana cattlemen have the regular opportunity to follow their steers through the feedlot and packing plant to check on performance and quality. The Staudenmeyers at Dillon and Monida have, however, and are breeding better cattle because of it.

The father and son ranching team feeds out most of its home raised steers and those of other breeders as well. In addition, it sells many of its steers direct to local packers where the carcasses can be easily compared. The result of this integrated ranching, farming and feeding operation has been constant improvement in the Staudenmeyers cattle.

Les Staudenmeyer has been in the cattle business since 1921 when he came to Montana as a 22-year-old from his father's Wisconsin farm. Bill, his 30-year-old son, now manages the 800-head Angus beef cow operation, while his father handles their feedlot and farming operations near Dillon.

"We feed our steers to grade Choice at 1,100 pounds and market the heifers when they are 1,000 pounds or less," Bill explained recently. "Through the feedlot we have learned a lot about the kind of cattle to raise. The fast gaining, early maturing animals stand out like a sore thumb. The poor doers on the other end are just as obvious and over the years we have eliminated the producers of this kind from our cow herd."

LES STAUDENMEYER got his first look at Angus crossbred calves in 1953 when he bought some black bulls to use on his whiteface heifers.

"Those crossbred calves did so well as calves and in the feedlot that Dad decided to breed all his cows to black bulls," Bill explained. "Then in 1957 he bought 450 head of good Angus cows, and we have had nothing but Angus on the ranch since then."

To sire the right kind of calves the Staudenmeyers buy nothing but high quality registered bulls from herds with proven gainability and early maturity.

"We don't look for pampered ones. Bulls that have 6 to 8 pounds of gain per day just won't work for us," Bill explained. "We have to have growthy animals with plenty of Angus type, that will mature out to 1,600 to 1,700 pounds when in good condition."

The cows are bred in July and August on irrigated pasture at the mountain ranch near Monida. As many as

500 cows are in one pasture, with a ratio of 5 bulls per 100 cows.

COWS START CALVING around March 1 at the winter ranch near Dillon. Within 60 days 95 per cent of the calves have been dropped and the big majority of them are on the ground during the first 30 days. The calf crop averages 90 per cent or better year after year, even though calving is done outside, except during heavy snowstorms or extremely cold weather.

One big factor in the 90 per cent calf crop is that they seldom have to pull a calf. "We don't have to help more than 2 per cent of our cows," Bill explained, "and I personally know of other ranchers who some years have to pull from 50 to 75 per cent of their calves."

Good year around nutrition is another management factor that the Staudenmeyers stress. The old cows are wintered on wild hay and mineral supplement and the calves and replacement heifers get alfalfa. Some of the tail end calves get chopped alfalfa and molasses.

On the mountain range, which is at about 7,000 feet, the whole herd has excellent irrigated pasture most of the summer. And, they stay in the mountains sometimes as late as December 1.

CALVES ARE WEANED during the first two weeks in November and average from 460 to 490 pounds, depending on the kind of year it is. All the calves are vaccinated with three-way vaccine 10 days to two weeks before weaning, the calves are then wintered and brought back up to the high country the next spring and are eventually sold around July 1 as yearlings, or put in the feedlot at Dillon.

The calves are all branded and vaccinated for blackleg and the bulls are castrated in early spring as soon as the herd is moved up from winter pasture.

Replacement heifers are selected before the yearlings are marketed or moved to the feedlot around July 1. Bill selects the best ones on size and type. The second best bunch of heifers are sold as replacements to other ranchers in the Northwest, and the remainder are sold as feeders or put in the Staudenmeyer feedlot.

Old cows are culled in the fall, mostly on an advanced age. When they get so they can't raise a big healthy calf, they are shipped to market.

A bit of the old west is revived



Top photo: This is the Staudenmeyer Ranch headquarters 7,000 feet up in mountains above Monida. Son Bill and his family live in the recently completed, modern, three-bedroom home in center. Registered cows in foreground, run as commercials, raise bulls used in the commercial herd.

Above: Bill Staudenmeyer, 30-year-old son of Les Staudenmeyer, manages ranch the latter established 35 years ago. Father and son run about 800 Angus cows and carry calves over on grass and market them as yearlings.

twice each year when the Staudenmeyers trail their cows into and out of the mountains each spring and fall. The drive is usually done in cooperation with at least one other neighbor, and takes from five to six days to cover the 70 miles.

IT IS ALL ACROSS country, where there are few if any roads, and it is quite a logistics problem, just getting food and supplies to the cowboys, and getting meals prepared.

The valley around Dillon is where the Staudenmeyers have their biggest investment in land and equipment. This includes 2,600 acres of land under irrigation that yields a rich harvest of barley and alfalfa. All of it is fed to home raised or purchased cattle and marketed as high good and choice beef.

From years of experience Les and Bill Staudenmeyer know the extra value of high quality cattle, and most of Bill's time is spent making the good cattle they have even better.—KEITH EVANS.

Rodeo Winner Dies

ON NOVEMBER 11, the sports world was saddened and shocked by the untimely death in an airplane crash of one of rodeo's most popular personalities — Bill Linderman. Linderman was born and reared in Red Lodge, Mont.; his current address was Walla Walla, Wash. As a champion steer-wrestler and saddle-bronc rider, he has won numerous titles in the rodeo arena. Also, he won nearly half-a-million dollars in his colorful career.

Blackout Farms Production Sale

24 Bulls—Average \$513.
27 Heifers—Average \$305.
51 Lots—Average \$463.
Gross—\$20,565
Auctioneer—SI Williams

■ A large crowd was on hand Nov. 12 at the Blackout Ranch, near Pullman, Wash., for its second annual production sale of top quality Angus.

Hubert Prince, Thornton, Wash., paid \$900 for the high selling animal of the sale. The big, correct May 25 1994 bull was Blackout Evaxmere 464. He was sired by Evaxus Eileenmere A577 and was out of an Oxbow Eileenmere 9 bred-cow.

Sigmond Angus of Opportunity Wash., bought the second high animal at \$750. This was a 1964 heifer, Black out Miss Eileen 334. Sired by Evaxus Eileenmere A577, she was out of Bruce 2 of G.M.R.-bred cow.

Lock Haven Farms, Hayden Lake Idaho, paid \$735 for a son of Evaxus Eileenmere A577.

Eight lots of cattle at the sale were bought by Bar-Non Ranch of Kailua Kona, Hawaii.

Gloss Enamel Best

■ High gloss enamel is best for painting areas that require frequent washing, advises the National Paint Varnish and Lacquer Association. Enamel dries to a smooth finish and can be washed often without losing its brilliant gloss and color.