

# Commercial Producer Award Nominees

## **Hobbs Ranch**

**Owner: Terry Hobbs Family**

**Manager: Terry Hobbs**

**Penokee, Kansas**

Hobbs Ranch was established in 1887. After serving his country in the Civil War, Terry' great-grandfather left Missouri and traveled west, homesteading along the north fork of the Saline River near Penokee, Kansas, in southern Graham County.

For 70 years, both registered and commercial Polled Herefords were raised on the ranch. They were a cooperator herd for the American Polled Hereford Association (APHA), progeny testing young sires, recording data and furnishing the association with all the results. They exhibited their cattle at many state fairs and shows during the 1970s and 1980s. Most of the bulls produced were fed and performance-evaluated at central

bull tests not only in Kansas, but in Nebraska, Colorado and Oklahoma as well.

In the early 1990s it was decided to incorporate Angus genetics into the herd. They looked to this breed to complement their Hereford cow herd, gaining hybrid vigor, carcass quality and consistency. Presently, they run more than 500 cows on about 12,000 acres of grass and farmland. Calving season begins the first part of February and wraps up about the end of March. They artificially inseminate 100 replacement heifers and 100 cows annually. All the heifers and cows are exposed to natural service sires during the summer. All the calves are weaned, usually in September and October, and backgrounded at the ranch for 60 to 90 days before being sent to a commercial feedyard, where growth and carcass value data is tracked for use in future bull selection. By retaining all, or part, ownership in their calves, they can take further advantage of the genetics they have in their herd.

The Kansas Livestock Association is proud to nominate the Hobbs Ranch.



## **Lovers Lane Farms**

**Owners/Managers: Bill and Jim Martin**

**Moorefield, West Virginia**

Headquartered along the south branch of the Potomac River just north of Moorefield, West Virginia, Lovers Lane Farms is a third-generation, diversified livestock and crop farm managed by brothers Bill and Jim Martin along with their father, Leonard. The Martin family operates on 5,000 acres of owned and leased land spanning four counties, including 1,500 acres of crop land, and 2,500 acres of grazing and hay land, with the balance of the acreage being forested.

They calve 600 commercial Angus-cross cows and graze 350 stockers annually. The Angus based cow herd is sorted according to areas of need and specifically mated to top AI and performance tested Angus and Hereford bulls selected to improve each management group's area(s) of weakness. Replacement heifers are selected using reproductive tract scores, pelvic measurements, and health status as well as individual, sire, and dam performance. Steer calves are weaned and preconditioned at least 45-60 days prior to shipment. In addition to their own calves, the Martins will background 2,500-3,000 purchased calves and fully finish an additional 500 annually.

Home-raised and backgrounded calves as well as stockers are sold via local board sales in load lots to farmer feeders in the Eastern Corn Belt, where the Martin's have developed a reputation for healthy, documented, quality cattle. Finished cattle are marketed through local sales where they are procured for harvest in Eastern Pennsylvania. Because of their location within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the Martin's follow a comprehensive nutrient management plan on all managed properties to protect water resources and appropriately allocate manure nutrients from their feeding facilities as well as their six poultry houses where they raise around 200,000 pullets annually for Pilgrim's Pride Corporation.

Lovers Lane Farms is committed to maintaining healthy animals, a healthy environment, and a healthy business for their industry, their community and their family.

The West Virginia Cattlemen's Association is proud to nominate the Lovers Lane Farms.



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## **Plum Thicket Farms**

**Owners: Rex & Nancy Peterson, Patrick & Krista Peterson**

**Manager: Dr. Nancy Peterson**

**Gordon, Nebraska**

Plum Thicket Farms is located in the panhandle of Nebraska. Average annual precipitation is between 14" and 16". They purchased the core of the ranch in January of 1998 along with 200 Angus cows, calving over four months. At that time, the ranch consisted of 2,078 acres of native range, 170 acres of irrigated alfalfa under a side roll system, and 500 dryland acres in a wheat fallow system. The pastures were all season long grazed and the cattle were fed hay for five months of the year. The calves were sold at weaning.

They now control 4,000 acres of native range, grazed in a rest-deferred rotation grazing system. They no-till farm 2,300 acres, including 560 acres under pivot irrigation. They calve 325 Sim-Angus cows for 45 days, starting in late April. Whole herd AI has been a staple of their program. From the outset, they have maintained detailed individual performance records that follow cattle to the rail. Nancy utilized this data to make bull selections and culling decisions. She has steadily improved the genetic quality of their herd. Utilizing annual forages, their cattle live within an eleven-month grazing program. They breed all of the heifers and select their replacements in the spring after they have had their first calf, selling young pairs that will likely go into a fall calving herd. They background all of the steers on forage cocktails and swathed sorghum supplemented with DDG and often retain ownership through the feed lot. They also run a small backgrounding lot. They are currently developing 300 heifer calves, 32 bull calves, and feeding 140 cull cows.

Plum Thicket Farms are a family operation with a passion for raising excellent beef cattle, and improving the range and soil that are their livelihood. Rex and Nancy head the cattle operation. After two tours of duty with the National Guard, Rex and Nancy's son, Patrick, came home to head the farming operation. Patrick is passionate about improving soil health and conserving resources. His wife, Krista, is a large animal veterinarian with a mobile practice in the area. She did a food animal internship at Kansas State Veterinary School and is a welcome addition to their management team.

The Nebraska Cattlemen are proud to nominate Plum Thicket Farms.



## **SingleTree Ranch**

**Owners/Managers: Frank and Sheila Daley**

**New Castle, Colorado**

SingleTree Ranch is a family run cow-calf operation started near New Castle, Colorado, in 1979 with the purchase of 106 acres of mostly irrigated land. An adjoining 160 acres were purchased in 1980 along with 80 head of mostly black baldy cows.

More land, cattle, BLM and Forest Service grazing permits have been acquired over the years. They now run close to 600 cows on two ranches near New Castle and another 250 cows on ranches near Wray, Colorado, added in 2005 and 2007. All calves except mountain replacement heifers are backgrounded in a small feedlot on their ranch at Haigler, Nebraska, just across the state line from Wray.

They feed the feeder calves to around 800 pounds at which time they decide whether to sell them or retain ownership while they are fed out at a custom lot. The dairy buy out in 1985 got them started on retained ownership and they have done it off and on since then. They purchased their first Limousin bulls in 1981 and have used primarily Limousin bulls since. They also have used Angus and a few Herefords.

When they have expanded, they have purchased more cows, mostly Angus and Black Baldies, but have primarily raised their own cow herd. Cows on the mountain ranches are bred to start calving March 1, while those in Wray start April 1. For several years they have been keeping the calves in a "natural" (as per USDA guidelines) and have marketed finished cattle to Coleman Natural Meats, Laura's Lean, Meyer Natural Angus,



National, Tyson, and a few others. Selling on a grid has worked well over the years because of the Limousin's excellent carcass traits. They always have a very high yield and a high percentage yield grade 1's and 2's with large ribeye area. Their mountain cattle summer at elevations from 8,500 to 10,500 feet and they have always appreciated how well the Limousins perform at these elevations.

The North American Limousin Foundation is proud to nominate Single Tree Ranch.

### **Triple M Farm**

**Owners: Tommy and Rhonda Martin**

**Manager: Tommy Martin**

**Moundville, Alabama**

Triple M Farm, owned and operated by Tommy and Rhonda Martin, is located in Hale County, Alabama, just south of Tuscaloosa. The farm began in 1943, when 180 acres was purchased by Tommy's grandparents, and has produced beef cattle for three family generations. After his retirement in 2011, Tommy is operating the farm full-time.

The farm consists of 250 acres of owned land, with an additional 90 acres of leased land, made of sandy loam and clay soils. The forage base primarily consists of Bermudagrass, Bahiagrass and Crabgrass, with annual planting of Ryegrass for winter grazing. Soil fertility and weed control are a major focus.

The Triple M herd consists of approximately 90 Simmental and Angus cross cows with a 90-day fall calving system, beginning to calve around September 25 each year. A SimAngus cross is maintained to balance heterosis to capture benefits in fertility, heavier weights and longevity. Artificial insemination, along with estrus synchronization and fixed-time AI, has made a tremendous impact by providing the ability to capture the highest quality genetics. Emphasis is given in balance to calving ease and growth to produce a live calf with solid growth traits and maternal ability. Feeder calves are marketed each August through a cooperative tele-auction sale to seize fall marketing opportunities. Replacement heifers are selected by evaluating heifer and dam performance histories to advance performance. Triple M Farm began maintaining performance records through the Alabama BCIA Commercial Record Keeping Program in 2000. Since then, Triple M Farms has earned a BCIA Gold Star Cow Award each year for the past 13 years, a Most Improved Herd in 2008 and a Top Weaning Weight Award in 2016.

Triple M Farm is proudly nominated by the Alabama Beef Cattle Improvement Association.



**K-State Animal Sciences & Industry**

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