

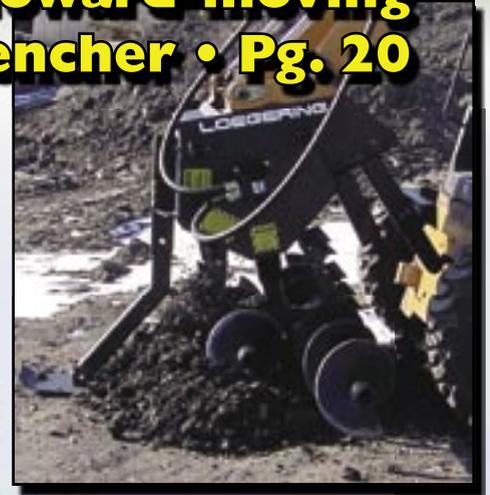
# Western Farm, Ranch & Dairy Magazine

The vital resource of the Ag Industry

Rocky Mountains • spring edition 2004

Montana / North Dakota / South Dakota / Wyoming

**Loeering introduces forward-moving  
skid-steer trencher • Pg. 20**



**Ridley Block Operations  
Supplements For Your Cattle • Pg. 3**



**Buffalo Business Moving Toward  
Greener Economic Pastures • Pg. 35**

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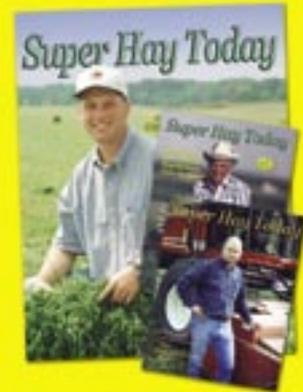
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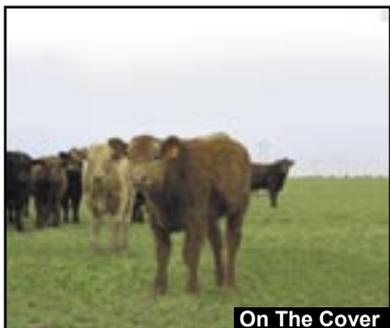
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**On The Cover**

Photo courtesy of Ridley Block Operations. For more, see page 3. Inset photo courtesy of Loegering Mfg. For more, see page 20.

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## Merrick's A Division of Merrick Animal Nutrition, Inc.

*Bringing together experience, research, performance and commitment.*

**M**errick's mission is to manufacture animal feed products and ingredients for a worldwide market, providing quality and service exceeding the expectations of our customers. Merrick's began selling dairy products to the feed industry in 1959. The experience and knowledge Merrick's brought to the industry helped establish the standards by which milk and fat products are judged today.

### Innovative Product Development

After pioneering in the manufacture of 60% and 80% dry high fat products, we expanded this line to include 100% fat for both dairy cow and swine rations. Merrick's was the first to develop and introduce many innovative products that optimize the survival and health of baby animals. In 1982 Merrick's expanded



to manufacture and market a full line of branded milk replacers for calves, baby pigs, foals, lambs and kids. Over the years we have developed innovative supplements, additives and electrolytes for all species.

### Milk Replacers . . . and So Much More!

Animal plasma in milk replacers was introduced into the market by Merrick's in 1989. In 1998 we developed a calf milk replacer formulated with spray dried animal blood cells. In the search to develop nutritionally advanced products for use in milk replacers, we test many alternative proteins. This testing resulted in the formulation of egg protein milk replacers for both Merrick's branded milk replacers and private label customers. In 1994 we developed a calf nursing bottle and a patented nipple featuring the first advance in calf nipple design in many years. That year Merrick's also entered the poultry feed industry with products to help producers maintain healthier animals.

### Research and Product Formulations

At Merrick's, research is a basic belief and an ongoing process. Research into all aspects of animal nutrition results in the development of innovative products and in our ability to offer products with a wide range of protein and fat sources. The manufacture of these products allows us to fulfill a variety of needs to help guarantee the survival and health of valuable animals. Merrick's qualified nutritionists can help determine which product formulations will best meet producers needs. We also market a wide range of ingredients for swine and dairy rations, in addition to dry fat, including whey, lactose, animal blood cells and plasma.

### Commitment

Merrick's is committed to develop, manufacture and market quality products. We maintain a high level of commitment to the individual needs and success of our customers and pro-

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## ANGUS TOUR OFFERED TO SCOTLAND JULY 27-AUGUST 14

The American Angus Association is pleased to offer a custom planned, professionally managed tour to Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland, July 27 to August 14, 2004. A highlight of the program is the Angus Heartland Celebration at Creiff, in Central Scotland, which coincides with the 125th Anniversary of the Aberdeen Angus Society in the United Kingdom.

We're very pleased to work with Terry Steele and Anchors Away Cruises and Tours to offer this first-class trip to visit the home of the Angus breed, says John Crouch, executive vice president of the American Angus Association. This op-

portunity to see Angus cattle and explore the sights and sounds of Scotland and other countries is a unique opportunity for our membership.

Not only will the group visit leading Angus herds in Central Scotland, but they will also attend a cattle sale, visit Scotbeef Ltd's meat plant, a civic reception at Perth's Royal George Hotel, which is where the inaugural meeting of the society was held in 1879, and witness a rededication of the gravestone of breed founder Hugh Watson of Keillor, and much more.

The tour package includes:

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Space on the tour is limited. For more information or to download a registration form, a complete itinerary and costs, go to [www.anchorsawaycruises.com/angusscotland](http://www.anchorsawaycruises.com/angusscotland), or call Terry Steele at Anchors Away Cruises and Tours at 1-800-527-8666, ext. 203.

When you hear Auger fighting, most of you think of Egbers. We're very proud that we're so well known by our customers, "Says Doug Egbers, owner of Egbers Flighting & Supply." The Egbers family has been involved in the Auger and Agricultural Repair business since 1974." Doug and Laura Egbers are the newest members to take on the family business. In January, 2003 Egbers Farms Inc. was purchased and Egbers Flighting & Supply was set in place.

Egbers still offers a wide variety of auger flighting and recently they opened up their other stock items for resale. "In the past, we did not heavily advertise our stock of tube, shaft and auger accessories. There are so many companies that require minimum orders, we opened our stock items to better accommodate our customers," says Laura Egbers. Egbers has no minimum order requirements.

Also new with Egbers is their 20 ft. balancing machine. They have found a better-finished product when unloading augers are balanced. "We can take most of the vibration out these unloading augers," Doug Egbers says. The faster the auger runs the greater the need for the auger to be balanced. "We have customers drive from all over just to balance their grain cart augers."

Along with their many stock items, Egbers accommodates their customers by shipping complete augers. "We have a lot of talent in our company, and we like the variety of projects that we do," says Doug Egbers. "We've worked on augers as small as 2" in diameter for corn burners and 24" in diameter for a rock quarry.

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## Bison Hunting Tags To Be Issued In August, 2004

State wildlife officials expect to issue hunting tags for bison next summer, and to resume a controversial hunt on the edge of Yellowstone National Park next winter, an agency spokesman said.

Ron Aasheim of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks said an environmental assessment should be finished soon and then will be available for public comment, with a completed plan.

After that, hunters would be able to apply for one of a limited number of tags, expected to cost \$75 for residents and \$750 for non-residents. Current plans call for tags to be issued in August 2004.

The duration of the hunt and the number of tags to be issued remain to be decided.

Every winter, bison wander across the Yellowstone National Park border to forage in Montana. Some bison carry brucellosis, which causes domestic cattle to abort. A federal-state management plan allows for bison that leave the park and cannot be herded back in to be killed under certain circumstances to protect cattle from infection.

A decade ago, lawmakers stopped public hunting of bison because of a barrage of bad publicity and a threatened boycott of Montana organized by animal-rights activists. But the Legislature last winter voted to resume hunts.

Aasheim said a hunt this winter is very unlikely, no matter how many bison stroll into Montana, and any future hunts will be very different from those in the past.

There will be fewer hunters, with emphasis on shooting areas away from public roads.

But any killing of bison would draw protests, said Michael Mease of the Buffalo Field Campaign, an activist group that tries to protect bison that roam from the park.

Yellowstone officials say the park's bison herd is estimated at 4,250 head, at or near a record high.

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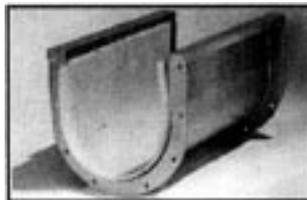
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# Beef Carcass Ultrasound Aids Marketing and Profitability

By: Eric Geving

**P**recision Beef Ultrasound offers a service allowing an animal to be analyzed “under the hide.” Whether you produce seedstock, commercial cattle, or finish cattle in a feedlot, beef carcass ultrasound can improve your marketing and profitability. The ribeye area, back fat, marbling, and rump fat traits are captured by ultrasonic imaging and evaluated for carcass merit.

Precision Beef Ultrasound services are used in seedstock production for trait measurement and body composition EPDs. Images are captured on animals within guidelines set around one year of age. The images are sent to the Centralized Ultrasound Processing (CUP) Lab in Ames, Iowa and traits are measured through software at the laboratory. The data

is then sent to the represented breed association where body composition EPDs are derived and subsequently put out to the breeder. Many seedstock producers use the derived EPDs to market their cattle.

For commercial producers, Precision Beef Ultrasound can measure marbling and back fat chute-side through software developed by the Cattle Performance Enhancement Company (CPEC) of Oakley, Kansas. Ribeye images are captured and later traced through CPEC software for area measurements. Commercial producers use the ultrasound evaluation to cull herds and enhance selection.

Carcass ultrasound is used in the feedlot industry to sort fed cattle. Scanning for backfat, marbling, and muscle depth improves profits by marketing sort groups when they fit

a profitability model. Studies show that marketing a pen of cattle on one day is inefficient and does not maximize carcass quality or profitability. Each animal has an optimal harvest day and those optimal days are distributed so that there is typically at least a hundred day interval from when the first should be harvested until the last. Normally, a 3-way sort for a pen is the most efficient sort as it nearly eliminates outliers and also leaves the middle group intact.

No matter what segment of the beef industry you’re involved with, increasing marketing and profitability is available to you through beef carcass ultrasound. Precision Beef Ultrasound offers competitive services that can be catered to help reach the goals of your operation.



**Eric Geving**  
CUP/CPEC Certified Technician

*Working to improve the cattle industry through beef carcass ultrasound.*

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Units come complete with the tank, 50 feet of hose, a specially built wand, frame, mole probe, gloves and goggles. The wand is equipped with a spring-loaded valve that for safety reasons has to be held open when in use. On the end of the wand is a hose to be placed in the hole, or a probe can be installed if you are after pocket gophers.

The purpose of this unit is to eradicate rodents for good. This is done by placing the end of the wand into the burrow of the rodent and injecting the NH3 down the hole. It only takes about five seconds per hole, and one tank can last up to 500 holes.

The unit is designed to be loaded in the back of a pick-up truck, on a trailer, or whatever the operator chooses by either a forklift or a front-end loader.

The price is \$3,100.00 (U.S.) plus applicable taxes. Price is quoted FOB Unity, Saskatchewan. A wheel unit is also available for this unit. It allows to be towed behind a four-wheeler or any ATV. The price for this option is \$550.00 (U.S.)

To place an order, phone Maze Innovations at (306) 398-2637 or Fax: (306) 398-2638. Website: [www.gophinator.com](http://www.gophinator.com)

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# Farmers Experience Greater Hearing Loss

Nearly 75 percent of all farmers suffer from some hearing loss, compared with one in 10 of the general public that develop hearing loss, according to the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health. The statistics are a reminder that the farm can be a very noisy place, said Kansas State University Extension farm safety specialist John Slocombe.

The statistics are a reminder that the farm can be a very noisy place. Hearing loss can happen gradually so that it may not be noticeable to the person who's losing his or her hearing. It can be caused by both loudness and the length of time a person is exposed to the loud noises. On the farm you have exposure to engines running, squealing pigs, or power tools can damage hearing in as little as two hours, unless

some type of hearing protection is used. Hearing protection decreases the intensity of sound that reaches the eardrum.

The bad news about hearing loss is that it is permanent. Once it is lost, it can't be recovered. The good news is that it is easy to protect against it. The first step is to recognize that many sounds on the farm can be damaging. If any noise is so loud that people must shout to be heard, or if the noise hurts your ears, makes your ears ring, or leaves you slightly deaf for several hours after exposure, it is too loud and steps should be taken to protect yourself, the farm safety specialist said.

Eliminating the noise is the perfect solution, but since that is not always possible, hearing protection should be worn. Protectors such as earplugs and earmuffs are available at most farm

supply, hardware, and discount retail stores. When properly fitted, plugs and muffs allow a person to hear conversation and the sounds of machinery, but with the volume of sound greatly reduced – thus protection hearing.

An added benefit, Slocombe said, is that the wearer will feel less fatigued at the end of the day. For the best safeguard, look for hearing protection that carries a noise reduction rating of 25 or higher. Those who already have hearing loss may want a lower rating, he said. Choose protection that is comfortable and easy to use, so there will be no excuse for not using it. In addition, because farmers are continually exposed to loud noises, they should have their hearing tested regularly. An audiogram will reveal signs of hearing loss so that steps can be taken to reduce exposure and stop further hearing damage.

## Ag Census: Women Farmers Grow In Numbers

Women are making up a larger percentage of all U.S. farmers, the U.S. Census Bureau reported. Come 27.2 percent of agricultural producers were women who were principal operators increased 12.6 percent from 1997, the survey said.

The census changed the way it counts principal operators for 2002, so comparisons need some interpretation.

California had 12,598 women operators in 1997, when the last survey was conducted. Now it has 35,438, when as many as three people can be considered an "operator" of a farm.

In Idaho, the number of women operators increased from 2,245 in 1997 to 11,347 in 2002.

African American, American Indian, Hispanic and women operators are all

significant contributors to agriculture and their numbers have all increased since 1997. These women are involved in day to day farming and ranching decisions.

This census incorporated collection of new data and improved methodologies to enable us to present the most complete and accurate picture of U.S. agriculture available.

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systems, which are great for semi's, straight trucks and gravity boxes simplifies the installation in bins with concrete and aeration floors. With the optional sweep tunnels, you can leave the sweep in the bin saving time and labor. The no hassle "Y" duct and straight duct aeration systems are available for storage facilities up to 36' in diameter. The system is easy to install and has clearance for the sweep to pass underneath so the system can remain permanently in the bin. This option gives you outstanding, year-round grain conditioning and affordable complete grain handling system on the market.

Schiltz Manufacturing's goal is to provide its customers with a product that is affordable for new and existing grain storage facilities. Their proven track record of reliability and ease of use keeps their customers coming back and bringing new customers that are

looking for a cost effective and much improved grain handling system.

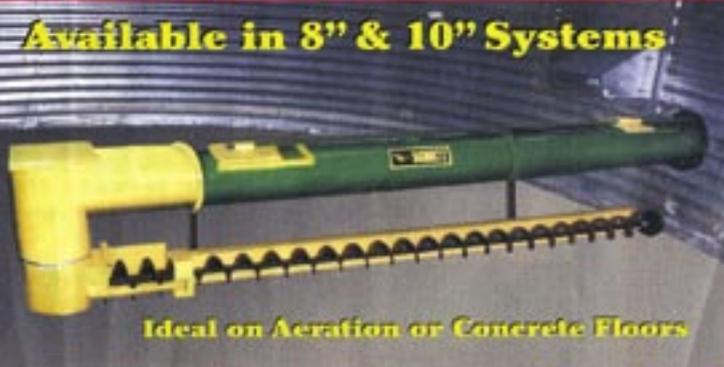
One of Schiltz Mfg.'s biggest concerns is for your safety. Always remember to:

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- (2) Always make sure the grain unloading system is disconnected from power, and that others will not engage power to the system.
- (3) Close the sump lid and stop all augers before entering a grain bin or before making adjustments.
- (4) Keep children away from augers.
- (5) Keep your hands and feet away from all augers.

Schiltz Mfg. looks forward to be of assistance to you. For more information, phone (605) 458-2220 or call toll-free at 1-800-658-3637 or e-mail: schiltzmfg@sbtc.net. Website: www.schiltzmfg.com.

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# U.S. Hog Slaughter Second Largest Ever

U.S. Hog slaughter for the week ending December 20, was 2.225 million head, the largest in five years and second-biggest weekly figure ever.

The all-time high was set the same week in 1998, at nearly 2.265 million head. Weekly hog slaughters during the fourth quarter have averaged nearly 3.4 percent above a year ago. This compares with expectations before the quarter began of approximately one percent below a year ago. Heavier carcass weights have added to total pork production, which for the quarter is up about 4.8 percent from a year ago.

Although the week's kill was nearly 40,000 head below the record week in 1998, estimated pork production was 15.8 million pounds, or 3.68 percent, above that of the record kill week.

Despite the unexpectedly large slaughters and pork production this

quarter, prices are well above a year ago. The same week a year ago, lean hog, or carcass prices, in Iowa/southern Minnesota averaged \$40.68 per hundredweight. Lean values in that region averaged about \$47.90, up approximately 17.5 percent from a year ago. During the same week in 1998, carcass-based prices averaged only about \$16.50.

Industry sources and market analysts credit the very high wholesale beef prices and reduced beef production as supportive for pork. They said the beef complex is largely responsible for keeping hog and pork prices from falling.

Combined meat output for the quarter to date is running about 4.4 percent below a year ago, with the increase in pork more than offset by reduced beef production. Some also said growing U.S. population and expanded exports of U.S. pork are supportive factors for prices.

U.S. cattle slaughter for the week was 634,000 head, compared with 620,000 a week prior and 650,000 a year ago. Year-to-date cattle slaughter is estimated at 34,022 million head, down 1.03 percent from a year ago.

Year-to-date hog slaughter is estimated at 96.791 million head, up 0.20 percent from a year ago. The week's combined meat production – for beef and veal, pork and lamb/mutton – was estimated at 923.5 million pounds, versus the previous week's 896.5 million and the year-ago figure of 934.3 million pounds.

Combined meat production for the year to date is estimated at 44.909 billion pounds, down 1.33 percent from last year.

Broiler slaughter of the week was estimated at 154.380 million head, compared with 153.501 million a week ago and 152.854 million a year ago.

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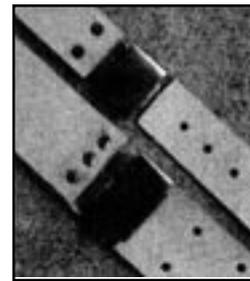
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the EPA providing efficient and effective burrowing rodent control. Farmers, ranchers, pest control companies, nurseries, golf courses, and water districts experiencing rodent destruction can eliminate the problem. City parks and recreation departments, schools, and public works, all of whom have a responsibility to monitor public safety, are using this system to eliminate rodent infestations in the U.S. and around the World.

The Rodenator Pro™ is a new aggressive approach to burrowing rodent control. It is an elimination system as well as a control system. Marketed exclusively in the U.S. in the past, the Rodenator Pro™ System has proven so effective that it is now marketed worldwide. Waiting for animals to come to baits or traps is no longer necessary. The Rodenator Pest Elimination System is fast and efficient, allowing a user to go directly after a targeted pest.

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pane and oxygen down through the rodent's tunnel system. A self-contained ignition system then allows the user to ignite the gas, creating an underground shockwave, instantly and humanely eliminating the animal without using poisons.

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- Monte Daniels, D&D Cattle Co. Wolfforth, TX "The Rodenator Pro™ is the only economical and environmentally friendly device I have found for both control and eradication of prairie dogs in cropland and rangeland."
- Gino Favagrossa, Farm Manager at Fresno State University says, "The new Rodenator Pro has been very effective in the control of our squirrel infestation at Fresno State. The improvements of the new Rodenator Pro have increased the efficiency of our eradication efforts. We continue to use the Rodenator Pro throughout the campus farm for control of squirrels and gophers".

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## The Tradition of the Arapahoe Ranch

As one of the West's reputation outfits, the Arapahoe Ranch consists of 380,000 acres of high desert and steep mountain country, spanning the Owl Creek Mountains to an elevation of 10,000 feet. The Arapahoe Ranch is home to over 4000 mother cows and 2000 head of yearlings, along with over 300 head of Quarterhorses, including the ranch cavvy, the product of years of intensive breeding to establish hard working ranch geldings.

The Arapaho nation is seven generations strong. Just as strong are the three generations of the Arapahoe Ranch. This is a place where the past is lived everyday. The past shapes the future. And from the beginning of ranching along Owl Creek sprang the future of the Arapahoe Ranch. The ranch was established in 1940 when the Northern Arapaho Tribe purchased the Padlock Ranch. The Arapahoe Ranch was the first enterprise of the Northern Arapaho people and came into tribal ownership at a time when the Arapaho were still reeling from the shock of moving away from a nomadic lifestyle to settle into an agricultural community. It is the strength and perseverance of the Arapaho people that allowed them to make this transition from

chasing buffalo on the open plains to raising cattle on the Wind River Reservation.

Sixty-four years after its purchase, the Arapahoe Ranch is a thriving enterprise for the Arapaho people. It is also a source of great pride and accomplishment.

The West is still very much alive at the Arapahoe Ranch, where cowboys spend long, hard days horseback working cattle. Summers are spent in high mountain cow camps branding calves. And during the fall, the cowboys spend long days in the saddle gathering pairs to the lower country so that the calves can be weaned and the cows pregnancy tested and then turned back out on native range. Arapahoe Ranch cows must be highly adaptable to endure long, tough winters and hot, dry summers, but the summer grass is beyond comparison and both cows and calves come into the winter months in good flesh.



The yearling program is also very productive for ranch operations.

The ranch has recovered from the devastating wildfires of the summer of 2000 and four consecutive years of drought and has begun to rebuild the cow herd and is quickly becoming one of the premier cattle ranches in the country. With the continued support of the Northern Arapaho Business Council and the Arapaho people, the Arapahoe Ranch will continue its historic and prosperous tradition for generations to come.

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## NWAS • Electro-Seismic Waves Help Quench Montana Well-Water Thirst

A new, scientific wave in water location is now available in Montana to help land owners find water before their driller ever punches a hole. Technology in use by NorthWest Aquifer Surveying of Southern Montana is a slightly different twist to sound-wave science that has pinpointed oil and ore deposits for decades. This new technology utilizes sound waves to disturb the bond between rock and water allowing electrical signals from water to be collected and analyzed revealing aquifer depth and potential yield.

"So far we have assisted a number of clients who have one or more dry wells and are hoping to find a location where they can drill a productive well," says Dean Petty, who with his wife Darla, purchased the Southern Montana franchise of NorthWest Aquifer Surveying in October of 2002. "Some have felt a little desperate I think. It's hard to live on a gallon or less of water per minute especially if you have a family," adds Darla.

Other clients have come to the Pettys planning ahead. Near Great Falls a client was looking forward to purchasing property, but wanted some assurance that he would be able to get an adequate supply of water for the horses he plans to keep. Another client put off buying his dream property near Wilsall until he was sure water could be found. After an NWAS survey of 14 soundings, at a fraction of the cost of drilling in an uncertain location, this land owner drilled at the best site located by the Pettys and now has a 15 gpm well. Both he and the driller were thrilled to find water at the depth indicated by NWAS electro-seismic data, and a higher yield than expected.

The Pettys of Bozeman are just as excited as their customers about this new water location technology as it promises to take the guess work out of where to drill. "It's a scientific, highly accurate technique proven by its ten to 20 percent margin of error at estimating aquifer depth, and 25 percent margin of error to estimate yield," Dean said of its accuracy rate which has been proven around the world since 1994. That is when developers at the British-based company GroundFlow Ltd. patented and first began promoting the technology. Exclusive franchising rights for North America were purchased by Ervin and Christine Kraemer of Washington state, who have been offering

NWAS water location services since July of 2001.

Aquifer surveys provide accurate estimates of aquifer depth and potential yield in gallons per minute which are determined from data collected through 'soundings'. Each survey includes a minimum of four soundings that are accomplished on site beginning with insertion into the ground of four, three-foot electrodes. Connected by cables to a data-collection computer, the electrodes capture electrical signals from water generated by a sound pressure wave sent from the surface. The sound waves are created through one of two sources: either a sledge hammer and steel plate are used for shallow soundings of 325 feet or less, or a 'buffalo source' is used for soundings that will reach more than 1000 feet deep.

The sound wave jars rock formations, producing a movement, or rippling, of existing ground water. This seismic disturbance causes a very small (electro-kinetic) change in the earth's magnetic field. Having disturbed existing water, electrical signals returning to the surface at the speed of light reveal a distinct pattern where water is found. Using computer programming designed by geophysicists at GroundFlow Ltd., the collected data is analyzed and processed to reveal the depth and quantity of the groundwater.

Each sounding is recorded approximately 80 feet apart in a systematic pattern so that the minimum survey of four soundings maps an area of over 8000 square feet. Clients receive the data analysis in a written report which they can then use to determine their best drilling options.

While in some ways it is similar to traditional seismic testing, there is a major difference in what kind of data is being recorded. Seismic work performed by geologists measures the waves returning from different geological formations while electro-seismic technology measures the electrical signals given off by water that is being disturbed. The signal does not reveal anything about the geology, but it proves very accurate in locating where water can be found.

Since beginning operations in December of 2002, NWAS of Southern Montana has served over 30 clients in Southern Montana and Wyoming. Most clients have been referrals from well drillers, but the Pettys believe that as the word gets out, the many uses for electro-seismic aquifer surveys will become more evident and sought after. Besides helping residential clients and their drilling contractors to avoid drilling dry holes, electro-seismic data has also been used to discover the most productive well location for agricultural pivots, has helped developers plan new subdivisions, cities solve water problems, and in numerous other ways has aided projects dependent on water.

While this is new technology for America, it has been used extensively in Africa, the Middle East, Japan, Australia and Europe. As a new company in the U.S., NWAS Inc., of Adna, Wash., has continued to expand the use of electro-seismic technology through franchise holdings. It now has 15 franchises, located in the states of Washington, Montana, Colorado, Oregon, California and Texas with several others pending.

As attested to by numerous successful wells drilled using NWAS data, electro-seismic water location is the newest, most accurate scientific method available in North America today. For more information on successful wells and testimonials of satisfied customers one can visit [www.findwellwater.com](http://www.findwellwater.com), the NWAS, Inc. website. The Pettys can be reached in Bozeman at P.O. Box 881, 59771 or by calling them at 406-587-3250 or toll free at 888-588-3250.



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# FROSTFREE NOSEPUMPS - THE ENERGY FREE SOLUTION

Helping ranchers with a low-cost method of providing clean water to livestock for 12 months a year, Frost-free Nosepumps put a new spin on old-school technology - a pump that lets cattle draw their own fresh well or pond water year-round, without the need for power.

The design allows the pump to work in winter, and is easy for livestock to use. With a little help from the producer, cattle train themselves to use the pump by being able to smell water pumped into the trough by the trainer, and also by observing those animals that have learned how to operate the pump. The first cow to the pump strokes the pendulum about 3 times to draw the water, after which it pumps at about half a quart per stroke. When there are no livestock pumping, the fresh water in the riser pipe drains back down through a small hole. The hole is 5 feet down the pipe, and the vertical culvert should be insulated to protect against freezing in winter temperatures. When the livestock pump, water flows over a nipple in the back of the Nosepump unit and into the trough. This nipple prevents backflow which could carry contaminants back into the water source. Because water is produced on the push stroke vs. the return stroke, the cattle drink everything they pump.

The creator of the Frostfree Nosepump, Jim Anderson, puts his own herd of 135 cows on a single unit after weaning, and recommends 50 to 60 cow/calf pairs per pump in the summer-time. After five years of using the pumps year-round on their own operation, the Andersons are very confident that this pump will help many livestock producers.

Customers are encouraged to pour a 20' by 20' concrete pad around the unit. It'll help prevent contamination and it also keeps the frost from being driven down by the activity around the pump. As an added precaution, we recommend styrofoam insulation under the cement pad.

The demand to keep cattle out of riparian areas is increasing, and the Frostfree Nosepump is an environmentally friendly alternative to keep cattle out of rivers, creeks, ponds and dug-outs. It is especially helpful to water cattle on remote pastures and establish winter feeding areas away from traditional sites.



*Cattle Pump Their Own Water*

The pump has been tested over existing cased wells and bored wells, or trenched from ponds with standing water between 7' and 45'. It is guaranteed to work year-round if it is installed according to the directions provided. To view cattle operating the pump even at temperatures of minus 40 degrees, take a look at the videos on the website: [www.frostfreenosepumps.com](http://www.frostfreenosepumps.com). For further information on Frostfree Nosepumps Ltd. visit the website or call the toll-free phone number in the ad on this page.

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## Loeering introduces the only forward-moving skid-steer trencher in the market. Now you can dig trenches the RIGHT way!

Loeering is excited to introduce the only forward digging skid-steer-mounted trencher that is guaranteed to trench circles around the competition. This trencher is literally the only trencher that goes the right direction. The Loeering Trencher's innovative side-shift design digs in both directions, straight, and in curves. This innovative trencher has a skid-plate that can be set in relation to the two tandem dirt augers and rests on the ground, allowing the operator to skid-steer in the float position and maintain a constant digging depth at all times. "Not only is it a user-friendly trencher, this is currently the only trencher in the skid-steer market that can dig trenches moving forward allowing you to dig right up to a building or curb", states Loeering Region Sales Manager Todd Shepherd.

The trencher is available in digging depths of 3 feet 6 inches, 4 feet 6 inches and 5 feet 6 inches. In just a matter of minutes, your 3 feet 6 inch trencher can become a 4 foot 6 inch unit by simply sliding the extension piece onto the boom and adding an additional section of chain. Converting to a 5 foot 6 inch machine just means adding a second boom extension, the proper length of chain as well as additional teeth. The teeth can also be adjusted to widen or narrow the trench. The trencher can dig

trenches from five to 12 inches wide.

The Loeering trencher is easier, safer and faster than the competition. This trencher features bumper arms that rest on the front frame of the skid-steer to stabilize and take pressure off the skid-steer's tilt cylinders.

Loeering Regional Sales Manager Dale Brandt feels one of the primary benefits of the Loeering Trencher is the added safety you get with our trencher.

"With the Loeering Trencher, you can now see where you're going. Not only is this a nice safety feature, but since you no longer need to use a spotter, this Trencher will also cut down on your labor costs!"

This trencher is ideal for creating circular foundations. The outside of the trencher frame has eyelets for hooking up a chain to use as a visual guide to keep the trencher at the desired radius while creating perfect sidewalls.

The trencher also has a Spoon that



cleans out and levels the trench. The spoon attaches to the underside bracket.

Loeering, the original skid-steer track manufacturer, has been building tracks for over 30 years and tracking self-propelled booms since 1977. The company designs and produces tracks and attachments for distribution worldwide.

For more information, please contact: Becky Fix, Marketing & PR Specialist, (701) 347-6316.

e-mail: [beckyf@loeering.com](mailto:beckyf@loeering.com)

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Both panels are attractive and have a clean, pleasing appeal. Our panels are as strong or stronger than any other on the market.

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## MANAGE FARM STRESS TO STAY SAFE

**F**armers cope with more job stress than the average worker. In fact, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health reports that farming is one of the 10 most stressful occupations and one of the most dangerous occupations - with an accident rate second only to mining.

The combination of stress and daily work around powerful machinery and/or large animals in varying and unpredictable situations can lead to accidents. The most effective way to counter farm stress is to recognize that some events can be stressful and to plan ways to deal with those stressors effectively - before symptoms become severe.

Stress can manifest itself as physical

symptoms such as headaches or stomach problems, or as emotional symptoms through angry outbursts or depression. In most people, stress affects relationships with others and is often first noticed by someone other than the person experiencing it. Stress can also lead to action or behavior that results in a farm accident.

Research shows that even under similar circumstances, farmers react differently to the amount of stress they experience, Slocombe said. This is because some farmers develop more effective coping strategies than others.

Stress levels among farmers may increase farm accidents.

Tips for managing stress:

- Recognize your personal symptoms

and make a conscious decision to do something about them.

- Eat nutritious foods daily. Just as machinery needs quality fuel, our bodies need nutritious food to function properly.
- Keep machinery and equipment in good working condition. Elimination potential breakdowns can minimize stressful events.
- Talk about your stress with family or a close friend.
- Do something relaxing every day - even if it's just for a few minutes.
- Exercise. Farmers get a lot of exercise, but it's not always vigorous enough. Try to do some type of aerobic exercise at least three times a week.

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# WHY CONTINUE TO SELECT FOR MILK YIELD?

Dr. Jack McAllister • Extension Dairy Specialist, University of Kentucky

**D**airy farmers get paid for milk yield from dairy cows. It represents over 80% of the income from most dairy enterprises. The milk production of a cow is the result of her genetic capacity to produce milk and the provision for her on the part of the dairy farm manager of high quality nutrition and a comfortable stress-free environment. Over the last 40 years in the US the milk yield of first lactation Holstein cows has almost doubled from about 13000 pounds to just over 25000 pounds. Over that same time period the genetic value of dairy sires for milk yield has increased almost 7800 pounds. These gains are tremendous and represent a concerted effort of dairy farmers and the AI industry to improve milk production and the genetic capacity of cattle for milk production.

Now some farmers are asking if we need to continue our strong emphasis on milk production in our genetic selection programs. Why would this question be asked? Trends from USDA data show a decline in productive life of about 3 months over the last 40 years while breeding value of sires for productive life has actually increased by about 6 months.

Other studies have shown a decline in several measures of reproduction but the genetic component of this decline is not clear-cut. The real question is has increased genetic capacity for milk yield come at too high a genetic price?

This is not an easy question to answer. Management and the economics of dairy production must be examined to arrive at some overall perspective. Feed cost is the single largest cost category for milk production. Because higher producing cows require more nutrients, especially energy and protein, they will have higher feed costs for the same level of ration quality than lower producing cows. To a degree higher producing cows have greater health care costs. Most other dairy production costs are essentially independent of the yield of the cow. However, higher producing cows should still generate more income over variable costs. In so doing they will raise the production efficiency and should with good management increase the profit margin. Management is responsible for the environment which promotes higher production as well as the cost control to make the higher profit margin possible.

Continued selection on milk yield will ensure that the cows will have the genetic capacity to produce as good managers provide environments which stimulate higher and higher milk production. A long term study at the University of Minnesota begun in 1964 has shown that cows sired by bulls highly selected for yield since then now produce 10,000 pounds of milk more per lactation than cows sired by bulls at a 1965 genetic level when both groups of cattle were fed and managed alike. This study is consistent with the national trend discussed earlier.

We currently recommend choosing AI bulls which are in the 80th percentile or above for Lifetime Net Merit \$ to sire herd replacements. This should keep the genetic potential of herd replacements ahead of the genetic trend currently being experienced in the national population. In the Lifetime Net Merit \$ index, yield adjusted for feed cost receives about 67% of the emphasis in the selection for the production, type, somatic cell score and productive life traits. Among bulls which meet this standard, specific bulls can be selected to improve or prevent decline in other traits of interest.

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## Agri-Tourism Can Be Lucrative For Farmers

Farmers and ranchers possess the ability to boost their income and help preserve their enterprises by tapping into the potentially lucrative market for agri-tourism, according to Jane Eckert, a marketing professional and sixth generation farm proprietor, states that agri-tourism can create added stability for farm operations. Eckert urges farmers and ranchers to think about how non-farm families perceive rural areas.

"See a stressed-out urban couple, both of which are working," she said. "They wake up on a Saturday morning and they say 'Let's go out to a farm today.'" Such a couple is a perfect target market. Urbanites who appear at farms are "looking to reconnect with the land have an opportunity to experience what, for them, is a lost world," Eckert said. "Visiting a farm or ranch is more than a vacation. It is an awakening." Opening up a farm to visitors also opens up an educational purpose. "We can become a place where people learn to appreciate what you do," she said.

Eckert explained her own experience getting into agri-tourism. Born on a family apple farm outside of St. Louis, she left it to pursue another career after she completed her education. She returned to the farm in 1988 and "started looking at the farm with new eyes. I observed the good time people had by coming to our farm."

In subsequent years Eckert and other family members built the agri-tourism component of the farm so that it now attracts more than 500,000 visitors each year. The property hosts a series of season-specific events throughout the year. An Easter egg hunt, for

example, draws 2,000 children. The Eckert's charge \$12 for the daylong activity. "We are farmers just like you", Eckert said. "We are doing our best to keep our farms and property."

Changes in domestic travel patterns favor agri-tourist destinations. Most U.S. citizens now take short trips over long weekends instead of the traditional, two-week expedition. Eckert's said they are looking for different experiences that will also strengthen family relationships. Recent evidence indicated that farm properties open to the public have benefited. According to a U.S. Service Forest survey, 62 million citizens visited a farm or ranch in 2001.

Eckert recommends that farmers and ranchers who are considering agri-tourism, contact officials at state and local tourism agencies and local chambers of commerce. Partner ships with these outside entities can create additional sources of funding and assistance with marketing. She described the combination of agriculture and tourism as "a natural marriage."

The process of building an agri-tourism business is not easy and is not for everyone, but the rewards can extend beyond profits. Families and children will learn something every moment they are on the farm. One of the most thrilling things is when children make the connection that what was produced at the farm ends up on their table.

Farm and ranch owners may obtain more information about agri-tourism by contacting the North American Farmers Direct Marketing Association. The organization maintains a website at [nafdma.com](http://nafdma.com).

## History Was Written by the Horse

Since humans first domesticated horses nearly 5,000 years ago, the brainy and brawny horse has played a central role in shaping human culture. They not only enabled faster communication and travel, but also proved decisive allies in military campaigns, with mounted troops often overwhelming foot-bound infantry.

The horse was such an effective weapon, in fact, that empires from Egypt to Mexico crumbled before the onslaught of mounted enemies, who brought with them new ideas, technologies, and cultural practices.

Historians disagree about whether the first tamed horses were used primarily for food, riding, or to pull carts -- probably all three. But they do agree that by about 3,000 years ago, the horse had become a fixture of many ancient civilizations. Due to their use in war, horses quickly became associated with power and prestige.

The horse's quick feet so impressed the Persians that they put the animal to work as a communications tool. In the 5th century BC, Persian officials used mounted couriers, who would ride a short distance, then hand messages off to rested riders to send instructions to their far-away colonies. The riders were instructed not to let snow, rain, heat, nor darkness keep them from delivering their precious cargo. Centuries later, in the 1800's, the U.S. Pony Express borrowed the same method and motto as its riders galloped across the new nation, delivering the messages that drew America together.

It is the workhorse, however, that may have had the biggest impact on human history. Bred to haul heavy loads day in and day out, the workhorse changed the practice of farming and industry. Harvests could suddenly be transported long distances, creating

trade and wealth in villages that had once had little contact with the outside world. Similarly, timber and stone could be moved to cities and towns, greatly increasing the supplies of raw materials available to shipyards, carpenters, and builders.

In an age of trucks and trains, it is hard to imagine that a trained team of draft horses once pulled as much as some locomotives. Still, they proved no match for modern engines.

Even race car owners would agree: no high-horsepower motor has anywhere near the personality or historical importance of a real horse.

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## The Shoshone

The vast territory belonging to the Shoshonean linguistic stock of the large Uto-Aztecan family once stretched from the rugged Cascades and Sierra Nevadas to the northern Plains, then southward almost into Mexico. With the exception of the Washos of California, it included all of the Indians in the Great Basin area, the Shoshonis, the Paiutes (Paviotsos), the Bannocks (Northern Paiutes), Commanches, and the Utes. There was a variety of dialects, but the natives had little difficulty understanding each other.

With their linguistic bond and cultural similarity, they were not readily distin-

guishable. Yet the Shoshoni (Snake) Indians, bearing the linguistic name and speaking the Shoshoni-Comanche dialect, are unique in that they show the influence of three distinct cultures, namely, the Basin, the Plateau, and the Plains. Their territory, separate from that of their kinsmen, the Paiutes and Utes, stretched continuously from the desert area of California, across the central and northwestern Nevada, then across Utah and Idaho into Wyoming, over the Rockies and on to the Plains, with the Comanche branch pushing southeastward through Colorado deep into Texas.

The Great Treaty Council, officially known as the Fort Bridger Treaty Council

of 1868, was highly significant as it was the last treaty council called for the purpose of establishing a reservation. Thereafter, all reservations were created by executive order.

### The Eastern Shoshone of the Wind River Reservation

The Eastern Shoshone are located on the Wind River Reservation, which is located in the central region of the state of Wyoming. The reservation is home to two tribes: the Northern Arapaho and the Eastern Shoshone. The tribes operate as two separate tribal governments. The reservation covers 2,268,008 acres. There are 2,650 Eastern Shoshone.

# Wind River Indian Reservation



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**U**.S. Custom Harvesters, Inc. is an association of professional custom harvesters serving the needs of the American Farmer. The organization was established and chartered in 1983 in the State of Texas and serves as a link between the harvesters and the many groups of people they work with such as farmers, businesses, and the State and Federal Government. U.S. Custom Harvesters is a dues funded, membership organization with the Harvest News magazine as their primary means of communicating with members.

This organization also works to educate its membership concerning safety, quality of workmanship and information on equipment updates.

The input from their membership is channeled through designated committees

that report to the elected board meeting annually the first weekend of March. The membership has benefited at these annual gatherings in such areas as exchanging ideas, helping one another in the placement of work, and establishing a scholarship fund that helps educate future leaders. Much of the information is updated in the Harvest News monthly magazine.

It has been a goal of USCHI to provide funding for scholarships through various activities such as quilt sales and raffles, silent auctions, memorial donations, honorary and auction donations. To qualify for a scholarship, all applicants must have some direct family ties to a current USCHI regular member, or have been employed by a current regular member within the last year, or be making some direct contribution to the USCHI organization.

In addition, applications are considered if the applicant is directly related to a deceased member (son or daughter) that was a regular member within the last two years of their death. The strength of this organization is in its membership, which consists of not only custom harvesters, but also related businesses such as implement dealers, insurance companies and farmers. It is their goal to continue to enhance and promote custom harvesting so that it is a viable industry available to future generations of producers.

U.S. Harvesters will continue to support and be a vital part of American agriculture, which is the strongest and most effective producer of crops that feed the world.

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The stall fronts include two posts with channel for tongue and groove lumber

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# Burrows Enterprises, Inc.

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During the mid 1970's, Harvey designed a grinder capable of grinding all types of forages, grains, and other feeds. This machine controls how fine the grind is without using screens. While designing and fine tuning prototypes, he became satisfied that the new design would eliminate the problems caused by grinding wet materials with screen grinders.

After production, he encountered other pleasant surprises:

- Grinding capacity exceeded expectations.

- The Roto Grind used less horse power than screen-type grinders at the same capacity.

- The grind is more consistent than other types of grinders.

What's more, the simplicity of design requires only 2 moving parts. This results in:

- Lower maintenance costs
- Less replacement cost of wear items
- Lower initial machine cost

Since Burrows Enterprises is a small, family owned business, we had to gain our reputation through honesty, word of mouth, and through the creation of an excellent product. As we have grown in the past 20 years, we have kept improving the quality, performance, and versatility of the Roto Grind. We are in constant contact with end users, dealers, and sales people. We are open to suggestions from our distributors and users

on new improvements and changes.

Burrows Enterprises, Inc. now sells a high percentages of all grinders sold in the United States and sales are now world wide.

Other products manufactured by Burrows Enterprises Inc. are:

- Round Bale Unroller
- 3 Point Grain Grinders
- Fisher Pumps used in Irrigation, Industrial, Oil field, Manure and Construction applications.

- Our basic philosophy is to keep our products as versatile, simple, and low cost as possible.

- Our goal is to make certain we make every effort to produce the best product on the market.

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## J.C. Ramsdell Enviro Services, Inc.

**J**.C. Ramsdell Enviro Services, Inc. introduces a secondary containment system that is portable and takes the “common sense” approach. Shipped in kit form, the galvanized steel secondary containment system is easy to assemble. Kits are available for earthen floors or for concrete pads.

Three standard heights are available 21”, 33”, and 44” tall. Taller panel heights are available upon request. Four shapes are available-round, oval, square, and rectangle. Panel lengths are either 56” or 112” long. Round secondary containment systems are available in various diameters from 12’ to 72’ in diameter. Square and rectangle shapes can be virtually any size to fit your available space.

With many fertilizer regulations now being enforced by numerous states and the Federal EPA Clean Water Act petroleum regulations now starting to be enforced, the galvanized steel secondary containment system makes sense. Across the Midwest, many insurance companies, to limit their potential liability, are requiring secondary containment systems for petroleum tanks. Federal EPA regulations state that all oil tanks over 1,320 gallons or a cumulative total of 1,320 gallons must have secondary containment. This includes gasoline, diesel, kerosene, ethanol, mineral oil, vegetable oil, animal fat, crop oil and any other type of oil.

If you have 1,320 gallons, of oil products on your site and you have a 55-gallon drum of engine oil or crop oil then this 55-gallon drum must also have secondary containment as all containers 55 gallons or larger fall under this regulation. All oil



tanks are included in this regulation, which includes farmers and ranchers.

Just one fertilizer or petroleum spill can pay for the secondary containment system by recovering the spilled product and reusing. Having the spilled product get into any water or having the soil cleanup costs can put a financial burden upon your operation. In today’s climate of “clean and green”, a galvanized steel secondary containment system is not only environmental friendly, it can save you money if you would have a spill.

If you have any questions about secondary containment, give J.C. Ramsdell Enviro Services a call at 605-997-3704.



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## Roswell Wool • Dedicated To A Tradition Of Integrity

**W**e would like to tell you about our company Roswell Wool and how we can be of service to you.

Each partner is actively producing and /or feeding lambs here in New Mexico. We purchased the Wool Warehouse in Roswell in 1992 and purchased a second warehouse in 1994, Roswell Wool and Mohair. We combined the two businesses and renamed it Roswell Wool.

In 1994, I began managing the business. At that time, 100% of the wool we handled was from New Mexico. Currently, with our growth, 50% of the wool we handle is from

out of state, even though the amount of New Mexico wool we handle has grown. We are now the largest wool warehouse by volume, under one roof, in the United States. Therefore, we attract wool buyers from all over the world. We offer our wool on consignments to all wool buyers at our regularly scheduled wool sales each year. We have sales in January, February, April, May, October and December. Wool buyers who come to our sales have core information/grab samples/sample bales from each lot of wool offered for sale to make their visual inspection of each lot.

Our sales are by seal bid offerings – meaning that each buyer who bids on

a lot of wool is by sealed bid. When the bids are all in, I announce the high bidder, but not until the end of the sale do I announce what the bid was. Therefore, keeping the speculation on what each buyer is willing to offer secret, thus adding a bit of excitement when several buyers are needing the same types of wool.

We look forward to earning your business, so you can see why when we say “Dedicated to a Tradition of Integrity”, isn’t just our motto, it’s our reputation.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact Mike Corn at (505) 622-3360 or 1-800-624-WOOL Website: www.roswellwool.com

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**E**njoy the ultimate in western hospitality at the Badlands Ranch and Resort located next to the South Dakota Badlands National Park.

You have a choice of many lodging accommodations including a bed and breakfast. The RV Park, open from April 20th to November, has full hookup sites which are shaded. There is lots of space between the pull-thru sites. Tent in the campground or down by the White River. There is a common bathhouse with hot water and showers available. Rent a tipi and live like the mountain men and Indians did when the West was a frontier. Or, enjoy a stay in the gorgeous heated, air conditioned cabins during any season. Motel units have microwaves, refrigerators, and sat-

ellite TV’s in all rooms. They are also furnished with all cooking utensils.

Open all year, the large lodge will house 25-30 people. It’s a new ranch style log home, used as a lodge designed for groups, bus tour groups, family reunions, etc. It has three levels, and all of the levels have bathrooms with showers, satellite TV and an outside entrance. There is a fireplace, large dining area and a meeting room. The view of the two fishing ponds stocked with trout, bass, crappies, catfish and perch and the Badlands National Park from the lodge is outstanding. The resort will accommodate up to 350 people.

Excellent hunting packages are offered for spring and fall. Corporate and private hunts are offered for deer, elk, pheasant,

grouse, turkey, prairie dogs and trout.

Trail rides is just one of the many activities offered. Some of the best trail rides in the scenic Badlands are located here. All ages and riding skills are accepted. Normal trail rides are 1-1/2 hours, but will tailor to your needs. Inquire about prices for a trail ride tailored just for you or your group. Instructions and riding tips are provided for all rides. Other activities include bicycling, hiking, rock hunting, basketball, baseball, volleyball, horseshoes, and snowmobiling.

For you convenience, airport pickup to and from Rapid City Regional Airport is also available. For more information, phone: 605-433-5599 or Fax: 605-433-5598.

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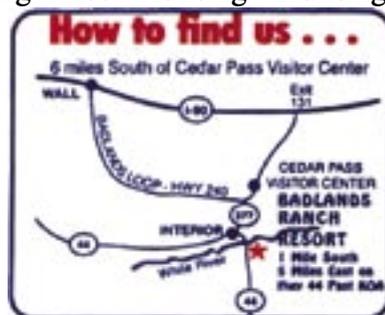
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## Angus Foundation To Sponsor Golf Tournament

**B**eef industry leaders who are golf enthusiasts should mark their calendars for the fourth annual Angus Foundation Golf Tournament, set for July 13 at the Shiloh Springs Golf Club in Platte City, Mo. The Angus Foundation hosts the tournament, held in conjunction with the 2004 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS).

Teams of four will compete for various prizes. Four-player teams can be formed before the tournament or players will be placed on a team that day. Registration fee is \$400 per team or \$100 per individual golfer. Junior golfers, National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members under the age of 21 can play for \$75.

All proceeds raised from the event go to the Angus Foundation, which is a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 organization that supports youth, education and research.

For more information about the tournament, go to [www.angusfoundation.org](http://www.angusfoundation.org) or contact the junior activities department at the American Angus Association at 816-383-5100.

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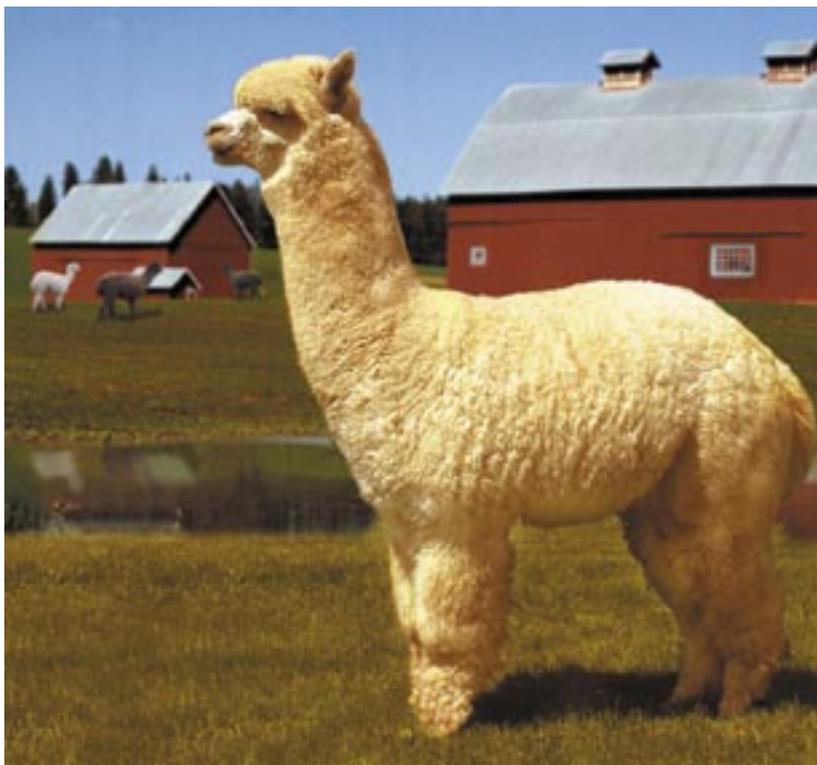
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## RAISING THE ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK AND LOVING IT

*Cattle Ranchers Find Raising Alpacas Personally and Financially Rewarding*



*Huacaya Alpaca (Photo Courtesy AOBA)*

**I**t's your business. It's in your blood. It has been passed on from generation to generation. If you've raised cattle all your life and have thought about adding an alternative livestock, alpacas might be the answer.

Cattle ranchers find that, in addition to raising cows, calves, horses, and other livestock, raising alpacas offers countless benefits—benefits that are hard to match. Alpacas are beautiful, intelligent animals that are easy to handle and raise, require minimal acreage and food, and can offer numerous financial benefits.

Alpacas, cousins to the llama, are native to the Andean Mountain range of South America, particularly Peru, Bolivia, and Chile. Once an Incan civilization treasure, alpacas provided clothing and transportation. Their luxurious fleece was reserved for royalty and was known as the “fiber of the gods”.

The United States first imported alpacas in 1984. What began as a small, intimate alpaca community has blossomed into an official national organization, the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Asso-

ciation (AOBA). That was over twenty years ago. Today, AOBA proudly boasts more than 3,700 members and 50,000 registered alpacas nationwide.

Ease. That's the word Debbie Cates uses to describe what she likes best about alpacas. Unlike the Cates' dairy cows, which are heavier and harder to handle, Debbie can easily handle alpacas herself.

Adult alpacas stand at approximately 36 inches at the withers and generally weigh between 150 and 200 pounds. They do not have horns, hooves, claws, incisors or upper teeth. Alpacas are alert, intelligent, curious, and predictable. Social animals that seek companionship, alpacas communicate most commonly by humming, but neck posturing, ear and tail positioning, and head tilt are other communication methods.

Mike and Debbie Cates of Springdale, Washington have raised dairy cows for twenty years. Five years ago, they added alpacas. The Cateses learned about alpacas through their friends' positive and enjoyable experiences. Yearning

to know more, they went to a local fair in Spokane. They were hooked. Today, they raise 27 alpacas, all huacayas.

Although almost physically identical, what distinguishes the two types of alpacas is their fiber. The Huacaya (wa-Ki'-ah) is the more common of the two and has a fluffy, extremely fine coat. The Suri (surrey) is the rarer of the two and has fiber that is very silky and resembles pencil-locks.

The Cateses, who raise the alpacas primarily for business, share the labor of love with their daughters. Mike says, “I love walking out there [the farm]. I love to be greeted by their friendly personalities.”

But there's more to alpacas than the fact that they're easy to handle and have gentle personalities. Simply put, they are beautiful animals. And for Judy Kania, it was love at first sight. Judy told her husband, “We're going to start raising alpacas”. Fifty alpacas later, Tom and Judy Kania, of Shawnee, Oklahoma expanded their cow/calf operation of 120 to include alpacas. The Kania's first discovered alpacas at a llama and alpaca show auction. At Judy's persuasion, the Kania's bought alpacas soon after. Besides their irresistible beauty and charm, Judy was relieved to learn that alpacas don't have to be killed to be profitable.

Alpacas are shorn, without harm, every twelve to eighteen months. They produce a luxurious fiber that is stronger, warmer, and lighter than wool and is as soft as cashmere. Making it even more desirable, alpaca fiber is hypo-allergenic, contains no lanolin, and comes in 22 natural colors.

Today, the Kania's consider raising alpacas as a full-time job and profit from them by breeding and selling their fleece. According to Tom, the difference between raising cattle and raising alpacas is striking. With cattle, you need large tractors and heavier equipment. While cattle graze on several barrels of hay, alpacas need only a small amount of grass and hay daily. In fact, a single, 60-pound bale of hay can generally feed a group of about 20 alpacas for one day. Cattle are significantly larger and often damage the land, whereas alpacas, with

their soft-padded feet, are more environmentally friendly. Clean-up is easy since alpacas deposit droppings in only a few places in the paddock.

Tom believes that alpacas are simply more economical. If you're a cattle farmer looking to tap into the alpaca market, here's Tom's advice: keep your cattle and gradually incorporate alpacas to your farm, research and see what's available, get a feel for what you like and don't like, and start small.

For Janet and Mike Wilkins of Geneva, Nebraska adding alpacas also made sense. The Wilkins's know cattle. For them, it has been a lifelong business. They've raised angus cattle, registered quarter horses, and hogs as well as feeding cattle commercially. For 40 years, they ran a cow-calf operation. They then began a livestock insurance business that included alpacas. Seeing the many benefits of raising alpacas, expanding their herd was logical. Says Janet, "Our initial investment was with seven open females, who we bred right away."

The average lifespan of an alpaca is 20 years, with a gestation period of 11.5 months. Female alpacas normally give



Suri Alpaca (Photo Courtesy AOBA)

birth, without assistance, in the daylight hours and typically have single births. Twins, though extremely rare, are possible. The most recent figure notes that one in 2000 is a twin.

Janet continues, "We're reaping the benefits, now. By the time the crias or baby alpacas were six-months-old, we were showing and selling for a profit. We had our initial investment paid for

in two years."

Where is the alpaca market headed? Janet says, "The alpaca market is here to stay." The best way to learn more about alpacas is to visit an alpaca farm or ranch. To find one near you, log onto: [www.alpacainfo.com](http://www.alpacainfo.com) or call The Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association at: 1-800-213-9522.

Source: AOBA

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### 3 Hawk Ranch Alpacas

I was raised in the suburbs with pet cats and dogs; this was my only exposure to animals as a child. I then began my career in accounting. I spent 15 years doing this type of work. The last position I had was the comptroller of our 48 state trucking company. I was ready for a change.

My husband was at the Ford dealership waiting for the them to open when a man approached him with questions about the Ford diesel trucks performance. Neil answered his questions and then ask one of the man. He noticed the guy was pulling a very nice horse trailer with an air conditioning unit. Neil ask what was being hauled and was shown his first Alpaca. He received a brochure about the animals and brought this to the office for me to look at. Once I read the brochure and saw the pictures of the Alpacas, I wanted to see them up close. We went to the Alpaca farm and looked at the many available Alpacas. There was one little male, he was 9 months old; that I decided was going to be ours. We thanked the owner and told him we would be in touch. We immediately started searching for the right

property. This process took us from Pennsylvania to our ranch in Colorado. We contacted the Alpaca owner and made an appointment to return to his farm. While we were there we bought the little male I liked so much plus 3 females and another male. We were now on our way to beginning our new adventure. Neil went to Minnesota and bought a feather-lite trailer and came home to pick-up our little ones. I say our little ones because we purchased all juveniles. He took them to Colorado to our ranch and began setting up the area. We then found a buyer for our trucking company and headed west, this was in 1991. I have been caring for and learning about these fantastic creatures to date. You continue to learn new things all the time no matter how long you work with the Alpacas.

I liked my Alpacas because after the rush of the main stream life style, I now had time to enjoy life and the serenity of life with the Alpacas. I did not show my Alpacas for many years, but finally I started showing them in 2002. I have enjoyed every show I attended and when the Alpaca



wins a ribbon, I become so excited. I have many ribbons already and just starting my 3rd season of shows. I do my own shearing and then have the fleece processed commercially. I am learning to make many wonderful items from their fleece. I have attended a class for hat felting and plan to attend more classes. From the knowledge I have gained, I now can felt a hat, make a quilt, and pillows. I am even learning to crochet.

I have been happier raising my Alpacas in the Mountains of Colorado then I would have every thought possible after working in the public most of my life.

## 3 Hawk Ranch Alpacas

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## Buffalo Business Moving Toward Greener Economic Pastures



**E**merging from a lengthy economic drought, the U.S. buffalo business today is leaner, healthier, and headed toward sustained growth, according to the Denver-based National Bison Association.

"Deliciously healthy buffalo meat is catching on in restaurants and retail outlets across the country. This growing demand, combined with current live animal prices, provides a great opportunity for producers to get into the business at the prime time," said Merle Maass, president of the National Bison Association.

Dedicated marketers, innovative association-sponsored promotion, and a newly approved source verified marketing program are all strengthening the buffalo marketplace, according to Maass.

The new source verified marketing program is only the latest development in an industry that is rapidly moving to meet consumer expectations in terms of meat quality and safety.

Under the program formally approved September 15, 2003, the National Bison Association will work with its individual producers and marketers to implement a USDA Process Verified Marketing seal assuring customers that source verified buffalo meat is produced without growth hormones or subtherapeutic antibiotics. Participants in the program will utilize state-of-the-art electronic ear tags to track animals from the ranch to retail outlets.

"This new label demonstrates that America's buffalo ranchers are proud to stand behind the integrity of their products," Maass said.

Source verified marketing will support other marketing initiatives that are already expanding buffalo beyond the white tablecloth restaurants that provided

the core business throughout much of the 1990's. Ted Turner has attracted significant visibility in launching the new chain of Ted's Montana Grills in partnership with noted restaurateur George McKerrow.

Other restaurants and retail stores across the nation also regularly stock buffalo products in

meat cases and on menus.

The Denver Rocky Mountain News that year announced that buffalo burgers were in, while portabella mushroom burgers were out.

The National Bison Association has helped spur new demand with unique and innovative marketing programs. Through the assistance of a U.S. Department of Agriculture Value-Added grant, the association conducted a targeted Buffalo Stampede campaign in Nashville, TN this summer, with several creative publicity events designed to convince customers to try buffalo meat.

Steve Wilson of Kentucky, National Bison Association Vice President, credits the Nashville Stampede with helping to build demand in an area that has not traditionally been considered a strong market for bison.

"Our association conducted extensive research and determined that Nashville was one of several cities across the country with strong potential demand for buffalo. By targeting our limited resources in that market, we were able to create some positive consumer pull," Wilson said.

Buffalo meat today is offered in a variety of restaurants, and can be found in the meat cases of nearly every Wild Oats, Whole Foods, and other natural food stores. Increasingly, consumers can also find buffalo in the meat case of conventional grocery outlets as well.

Despite the rapid growth in consumer demand, the bison business is relatively small. Slightly more than 25,000 buffalo were processed under federal inspection in 2002. By comparison, the beef industry processes roughly 130,000 animals each day.

The bison business is also highly en-

trepreneurial, with roughly half of the product being sold through direct ranch-to-consumer channels such as farmers' markets, internet sales, and catalogues.

Maass noted, "We know that our main challenge is to get consumers to take their first bite of buffalo. Once they sample our products, they want to know where they can find more."

Buffalo have staged a major comeback since teetering on the brink of extinction around 1900. Although the animal population grew slowly through most of the 20th century, a commitment from a



handful of ranchers to develop a viable commercial meat business in the 1980's launched a surge in the buffalo population. The industry experienced rapid growth in the 1990s with live animal prices soaring as new ranchers came into the business. As the influx of new producers slowed in the late 1990's, and as the industry was slow to develop the retail marketplace, live animal prices dropped sharply.

A USDA commitment to purchase up to \$10 million in buffalo meat for federal food distribution programs is credited with significantly culling the herds across the country. Meanwhile, the expanding retail and restaurant markets are helping to once again strengthen the live animal market.

NBA's Wilson said, "This is a great business, and this is a great time to get into this business."

Source: NBA

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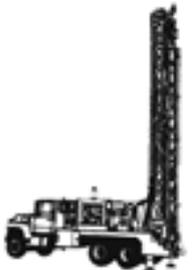
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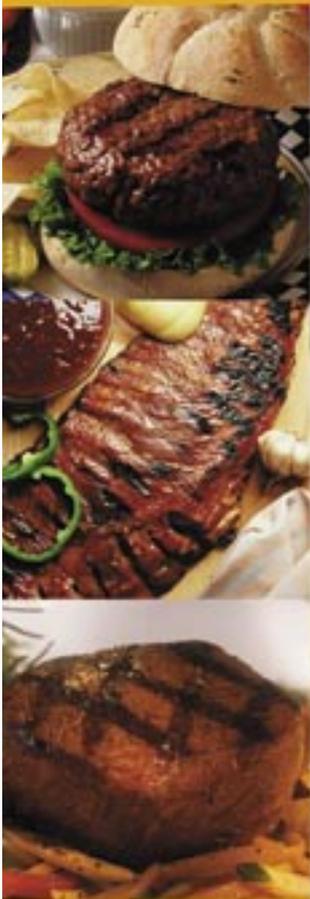

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