

Miller looks for 'good foundation' behind his Angus cattle



This is a partial view of Pleasant Valley Farm, Lebanon R4, owned by Robert Miller. Miller owns 70 pure bred Angus cows and farms 450 acres of land.

By JOAN LIESAU

LEBANON — "I don't put a paper on anything not good enough" said pure bred Angus breeder Robert Miller of Pleasant Valley Farm, Lebanon R4. Miller owns 70 registered Angus cows and farms 450 acres.

Miller's heifers posed with their heads up in alert attention as he spoke. "I take my top 10 to 15 heifers and put them back into the herd." He said he would fatten out the remainder, but the bottom five would not be registered.

His top 10 to 15 bull calves will be put on farm test and

be sold in the Spring. Miller weighs the bulls when they are weaned. "I put them on a complete feed that's not real hot, about half oats" he said. In 140 days Miller will weigh the bulls, and again at one year of age.

Miller feels the integrity of the breeder is of the utmost importance when selling livestock. If your not honest "in the long run it will come back to you" he said.

In 1977 Miller had 19 bull calves on his farm test. He pulled four off the test. When the 15 bulls sold, they averaged \$1040 per head.

When Miller weans his calves, they are fed corn

silage and hay, treated with anhydrous ammonia which he blows in the silo. He thinks synthetic protein has its place, but found that in some cases, like supplementing diets of sick animals, it does not belong. "You can read all the literature on products that you want, but you don't find out until you try the thing yourself" he said.

Miller wants to see "good foundation" behind the cattle he buys. A lot of western breeding such as Marshall, Black Revolution and Wal Bridge Farms serve as the back bone of Miller's herd. He estimated that he

had raised half of the 70 cows in his herd.

Miller also raises about 600 head of bulls and steers each year which he buys out of Kentucky, New York and Missouri. These are all eventually sold to Baum's Balogna Inc. in Elizabethtown.

He owns part interest in a bull under the name of Governors Club. The bull, who had a 720 pound 100 day weight, is presently in New York. Miller said "almost 100 per cent of the time the bull does more for me than I do for him."

Recently Miller built a manure pit off of his steer

barn. The pit was designed and planned by the soil conservation people, Miller said. It has a ground bank (mostly clay soil) and a cement bottom and ramp. The best part of the system is that "it is designed to use existing equipment." Miller said he was "in farming to make a living" and with the high cost of machinery and equipment, this pit was the most logical type to put in.

Miller farms 450 acres, renting the majority of the land from his father. He plants 230 acres in corn. He also raises wheat, barley, hay and sudax, which he green chops for the cows, or

bales for hay. Miller said "I don't buy any feed." But he does sell his excess corn, which this year totaled 7500 bushels. He said there was not much labor involved to fill his three silos. After they are filled he's done for the year.

Miller said he "really likes farming and Angus cattle." He wishes there was more profit in the investment a farmer puts out for "the only thing the government can trade in a foreign country." Robert Miller is a man genuinely interested and concerned with the welfare of the American farmer.

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