

Auction set for April 19

Wye Angus herd thriving under new ownership

QUEENSTOWN, Md. — When most of the internationally known Wye Angus herd was officially donated to the University of Maryland Foundation in January 1978, there were some questions raised throughout North America by knowledgeable breeders of the nation's most numerous beef cattle. They included the following:

—Would the Wye Angus herd remain at the Wye location near Queenstown on Maryland's Eastern Shore?

There had been speculation that the herd would be moved to the university's beef cattle research farm near Sykesville, Carroll county, in north central Maryland.

—Would semen from noted Wye Angus bulls continue to be available for artificial insemination purposes?

—Would outstanding bulls from the Wye Angus herd continue to be available for purchase by the public?

On the eve of the second annual production sale of tested bulls since acquiring the Wye Angus herd, W. Lamar Harris, director of the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station, is satisfied that these questions can be answered in the affirmative.

The herd appears comfortably settled for the foreseeable future in its historic location on the Eastern Shore; semen is

being sold regularly from a frozen-sperm bank, and an advisory panel of animal scientists, Angus breeders, breed organization representatives, and commercial producers have been appointed to help shape the future of the Wye Angus herd.

Finally, 54 prospective herd sires will be listed in the sale catalog when the auctioneer's chant starts rolling at noon on April 19 at the Wye Plantation sale site.

The University of Maryland Foundation herd now shares land and some facilities at the Wye Plantation with the Aspen Institute, a privately endowed "think tank" and educational meeting center. Some 200 gentle black brood cows and their young offspring lend a pastoral backdrop to the academic scene.

Supervising the Wye Angus program for the University of Maryland Foundation is Gordon M. Cairns, dean emeritus of the College of Agriculture at the university's College Park campus. A dairy scientist by training, Cairns finds that many principles of dairy cattle breeding and feeding are applicable to beef cattle as well.

Thus, he follows in the steps of James B. Lingle, now retired, who guided the Wye Plantation to worldwide renown among Angus

breeders for former owner, Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., over a period covering more than three decades. Dwight Riggelman, associated with the former Wye Plantation herd operation under Houghton's ownership, has remained as herd manager.

Cairns points out the young Wye Angus bulls offered for sale both this year and last were products of the Houghton ownership team. This year's 1980 calf crop represents the first offspring from the University of Maryland Foundation breeding program. It will furnish prospective herd sires for the 1981 production sale.

Most of this year's calves will have been born February, March and April, Cairns reported.

He emphasized the Wye Angus breeding program is being carried out basically as in the past. This includes a continuation of breeding management, performance testing, and live skeletal measurements on the bulls, along with detailed feed consumption records.

Two changes in the historic Wye Angus pattern under the new University of Maryland management have been formation of the advisory panel and installation on a trial basis of two "pinpointers", or electronic feed consumption recorders, in one of the Wye Plantation's four bull test barns.

Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser



The first day of Spring will be next week. That is difficult for me to realize. Somehow, I feel that the Winter passed too quickly and there are so many things undone I can't seem to catch up on the reading that I'd like to do. Do I read slower or am I just finding additional material that is interesting to read?

Last week our two boys were home from college and of course that entailed more cooking as they have quite large appetites. And, Mother does like to make extra desserts to please them!

We also used more milk than usual and that meant bringing it in from the barn and bottling it. This has always been considered a distasteful job around here and one that was passed from child to child with great pleasure or displeasure according to whether you were giving the job away or the one getting it. And it is embarrassing to only remember that you need milk after the

always in need of something as a boot has sprung a leak or an overall got caught on a nail and is torn beyond repair.

Of course, we could use a work sock factory output as they all have holes in the heels. Long ago I gave up sitting and mending them as after a few days they were worn through again as bad as before.

Recently, I ask a sixteen year old girl where her father works. She said, "I don't know." At least around here the children do know as they are part of the work that gets done or sometimes doesn't get done. So with the coming of Spring, we will all have to pitch in and work harder.

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