

State Cattlemen, Angus Association Holds Field Day

By
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FRIEDENS (Somerset Co.) — This year the Pa. Cattlemen's and Angus Associations held a joint field day at the ErReR Hill Farms, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Riggs, on July 24. The last state field day held in Somerset was some 20 years ago.

According to the official registry the hundreds who attended came for at least 25 counties in the state, plus Ohio, Maryland and Virginia.

Perfect weather with a low humidity level helped to make a comfortable day under the big outdoor canopy where speakers addressed the group. The brick picnic pavilion beside it where lunch was served also provided seating.

Schoolbus farm tours during the forenoon gave guests a good look at the ErReR Hill Farms Angus operation, as they bumped along over the paved rural backroads, weaving around the 1,200 acres and 10 barns. The entire business is a collection of smaller farms.

Tours were stopped at a recently completed streambed crossing and water system project, the benefits of which were detailed by Burrell Whitworth from the USDA.

Full-time farm employees Bob Hay, David Wise and Rob Landis were tourguides, telling about the Angus handling process from beginning to end, and the barns' utilization.

ErReR Hill Farms cow herd includes some 200 females. They



Here is Fortune 2000

raise their own replacement females and herd bull prospects. They use both embryo transfer and artificial insemination and have their own backgrounding and feedlot operations. Where feasible, water development systems and rotational grazing are utilized.

Penn State TKO is the main herd bull of the 20 at ErReR Hill Farms. They also hold an interest in Fortune 2000 who was brought in from West Virginia for the event.

Fortune 2000 has been favorably analyzed by many knowledgeable cattlemen, according to sources; in kind, pedigree, performance and calving ease. He is said to be a very correct bull with a charisma that catches the eye of cattle breeders. He was producing freezable semen at 11 months, sources said.

Minerts Fortune 2000 was calved on February 12, 1991.

Two national leaders spoke during the afternoon: Burton Eller, Alexandria, Va., who is the executive vice-president of the National Cattlemen's Association, and Richard Spader, executive vice-president of the American Angus Association, from Rosendale, Mo.

Eller who supervises the NCA office staffs in Washington, D.C. and Denver, and cited in one publication as a top lobbyist in the nation's capitol, said he's hearing a big noise from commercial beef users demanding consistency and palatability in the beef products they serve.

"The biggest issue in demand" he said, "is cost."

He addressed the issue of competition for beef from poultry and pork, quoting from another source, "Pork's going to kick your economic butt in the next ten years, not poultry."

Spader said the number one priority is to expand value and use that as the performance data base. He said the carcass evaluation is the next priority. "You are going to see more emphasis in carcass evaluation," he said, "so we can compete with poultry and pork."

The beef industry has a big job to promote breed assets to the practical users of beef, Spader said. Additionally, equipping young people for future leadership



Members of the state's Cattlemen's and Angus associations gather at this permanent pavilion at ErReR Hill Farms for a combined-organization field day.

through contests, speeches and other ways is a priority, he said.

Using the upper and lower barn levels and the outside seating, rotating afternoon sessions were held by Penn State officials. Dr. Erskine Cash talked about the Dollars And Cents of EPD's; Dr. John Comerford's subject was Cross Breeding Advantages; Dr. Jim Evans discussed Embryo Transplant Programs.

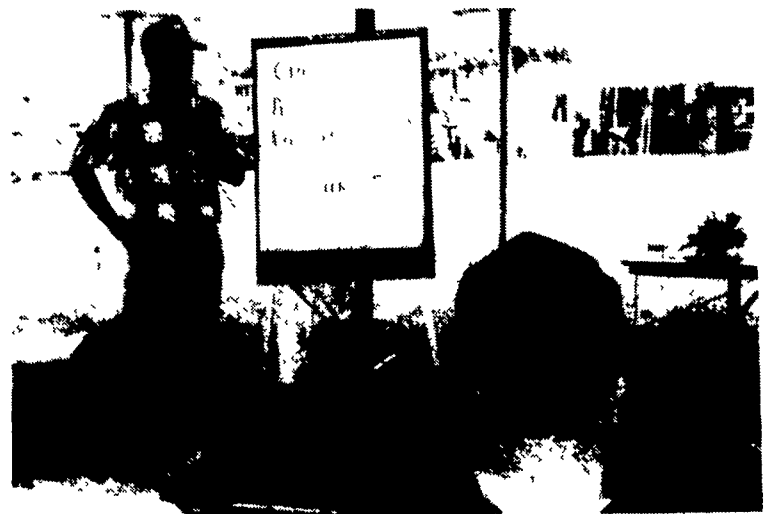
Sessions lasted 30 to 40 minutes and folks who sat on the arranged hay sales sure seemed to appreciate the cool comfort and shade they found inside the big barn.

A judging contest was held for class of heifers, steers and cow/calf. Kay Chapman, Benton (Columbia Co.), was the big winner, scoring 148 of a possible 150 points. "I was lucky today," she laughed.

Placing high in the junior division was Ed Chapman, her son.

Riggs said that because the farm is well-equipped to handle groups — the family reunion and occasional senior citizen groups — preparing for the state groups didn't cause any unusual problems or excessive work. "We have a general (property) cleanup every year," he said.

Bob Hay, manager of the ErReR Hill Farms is also the vice-president of the state Cattlemen's Asso.



Dr. John Comerford, PSU Extension specialist, talks about advantages to cross breeding, during a field day held jointly by the state Cattlemen's and Angus associations.



Hosts of the Pa. Cattlemen's and Angus associations are, on the left side of the picnic table, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Riggs, owners of ErReR Hill Farms, and, right, Bob Hay, farm manager.

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