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## Editorial Comments...

Jill Bayers Hotchkiss



Jill Hotchkiss

Hopefully you all survived the spring and summer. It's been a tough go all around.

Every fall I wish I could tell you what the cattle market is going to do. I'm sure all of you would like that insight as well.

One of the big stories in the cattle business over the past few months has been that of low prices out in the country while retail prices skyrocket. In our area at one point, the retail price for hamburger was between \$7 and \$10 a pound while live cattle were lucky to bring \$1 a pound at the sale barn. At about the same time, it started to become unavailable or available only in a limited quantity.

This scenario quickly prompted a "what-the-heck!" response from producers. In our area and I'm sure many others, ranchers quickly turned to packing and selling their own beef which in turn led to very limited time slots at small local packers. What a mess. Now, several months later, a lot of this situation seems to have changed for the better but there are still struggles.

I will interject here, a local store in Sturgis, Grocery Mart, eventually started selling hamburger at about \$3.00 a pound. Their label even said it was processed in town and it was American beef. This small store has always supported the local beef industry and their meat manager appreciates good beef. At one time they carried Certified Hereford Beef. Several of us got in a promo-

(continued on page 8)

# Friedt Herefords: Pursuing a Passion for Excellence

by Ruth Wiechmann

Gary and Kirsten Friedt are the fourth generation on their family farm near Mott, North Dakota. Gary's great grandparents, Emerick and Magdalena (Burghardt) Koenig, homesteaded

there. His grandfather, also Emerick, was born and raised on the farm, and with his wife Eva (Neurohr) Koenig, raised a family there. Gary and his brother, Dale, grew up on the farm with their parents, William and Lu-

ella (Koenig) Friedt. Gary and Kirsten raised their three children there and are now welcoming grandchildren — the sixth generation — back to the farm to help and experience the wonders of new calves, four wheeler rides, branding day and all the mischief they can safely get into!

"We were raised on your typical farm or ranch," Gary said. "We had everything: chickens, pigs, geese, turkeys, milk cows. We fed the skim milk from the cows to the pigs. It was just what everybody did then: you sustained yourself."

A sixteen-year old Gary purchased his first registered Hereford heifer calves in 1976 from Ray Kling of Keldron, SD. Bulls were purchased the next year from Ken and Jerry Bieber of Onida, SD. From those six heifer calves, the herd has grown.

"You start with what you have and try and make a go of it," Gary said.

(continued on page 4)



Balance is key to quality in the Friedt herd which is located north of Mott, ND. Their goal is to raise functional, efficient cattle that will thrive in a commercial herd environment.

## Allie Jensen Named New South Dakota Hereford Association Manager

Brookings, South Dakota (July 10, 2020) - The South Dakota Hereford Association Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Allie Jensen has been named the organization's new Manager.

Jensen, of Brookings, has years of experience in nonprofit management and is currently serving as the Ex-

ecutive Director for the South Dakota Cattlemen's Foundation. Jensen has a broad range of experience maintaining stakeholder relationships, event planning and reporting to a board of directors.

"We are thrilled to have Allie manage the South Dakota Hereford Association! She brings a broad skill set and experience along with Hereford enthu-



Allie Jensen

siasm which will keep our Association moving forward," said Seth Zilverberg, President of the South Dakota Hereford Association Board of Directors.

(continued on page 4)



## Friedt Herefords...

(continued from page 1)

Gary didn't expand a lot at first; as a teenager and attending college, he kept his numbers pretty small, but added to them as he could. He bought a few heifers here and there but kept his eye out for proven, older cows often available at dispersal sales.

"We got a few from the Oxley dispersal sale at Mahanomen, Minnesota," he recalled. "We also picked up a good handful from Van Newkirk's early on and those genetics are still in the herd. We bought some more from Biebers at their dispersal sale. I always looked for cows with no holes in them that had been there a while and had good

production records because they tended to be more reliable than heifers might be."

Gary and Kirsten met at North Dakota State University. They married in December, 1984, on the coldest day of the year. Even Grandpa Koenig's Red Eye was sludge that night it was so cold! Kirsten, a farm girl from Clifford, North Dakota, is Gary's right hand helper on the farm but she has always had two jobs. She became a registered nurse in 1986 and has worked at the hospital and as medical supervisor for ABLE, Inc., for thirty-two years.

They sold their first regis-



The Friedt farm was started by Gary's great grandparents. Six generations have now called this home.



Congratulations to Aaron and Tatian Friedt who were married this summer. Pictured are (left) Hayes, Dusty, Megan, Holden and (front) Hoyt and Hudson Dukart; Gary and Kirsten Friedt; Aaron and Tatian Friedt; Lindsey and Drew Courtney with children, Claire, Ella and Avery.

tered bulls in 1985 at the 4-U sale in Dickinson, North Dakota.

"We had just kind of gotten our feet on the ground and were to the point where we had a few good cows I knew I could depend on to raise a really good calf. There's always competition and as a new breeder I wanted to make sure I had quality bulls to offer."

Thirty-five years have passed like water under a bridge but quality is still paramount in Gary's selection process, whether he is choosing AI sires or picking replacement heifers.

"When I look at a sire, I want an in-

dividual out of a cow that has raised both good bulls and good females," Gary said. "I always look back on the cow family. A bull has to sire good daughters. When we AI I like to keep sons of those bulls out of my herd because I know they come from good, dependable cows."

Balance is key to quality in the Friedt herd.

"We don't single out one trait above others here," Gary said. "Fertility, good capacity, soundness, good feet and legs, milk production and udder quality, a good disposition: all are very

## Jensen...

(continued from page 1)

Marriage brought Jensen to South Dakota and to her new-found passion for the Hereford breed. Jensen and her husband, Brady, moved to South Dakota in pursuit of their careers. Brady is the Livestock Judging Coach and Instructor at South Dakota State University and comes from a Hereford operation in Kansas. Allie, Brady, and their daughter, Kelly work to develop their own herd of Hereford, Simmental and Angus stock.

"What excites me as I step into this position, is what an incredible impact the members and Board of Directors have made to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Hereford breed in South Dakota. Producers and juniors from across the state have come together to provide the next generation with so much," said Allie Jensen, Manager of the South Dakota Hereford Association.

As the South Dakota Hereford Association and producers continue to be committed to serving its members and the next generation of breeders, Jensen will manage the finances, event planning, marketing and membership relations.

"I'm thrilled for this opportunity to serve the Hereford producers. The Board of Directors and myself have goals to promote Hereford beef and genetics, continue to fund the programs for the next generation and serve the members of this wonderful organization. The Hereford people in South Dakota are certainly one-of-a-kind and I can't think of a better organization to serve," said Jensen.

Since its founding, the South Dakota Hereford Association has worked to bring the Hereford breed to the forefront of producers' minds throughout the state through various youth events, volunteer activities and promotions each year.

Visit their website at [www.southdakotaherefords.org](http://www.southdakotaherefords.org)

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important. Our goal is to raise functional, efficient cattle that will thrive in a commercial herd environment.”

Calving starts around the fifteenth of January every year. With their annual bull sale the second Wednesday in February, Gary wants to make sure his yearling bulls have enough age on them that if someone takes them home on sale day they are fairly mature. Bulls will be close to a year and a half old by turnout time in the spring, giving them an age advantage that will make them more useful breeders that first season.

AI’ing starts April 15th. The goal is to AI half the herd but that is somewhat dependent on how the spring farming is going. Friedts don’t often synchronize the cows; Gary feels his conception rates are better with a natural AI program, plus he’s seen a few too many blizzards show up exactly nine months after synchronizing and AI’ing a bunch of cows! With natural AI, the calving dates are spread out a little better which makes the workload during calving a bit easier.

“When we were first married, we had terrible weather,” Gary recalled, “Plus we were having a lot of calving trouble. Kirsten woke up in the night to find me gripping her arm in a hard pull and telling my dad that he’d better get the chains, this was a big one!”

Friedts are using embryo transfer technology to work toward improved consistency in the herd and increase the influence of some of their best fe-

males in the herd.

“It’s very interesting science to use,” Gary said. “For the most part we’ve had very good success with it. It’s easy to focus on the bulls’ performance records, but a cow has a tremendous amount of influence on her calves.”

Since Friedts have plenty of pasture close to the home place, cattle are moved to summer pastures around the end of May. Calves are weaned the end of September or early October, and they’re all kept over for their first winter. Along with the bulls, Friedts sell both registered and commercial heifer calves at their sale in February. Steers are sold in January or February, and heifers not making the grade for replacement quality are sold in April or May.



And so the years roll by.

Gary and Kirsten’s three children are all grown and married and all stay involved with the ranch. Daughter Megan and her husband Dusty Dukart live at Richardton, North Dakota. Dusty works in the oilfield, Megan works for Livestock Link and for a local veterinarian as well as keeping up with their five little boys.

Daughter Lindsey is married to Drew Courtney and they farm near Oakes, North Dakota, with their three little girls. Lindsey is a special edu-

cation teacher and helps on the farm.

Son Aaron just got married in June. He and Tatian live in Mott. Aaron  
(continued on page 8)



Megan working for The Livestock Link.



Aaron selling heifers at their sale.

## 80 bull calves and 30 bred females for sale



BW	1.4
WW	69
YW	104
M	31
M+G	66
REA	.62
Marb	.33

**F Warrior 005 (polled) BW 74 845C x Z311**  
Super stout. Check feddes.com for more bull calves.



BW	0.4
WW	65
YW	97
M	28
M+G	60
REA	.48
Marb	.47

**F Ms Tested 741 (polled) X651 x York**  
Pasture exposed to F Frontier 916 (BW -0.9, YW 109).



BW	2.4
WW	56
YW	98
M	37
M+G	64
REA	.50
Marb	.08

**F 3297A Advance 057 BW 84**  
3297A x 105Y. Dam produced two herd sires.

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BW	2.2
WW	73
YW	119
M	32
M+G	68
REA	.47
Marb	.08

**F Ms Frontier 972 (polled)**  
Bred May 24 to F Frontier 916.



## Friedt Herefords...

(continued from page 5)

works for Livestock Link, is an auctioneer, and keeps busy farming and ranching. Tatian is studying to be a court stenographer.

The grandchildren love coming to the ranch.

"They come in and say 'hi' and then the door opens and they're gone," Gary laughed. "The oldest one would live out here if they would let him."

After the 4-U sale disbanded about fifteen years ago, Friedts held a joint sale in Dickinson with Stroh Herefords for several years, but when Stroh's started having their sale at their ranch

Friedts were at a cross-roads. Gary's love of his Herefords directed the decision to expand the registered herd to the point that they could hold their own sale while maintaining the quality that their customers had come to expect.

"There are a lot of black cows out there that need Hereford bulls to cross on them," Gary said. "I've always wanted to raise registered Herefords so the choice was easy."



Son-in-law Dusty Dukart and son Holden looking at the herd.



Hudson and Hoyt



Hayes learning the ropes with a bucket as big as he is.



FH Navarro 242 MD is a proven herd bull in the Friedt program who sires lots of pigment and is a 6-trait EPD leader.

FH L1 Domino 812 MD is a rising star in the Friedt herd. He is a home-raised son of CL 1 Domino 215Z with excellent carcass EPDs and a balanced EPD profile.



Hoyt getting in on the feeding duties. Megan and Dusty's little boys enjoy working on the ranch!

## Jill's Editorial...

(continued from page 1)

tional sample barbecue there. That was quite awhile ago but the point is they are local and support the beef business and their customers.

Our local store owners, Joe and Karen Wilkinson, retired after owning the store for 37 years and being half the town's population of four. They too were a local store selling Hereford beef for many years which I always appreciated. That's minor though in comparison to all the things they did for us and the people of the surrounding community. You

could say, they were Reva. They're wonderful people who lived there, ran the store and small feed business plus Karen was the Postmaster for many years and did it incredibly well. They saw children born, friends die, kids go to school which used to be just a mile from the store, supported all their customers who are about 99% ranchers, dealt with Motorcycle Rally people going through on their way to Sturgis (many repeat customers who became friends) and on and on. They dealt with joy and sorrow in dealing with their extended family of customers who were friends. It's a unique little store and they were a big part of its long history

which started in the late 1800s. They haven't moved far but we still miss them and welcome the new store owners Vince and Collette Tift and her parents, the Fooses. The Tifts have somewhat of a Hereford connection in that their son-in-law and daughter, Brian and Chelsey Glass run Herefords just south of Reva.

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Which brings me back to the U.S. packer debacle of the last 6-12 months. I think we can all say we are totally fed up with low cattle prices while packers and some retailers are selling beef at incredibly high prices. I appreciate these local retailers who understand our plight and at least try to sell beef at reasonable prices. More power to producers who are selling their beef direct to consumers. We are definitely seeing more of this and with great results. Several states have changed laws which allows this to happen on a larger scale.

It has been just over a year since Tyson had a fire in their Holcomb, KS packing plant. The plant handled 5-6% of the nation's beef processing. The results of the fire and subsequent closing of the plant the week following the fire were record-high packer margins.

The largest difference between the dressed fed cattle price and the Choice boxed beef cutout value (since the inception of Mandatory



This was Hudson's first year showing in the 4-H show as a Cloverbud.



**Thank You  
Joe & Karen**

Reva Store and the community farewell party for Joe and Karen Wilkinson. Drone photo by Kevin Weishaar

Price Reporting in 2001) was recorded at \$67.17/cwt. after the Tyson Holcomb fire. That record was later exceeded following the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 discussed later in the report.

Low cattle prices in the country and high profits in the packing industry, is an event that in my opinion, brought a years-old issue to a head.

In June of this year the Department of Justice sent "civil investigative demands" to the Big Four Packers: JBS, National Beef/Marfrig, Cargill and Tyson.

(continued on page 10)