

CIRCLE B NAMED AHA COMMERCIAL PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

Circle B LLC, Bighorn, Mont., was named the Commercial Producer of the Year at the American Hereford Association (AHA) Annual Membership Meeting in Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 21. Circle B is an eastern Montana commercial cattle operation owned by the Borman family and run by just over a dozen cowboys and their families. The Bormans breed their 1,600 straightbred Angus cows to Hereford bulls to make uniform, high-performing baldy calves that are the epitome of Hereford heterosis.

Circle B was founded by the father-son duo Frank and Fred Borman in 1998. Patriarch Frank Borman is known as an astute businessman not afraid to shoot for the moon — literally. Borman commanded Apollo 8, the first mission to fly around the moon. And when it comes to Circle B, the Borman family is equally as pioneering and progressive. For more than two decades, Circle B has served as a textbook example of a profitable cow-calf operation, mixing management, good ol' fashioned stockmanship, benchmarking metrics and complementary genetics.

Fred's wife, Donna, was the one in the family first taken with the latter. She read about the power of crossbreeding in "Storey's Guide to Raise Beef Cattle" when the family first began their foray into Big Sky Country. Today, Circle B's F1 cattle reflect the family's commitment to artfully melding progressive ideas with proven tactics and business savvy with industry tradition. And the operation's use of Hereford genetics pays off in the bull pen and at feeder calf sales for their repeat buyers and in their budding replacement female market.

For more than 20 years, Feddes Herefords, Manhattan, Mont., has served as Circle B's bull supplier. The resulting black baldy calves are uniform, fast-growing, efficient,



Circle B LLC, Bighorn, Mont., was named the Commercial Producer of the Year at the 2023 AHA Annual Meeting in Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 21. Pictured (l to r) are: Bill Goehring, AHA president; Brent Morrison, Circle B manager, and his wife Lisa; and Chad Breeding, commercial programs committee chair.

healthy and manageable; the feeder cattle are also backed by Circle B's progressive management. Circle B calves are enrolled in the following value-added programs: Non-Hormone Treated Cattle (NHTC), Where Food Comes From CARE Certified, Superior Verified, VAC 60, Superior Progressive Genetics, Beef Quality Assurance (BQA), IMI Global Certified and Hereford Advantage.

Through its involvement in the Hereford Advantage program, Circle B has seen improvements in its feeder cattle. Each year, the Circle B F1 feeder calves sell in the Superior Livestock Bellringer sale, and there is no shortage of interest. You could say their lots really do ring buyers' bells. Year after year, their calves fetch premium prices, and the number of repeat buyers underscore their value. Hagemann Farms, Five Rivers, Beller Feedlot and Adams Land and Cattle Company have repeatedly purchased feeder cattle from Circle B,

and their continued interest serves as a great testimony.

While not all buyers offer Circle B carcass data, the figures that do roll into eastern Montana are impressive. Adams Land and Cattle purchased more than 400 steers and reported that the lot gained 4 pounds per day with just over 91% grading USDA Prime and Choice. These bald-faced cattle making the grade further prove the merit of the F1 cross' profitability from gate to plate.

This year, for the first time, Circle B retained all their F1 black baldy females to market as bred heifers. Their progressive management and the Hereford-influence shine in these sought-after replacements.

Circle B stands as a stellar example of how progressive commercial cattlemen can increase profitability through Hereford's added heterosis and the baldy advantage. **HW**