

March 2016

Dear Cattle Producers:

Please accept this invitation to our Harrer's **Lost Lake Ranch** with our partners **Windy Ridge Angus Ranch** 22nd Annual "**In The Real World Sale**"... emphasizing that cattle must be bred and fed to work in the real world.

We are again providing very extensive data on the bulls in the catalog (more than most breeders), with more information provided in sale day handouts, and we invite you to view our bull videos, and we invite you to come to see for yourself. This year, we have added i50K genomically-enhanced EPDs (GE-EPDs) on many of the sale bulls. On the following page, the American Angus Assn. has provided us all with a nice summary of this extra resource for cattle selection. We would like to embellish a little further on the GE-EPDs.

Buying yearling bulls is risky business! As is true in all aspects of our lives, we would like to know what the future holds as early as possible. No matter how good their numbers are as calves, their EPD accuracy has been low. Historically, the only way to improve the accuracy was to raise progeny and submit their data, a long and difficult process, especially for carcass data. By adding the genetic information about a calf, we can better predict their future.

GE-EPDs (we use the i50K test by Zoetis) incorporate that genetic information into the standard EPDs. They also incorporate the pedigree information and performance information. We now understand that traits such as weaning weight are not determined by one gene, but by hundreds or thousands of genes that interact. Tests such as i50K look at 50,000 genes, hence the abbreviation. For those with inquiring minds, the i50K is an evolution of the HD 50K test. After testing more than 160,000 cattle with the original test, the i50K test is a more affordable test prompting more breeders to test their cattle and thus build a better data base. The improvement in EPD accuracy is equal for both tests, greater than 98% concordance.

A clarification about these genomic tests, if you look at the raw data from them before they are incorporated into the EPD: each trait is expressed as a percentile rank within the entire population data base, from 1 to 100%. For each trait the top percentile is 1% and the bottom percentile is 100%. Thus a 1% CED is top, a 1% Docility is top, a 1% Marbling is top and so forth. Another clarification is that genomic tests clear away the bias added for bull management and environment ... genomic tests strip away the difficulty in comparing bulls fed heavily and those fed leaner rations.

GE-EPDs don't tell us everything about the future, but they sure help. Having such genomic information is roughly equivalent to having 20 progeny already bred, raised and harvested at the time you buy a yearling bull. A great step up and another "insurance policy" for the bull buyer! You don't have to do anything extra, just sit back and enjoy knowing more about your future with higher accuracy EPDs.

One now might ask, "So, why do I need to look at the bulls?" Primarily to determine soundness. We do not have EPDs for feet and leg structural soundness, crooked backs, sheath quality, etc. Also, when we show our neighbor our top herd sire, we don't want to show them a "wildebeest" or a "hippopotamus".

This year, we are offering 124 bulls. To assist in making your decisions ahead of time, see our web site at www.lostlakeranch.com which will be posting videos, scrotal size and ultrasound information. This year, sale order will be the same as the lot order in the catalog. We are again offering on-line viewing and bidding through www.DVAuction.com. See details on page 4.

A reminder that we still offer the following value-added options: free delivery (minimal qualifications); volume discounts; wintering agreements; shared Mortality and Loss-of-Use Insurance; and Harrer's Satisfaction Guarantee.

We hope you can join us in person or by phone or online on March 25, 2016, whether looking to buy, just looking, or just visiting. Consider this your invitation to see what YOU think!

Sincerely,

Grant & Deanna Harrer and the Harrer Family