

\$ COVID-19 impacts business SEE PAGE 3

SW Hybrid system faring well SEE PAGE 2

Cuba City farmer honored

Becomes American Angus Association alternate delegate

BY ELYSSA VONDRA

It's a crisp fall weekend morning in the country, and the kids are roaming the acres alongside their black angus cows, feeding them by hand and petting their heads; it may seem like a day such as any other on the homestead, but it comes as the clock is ticking down, with the farm owner preparing to take part in an exciting honor soon.

The Teasdale kids, Jonas, 12, Will, 10 and Natalie, 8, help with the daily chores, just like their mom, Leanne Teasdale used to do when she visited her grandparents' family farm.

"I think that that helps with the development of a young person really learning that work ethic," Leanne said. "It also helps them understand the cycle of life."

Sometimes earning a dollar a chore to help sweep the aisles, feed the calves and make hay, Leanne developed a passion for farming that has led her to success in the field.

"I really love good cattle," she said, starting to build her own family farm up 15 years ago, purchasing some bottle calves. Soon she and her husband Dan Teasdale, a veterinarian, decided to expand, adding some commercial cows to the mix.

"If it wasn't for (Dan), his

similar interests and experience with cattle both as a veterinarian and a cattleman and knowledge of farming, I wouldn't be where I am today," Leanne said.

They continued to work to grow and improve the herd together.

"Every year we progressed," she said. In 2013, they bought their first registered black angus cow, and that changed their trajectory.

"You could see the difference in the calf crop that would hit the ground every year, and that translated into improved profitability," Leanne said.

"Being an analyst, I fell in love with the progressiveness of the breed's genomic testing programs and standards for certified angus beef," she said. "It was exciting to have the ability to not just be a part of the American Angus Association that was revolutionizing beef industry standards, but to also be a contributor in building the best quality genetics in the world."

Leanne got her bachelor's degree in technology management from Herzing University, then worked in corporate America for 20 years, so she has a background in supply chains, and that's a major component of the beef industry, she said.

When she started in the workforce, she didn't know

exactly what she wanted to do.

"I just knew that I wanted to get a job working for a company that appreciated my skill set that I could give 110-percent to every day," she said.

She has since found her niche.

Leanne worked with Spectrum Brands in Madison for six years, then at Flexsteel for 14. She was a director of logistics, until her position got eliminated due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

"I lost my job at the end of April," Leanne said. "... (But) I believe in the silver lining, and I believe that you will always land in a better place than where you launched ... It's just part of a journey. It's just a job."

That's when she decided to get "more involved in helping (ensure) the continued success of the breed and be a part of the American Angus Association," she said.

The American Angus Association has "basically mapped all of the currently meaningful genetic traits of the black angus breed," she said.

"From a small blood sample, we are now able to ... forecast how that particular animal will compare to all the other animals from that breed in the database and be ranked" for traits such as marbling,



Natalie Teasdale, 8, feeds her parents' docile black angus cows. Her mom, Leanne Teasdale, is being recognized in November, earning a spot at the American Angus Association Convention of Delegates as an alternate.

carcass weight, calving needs and more, Leanne added.

That can help breeders make decisions to get farmers the most potentially profitable calf crop.

"You can work to manipulate

the breed into creating the best possible representation in terms of quality grade, which can get you a premium when you sell to slaughter, or you can work to get the best representation of carcass traits to increase

your weaning weight, yearling weight and rate of gain without increasing your feed input," Leanne said.

"You know what you have"

Delegate | SEE PAGE 10

Delegate

from Page 1



Leanne Teasdale, alternate delegate for the 2020 American Angus Association national convention.

with this system, she added, "And once you know what you have, you can work to improve those areas of that animal to make them better in that next year's calf crop."

It's an immense amount to learn and the industry evolves every year, Leanne said. There is a lot to do when raising purebred animals.

There's paperwork and registrations, calvings, siring and genomic testing to keep up with, and the industry identifies new traits that should be considered for measuring, along with adjustments that need to be made to the formula of existing traits annually.

"Each year the breed continues to improve, the standards continue to become more rigorous, and the output becomes more profitable to the farmer through improved quality, carcass and production," Leanne said.

Since "you quickly understand the investment that's associated with success," in the family-farm setting, Leanne wound up getting her entire herd 100-percent registered, genomic tested and qualified in the certified angus beef program within five years of starting with the breed.

"We understand the value of hard work and that results are directly tied to effort," she said.

The American Angus Association is recognizing Teasdale Angus LLC, founded in 2006 as Ledan Acres, in

November for its dedication to black angus cows.

Members of the association in Wisconsin voted Leanne in as an alternate delegate to the 137th American Angus Association Convention of Delegates Nov. 9 at the Kansas City Convention Center.

The Cuba City resident and Hazel Green native will be attending virtually, as both delegates and alternates received an invite, she said.

"Teasdale is one of 301 Angus breeders who have been elected ... to serve as a representative at the annual meeting," the association said. "Representing the United States and Canada, the delegates will participate in the business meeting and elect new officers and five directors to the American Angus Association board."

"It is quite an honor," Teasdale said.

She self-nominated, but didn't know whether she would have the opportunity to partake.

"I'm very humbled ... We haven't been doing this for very long," Leanne said, commenting that it's a "very large association, and there are a lot of breeders in the state of Wisconsin."

It's a "truly a great privilege" to be selected, said Leanne, who also earned a place on the Wisconsin Beef Improvement Association's board of directors this year.

"(Dan) introduced me to the breed, and we really fell in love with the progressiveness together," Leanne added. "I would never have been able to do what we've done without him."

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Right: The Teasdale kids spend time on the farm, where their parents raise black angus cattle. They get involved helping with the chores, just as their mom, Leanne Teasdale, did as a kid when she went to her grandparents' farm. That inspired her to get into the field of farming, and she has since earned national recognition, being elected as an alternate delegate to this year's American Angus Association Convention of Delegates.

