



## *TAKING PRIDE IN OUR CUSTOMER'S SUCCESS*

A Publication of Rippe Gelbvieh

August 2008

### **Top 10 Reasons to Attend the South-Central Nebraska Gelbvieh Tour!!**

10. 10 Breeders on one day. It is not very often you can take a day and view 10 different producers seed stock and discuss their program with them.
9. Free meals and Refreshments at every stop.
8. You can't stay home and work everyday.
7. Corey Jasnoch from ADM speaking.
6. Wayne Vanderwert speaking on Cow Size and efficiency.
5. Rick Pfortmiller, with Igenity speaking on how to use DNA markers in bull selection.
4. Heather DePra with Elanco will be speaking.
3. Pick out your next herdsire at weaning when it matters.
2. Compare the different breeders in your area.
1. Listen to Twig Marston speak on Ideas to maximize profit at the cow-calf level.



Our Key Speaker for the tour is Twig Marston. We are truly fortunate to have someone of this caliber speak on the South Central Nebraska Gelbvieh tour. Twig was recently hired away from Kansas State University to the University of Nebraska to become the director of the University of Nebraska's Northeast Research and Extension Center. He has been a senior

beef nutritionist for a major Midwest feed company and was the southwest Kansas Area Extension livestock specialist and was most recently the state beef Extension specialist in cow/calf management for Kansas. His research interests include beef production systems that decrease cost of beef production and enhancement of beef quality. Twig will be speaking on "Ideas to maximize Profit at the cow-calf level."

Hello Everyone, I am really excited about the upcoming Gelbvieh Tour. I included information about the tour and I discuss our breeding program in more detail. I am looking forward to seeing you all at the tour. If you would like to receive a program please give me a call. I hope you find some valuable insight in this newsletter. If you have any questions about the newsletter, or have some special request for other information, feel free to give me a call anytime at (316) 323-4874.

Sincerely,

Dustin Rippe

***South Central  
Nebraska  
Gelbvieh Tour  
is August 23,  
2008.***

***"The most effective way to cope with change is to help create it."***

L. W. Lynett

## Is your breeding program staying out of the ditch?

Rippe Gelbvieh has determined that it is *okay* to be *average* in your genetic selection when it comes to your breeding program. There are numerous specialized programs to which you can attempt to fit your genetics, but at the end of the day having a cowherd and calf crop that is well-balanced in all traits receives the highest payoff. A “middle of the road” concept in your breeding program is the optimal way to find the equilibrium between minimizing costs and maximizing profits. One item separating Rippe Gelbvieh from the majority of seed stock producers is that we have a pre-planned breeding program and are continually testing our genetics in real-world situations backed with factual and honest data. I would like to go over some traits of emphasis in our breeding program and give you examples of what direction we are taking and how we are measuring each specific attribute.

**BW:** *Goal:* 75 to 80 lbs

*Reasoning:* A live calf is worth more than a dead calf but at the same time BW and growth are strongly correlated, therefore neither extreme would fit what we are trying to accomplish.

*Measuring Stick:* We select bulls to have a BW EPD between -2 and 2. Then, we weigh every calf at birth to determine if changes need to be made in our breeding program before EPDs are updated.

**WW:** *Goal:* 550 to 700 lb adj. 205 day weaning weight

*Reasoning:* There are many outside factors that affect WW. Building a cow herd that is large framed and high in milk production will produce greater WWs but not economical, as feed expense and cow cost would be too great. We desire a cow herd that grows calves efficiently, yet is economical in our environment.

*Measuring Stick:* Every calf is weighed at weaning, and this measurement is then compared to its dam’s weight. Once again extremely high WWs cost the producer economically, and too small WW weights the producer will get docked prices for small frames.

**YW:** *Goal:* 65-90 YW EPD; 1250-1350 lb cow size

*Reasoning:* YW weight is very strongly correlated to mature cow size. We want to maintain a 1250-1350 lb cow size. At the feedlot level, you are docked for heavies and discounted for lights, so you want to stay in the “middle of the road.”

*Measuring Stick:* Every cow is weighed each year. In addition, replacement females and herd bulls are weighed at this time to achieve more accurate EPDs. We also use this for culling purposes and to select replacements.

**MK:** *Goal:* 15-25 Milk EPD

*Reasoning:* This level of EPD is ideal for the environment in which we market cattle. A surplus of milk leads to poor udder quality and decreases the cow’s longevity, as well as increasing the feed demand of the cow. A deficit of milk leads to poor WW and stunted calves.

*Measuring Stick:* Each cow is scored for udder quality. In addition, we carefully match the EPDs on bulls to fit the cow we are going to mate him too.

**MB:** *Goal:* 70% Choice/Prime.

*Reasoning:* Many people believe this is too low, but I strongly disagree. Putting fat onto your cattle is inefficient; for our operation, achieving a 70% level maintains a balanced cost of gain. In addition, cattle grading higher than this level are typically *very* fat and a high percentage are Yield Grades 4 or 5. Many people do not realize the negative consequences to producing cattle that are extreme in this category.

*Measuring Stick:* All the heifers are ultra-sounded before we choose replacements to measure carcass traits. All bulls are ultrasound measured and DNA tested, as well. I will warn you that DNA testing is still in its infancy and we are still only receiving a small percentage of the information through DNA. It will more than likely become increasingly useful in the future, but I question producers who are only making decisions based on DNA testing. All steer calves are fed out and put on a grid where we can receive carcass data. This information is used to select replacements and culls in our females, and we use the gathered information and EPDs in our bull selection process.

**YG:** *Goal:* 70% YG 1/2

*Reasoning:* Maintaining a balance between YG and QG is critical for cost of gain purposes and net dollars received from the packing plant.

*Measuring Stick:* Muscling is evaluated phenotypically along with ultrasound measurements and actual carcass data, as described more thoroughly above under “QG.”

**Phenotype:** *Goal:* Sound structured, easy fleshing, docile cattle

*Reasoning:* To me, these are the basics of cattle. If you are missing one of the three traits listed above everything else you do is irrelevant.

*Measuring Stick:* You can’t measure each trait. My experience in livestock judging has allowed me to see many differences that many people cannot pick up. Every bull and female is evaluated by me personally for these three traits. I perform a write-up on each bull and female for both my customers and for mating purposes. Before I A.I. to a bull I have seen his calves, seen the actual bull, or talked to a reliable source that has.

While many seed stock suppliers are concentrating on bending the BW and YW curve, we are attempting to bend the quality and yield grade curve; keeping our eyes on the end goal, the consumer. We feel we are one step ahead of everyone in this category. Our breeding program is designed for a balance of all traits and it is backed by hard and honest data. You cannot improve what you don’t measure. Is your breeding program on the middle of the road or is it in the ditch?

**Stop #1**      **Coffee and Rolls**      **Speaker: Wayne Vandervort**  
**9:30am to 11:30am**      **Title: Executive Director of the American Gelbvieh Association**  
**Topic: AGA update on carcass traits and cow size**

**From: Lawrence, Nebraska; 3 miles south on Rd. 2600, 1 mile west and ½ mile south.**

**Lemke Cattle (Randy and Leslie Lemke)**

**Display Cattle: MLM Gelbvieh (Marlin Meyer)**

**Display Cattle: Goldrush Genetics (Mike Hvnek)**

**Stop #2**      **Lunch**      **Speaker: Rick Pfortmiller, Igenity**  
**12:00pm to 3:00pm**      **Topic: How to use DNA to select breeding stock**

**From: Travel west from the Bruning and 81 intersection to the corner of 6000 and Z, which will be approximately 2 miles. Turn south and travel ¼ of a mile. Voss Farms will be the first house on the west side of Road 6000 (2365 Road 6000, Bruning, Nebraska 68322).**

**Voss Farms (Neil Voss)**

**Display Cattle: Kleinschmidt Farms (Randy Kleinschmidt)**

**Display Cattle: Tegtmeier Gelbvieh (Rod and Judy Tegtmeier)**

**Display Cattle: Bruning Farms (Fred and Penny Bruning)**

**Stop #3**      **Refreshments and dinner**      **Speaker: Twig Marston**  
**3:30pm to 6:00pm**      **Topic: Ideas to maximize Profit at the cow-calf level**

**From: Hebron, Nebraska, 4 miles east on Hwy 136 to Road 6600, south 7 miles to Road D, east 1.75 miles to Rippe Gelbvieh.**

**From: Hubbell, Nebraska, 2 miles north on Road 6600 then 1.75 miles east to Rippe Gelbvieh**

**Rippe Gelbvieh (Duane Brenda and Dustin Rippe)**

In 1994, a small 4-H project between a father and son began, which has evolved into nearly a 200 cow seed stock business built around traits for the commercial cattlemen. We pride ourselves on a “staying out of the ditch” and “middle of the road” mentality when it comes to genetic selection. However, it is our data collection and analysis within our own herd, in addition to EPD’s, that make our program unique as compared to other seed stock operations. An example of this attention to detail is that we have made carcass testing a point of emphasis in our program. We gather and analyze carcass data within our own herd through ultrasound, DNA, and actual kill data. Another point of emphasis is the cow; she needs to be moderate in size and efficient for our environment. Every cow is weighed each year and given an udder score at calving. We believe you cannot improve what you do not measure. This information is then made available to commercial cattlemen at their request.

Our annual bull sale is held the second Saturday of March. We plan on selling around 35-45 bulls this next year. The females that we don’t keep are sold privately to commercial cattlemen. We retain ownership on the steers and remaining heifers and they are marketed on a grid.

Rough And Ready and Buddy Boy will be on display during the tour. In addition, we plan on showcasing approximately 80 bulls and heifers that are a result of A.I. and E.T., which will be the result of 20 top AI sires. This tour will be an ideal time for commercial cattlemen to come pick out their next herd sire or for registered seed stock producers to witness how certain sires are working out at Rippe Gelbvieh.

**Display Cattle: Bauer Gelbvieh (Brian, Sandy, Kyle and Blake Bauer)**

## Rippe Gelbvieh

*WE ARE ON THE WEB AT  
[RIPPEGELBVIEH.COM](http://RIPPEGELBVIEH.COM)*



## Mission Statement:

**"To produce superior Gelbvieh and Balancer seedstock based on economically important traits, which provide more profitability for our customers, and ensure the consumer a very satisfying eating experience."**

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“Blessed is the man who finds wisdom,  
the man who gains understanding.”

Proverbs 3:13

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For more information about our program call Duane Rippe, (home) 402-324-4176, (cell) 402-200-0096 or Dustin Rippe, 316-323-4874 or online at [rippegelbvieh.com](http://rippegelbvieh.com)

## Rippe Gelbvieh

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