

## Angells in White

By Brenda Black

Her name sounds celestial and she surrounds herself with herds colored like clouds. Sally Angell is grounded in the Charolais business in Central Missouri, but shoots for the stars when it comes to raising cattle and rearing daughters.

“I think of us as a team working together,” says Angell of her four curly haired and precocious daughters. “I would love for them to become future partners.”

Her prayers may actually be answered if the little women of Angell Charolais continue their current cattle-focused orbit. The oldest, Sierra, 18, is a freshman at the University of Missouri – Columbia, majoring in Ag Business Management. “Sierra definitely is the toughest of the four girls,” says Mom. “She moves quickly and likes to get things done. She has been a great asset on A.I. Day and will be coming home from college to help with this upcoming ritual.”

Savannah is 16. She provides the patience and compassion. “She always wants to make sure everything is healthy and that the newborn calf is up and sucking,” says Sally.

At age 12, Selestia means business and sometimes butts heads with the older siblings. “Selestia enjoys working hard and she tends to our occasional bottle calf.”

Little Schyler may be the youngest, but serves the high calling of calf-spotting. “Schlyer loves to hang out of the sunroof of our family suburban while driving across the pasture,” Angell begins. “The Suburban actually serves as a pickup most of the time, carrying feed, calving supplies, tubs and salt blocks, and the occasional baby calf. During calving season, Schyler is the first to spot a newborn calf without an ear tag.”

The purebred Angell Charolais business is hard work with 130 production cows and nearly 400 acres in owned and leased land to manage. Still, the Angell girls get the job done. And what they can't offer in man power, they make up for with womanly intuition.

“I am always concerned with safety,” Sally says. “My bulls will weigh about 1,350 lbs. coming off a forage test, and a mature four or five year old Angell Charolais Bull will weigh around 2,000 lbs. So we have a well built corral system and we cull for disposition. We weigh every calf at birth and at weaning. If it acts up or has a poor disposition at weaning it is not kept in the registered herd. Therefore, I believe we have an extremely gentle cowherd. I also utilize intensive grazing so the cattle see us often and are used to being handled.”

Angell continues: “In general, I think that men like to work cattle very quickly. I actually enjoy

working cattle at a slower pace and keeping everyone, both people and animals, calm. This just seems to make everything run a little smoother. I definitely appreciate the help that my girls give me so I like to keep everyone happy so they will be eager to help next time.”

For Sally, there have been a lot of cattle working days since her first 4-H project in the late '80s. She started out with one show heifer as a teen. “I simply enjoyed the Charolais breed and the people involved in the breed.”

She married Justin Angell in 1989 when she already had three mature cows in her growing herd. A few dispersal and production sales later, the numbers grew to encompass both purchased and retained females that evolved into the superior herd Sally runs today. Though she and Justin are no longer married, the bloodlines they pursued together in the breed have left a legacy in Centrailia, MO.

In the early 90's, Angell marketed her bulls at the UMC Performance Tested Bull Sale in Columbia. “Today, most all of my bulls are sold right off of the farm,” Angell says. “I am a member of the PBG (Professional Beef Genetics) group. My bulls are developed and the data is collected with the other members, but I market my bulls private treaty off the farm.”

Angell Charolais PBG bulls are fed out at two locations. The Fast Track bulls are fed at Valley Farm Feedlot, Mendon, MO, under the supervision of Ron Rogers. Those bulls are delivered shortly after weaning and fed until they are a year old. Ultrasound and efficiency data is collected when they are yearlings. Bulls are also fed at Fisher Family Farms, Butler MO. These bulls are on an intensive grazing system, but are also supplemented along the way. They come off of test when they are 16 to 17 months of age.

“The forage test works really well since about 80 percent of my cows calve in the fall or late August, early September,” says Angell. “Those bull calves will enter the grazing test in early May when the grass is really growing and stay on the test until February or March. They are then ready to be turned out with spring calving cows. Having a spring and fall herd and using both test stations allows me to have bulls ready for those farmers or ranchers that calve in either season.”

The bulls are always brought back to the farm so buyers can view them and data is posted on the Angell Charolais website as soon as it is available. It is important for bull buyers to realize that these gains will not be as high as traditional gains, explains Angell. “The bulls are not pushed hard but are grown and developed slowly. It is much more important to look at EPD's and ratios when buying bulls developed like these. These bulls will not be overly fat but in the right condition to go out and breed cows.”

Annually, 25 to 30 bulls are sold. Available for October 2009, Angell Charolais has ten bulls with several of those AI sired. Seven are sired by LT Thundering Wind 5200P, an LT Wyoming Wind

son, the 2006 Lindskov Thiel Ranch's high selling bull.

"I look for high growth bulls with high accuracy but always keep birth weight in mind," says Angell. "since our bulls are sold to commercial producers who mainly sell their calves at weaning or after a vac 45 program. This allows those producers to add pounds to their calves while making them more efficient. There is always a good demand for Charolais-sired calves at the livestock market which allows the cow-calf producer added profits."

Another 15 bulls will be available in late February or early March of 2010. And commercial breeders should take note. The Angell ladies believe in their own product.

This summer Sally purchased 90 calves back from a bull customer and backgrounded them until late August. The calves were sired by Angell's Rio 4-2381, a son of Lt Rio Blanco (ranked in the top 1% in the breed). Three Charolais steers by Rio 4-2381 that the girls purchased last fall recently swept the 2009 Boone County 4-H and FFA Rate of Gain contest, out performing 62 other contenders. They commanded the top three places by each steer gaining over four pounds per day. Selestia's Champion Rate of Gain steer won with a 4.23 ADG. Sierra's Reserve Champion Rate of Gain steer performed at 4.19 ADG. And Savannah's 3rd place Rate of Gain steer gained 4.13 pounds per day.

"It was exciting for the Charolais breed and for Angell Charolais Farms!" says Sally.

To develop such champions, the breeding program at Angell Charolais Farms keeps it simple. "We use genetics that will help our commercial customers meet their needs and provide these genetics in a user friendly package," says Sally. "Our basic criteria starts with calving ease, disposition and competitive growth while maintaining a moderate mature size. We keep our own replacements so we demand fertility, udder quality and great dispositions. Customers also wanting growth and muscle know our bulls will deliver. Bulls are developed in large pastures with the goal of maintaining their soundness and athletic ability."

Though the Charolais business is booming on the Angell farm, the family does more than just herd cattle. When Sally isn't fixing fence or tagging calves, she might be helping a customer at "Angell's Western Wear and More" in downtown Centralia, or substitute teaching for the local school. She supports the MCA, NCBA and Farm Bureau with membership and serves on the Missouri Beef Industry Council Board as well.

Savannah maintains over 300 daylilies growing on their farm, each one individually marked with its variety name, and sells them as part of her SAE project in FFA.

Sierra writes a monthly column for "The Cattleman's Advocate," a publication published by Eastern Missouri Commission Company. Through her contributions, she handily demonstrates why she is the 2009 FFA Star State Farmer and winner of the Agricultural Communications Proficiency

Award.

Whatever the Angell women set out to do, they underscore their efforts with hard work, high hopes and plenty of heart. It's the Angell way of creating a little slice of heaven right here on earth.

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