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2010 Beef Improvement Federation Annual Research Symposium and Meeting

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### **Elite Seedstock Producers Honored at BIF Conference**

COLUMBIA, MO. (JUNE 30, 2010) – Eight nominees for the prestigious “Seedstock Producer of the Year” award, given each year by the Beef Improvement Federation, were honored at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual BIF Research Symposium and Meeting, June 28-July 1 in Columbia, Mo. These seedstock producers were nominated by agricultural and livestock organizations and are all-important contributors of cattle breed genetics in various types of operations across the country. The nominees included:

Circle Ranch in Ione, Calif., is owned and operated by the Tim and Jill Curran family. The Currans are a fifth generation ranching family that dates back to 1856. The farm has been in the commercial cattle business since 1975, but in 1992 the owners purchased a group of Simmental heifers to produce bulls for the Angus-based commercial herd. Today, Circle Ranch maintains a cow herd of 350 mother cows registered SimAngus or Angus, and the family markets about 90 bulls annually made up of a SimAngus composite of 50 percent Simmental and 50 percent Angus. The California Beef Cattle improvement Association nominated Circle Ranch for the award.

Edgewood Angus of West Point, Va., is owned and operated by Pete and Connie Henderson and the couple’s son, Peter. The farm is made up of 200 registered Angus cows and has been developed since the early 1980s from a commercial herd. For more than 14 years, the farm has consigned bulls to the Beef Cattle Improvement Association test stations and has developed a reputation for strong genetics that fulfill the needs of commercial customers. Pete is also the past president of BCIA and serves as the current chair of the BCIA Culpeper Test and Sale Committee. In 2000, the operation grew from 75 to 450 acres, and the family has worked diligently to improve pastures, fencing and management infrastructure since that expansion. The Virginia Cattle Improvement Association nominated Edgewood Angus for the seedstock producer award.

McBee Cattle Company in Fayette, Mo., has been a major innovator in the Braunvieh business. Since 1979, owners Ron and Teri McBee have built up their cattle operation to include a herd of 250 registered Braunvieh-Angus cows and 200 commercial cows influenced by the Braunvieh breed. The ranch is made up of 1,650 acres of rolling fescue-based pasture, divided into an 80-paddock intensive grazing system. Each year, 100 to 120 bulls are developed with a high-fiber, low-starch commodity ration and performance measured for growth and carcass traits, and after culling, about 60 percent of these bulls are sold in the annual Selection Day sale at the ranch. Additionally, customers of the McBees can take advantage of the McBee Gate Cut Heifer Sale and the new McBee Genetic Advantage Program. McBee Cattle Company was nominated for the seedstock producer award by the Braunvieh Association of America.

Rincker Simmentals, owned by Curt, Pam, Cari and Brent Rincker, traces back to 1972 when Curt began raising cattle with his father, Leland. Prior to this, the Shelbyville, Ill.-based operation was in the Angus business. The Rincker Simmental herd is made up of 80 Simmental brood cows that produce seedstock for purebred and commercial customers. The Rinckers run an aggressive embryo transfer program to multiply the progeny of their outstanding females, and many successful show cattle have also derived from this method of breeding. The farm relies heavily on performance testing, expected progeny differences and dollar value indexing to make balanced cattle for the industry. Rincker Simmentals was nominated for the seedstock producer award by the University of Illinois Extension and the Illinois Beef Association.

Sixth-generation Sandhill Farms, located in Haviland, Kan., is owned and operated by Kevin and Vera Schultz. The homesteaded ranch was established in 1869 and has since made great strides in the Polled Hereford business. Roy Schultz originally purchased the Polled Hereford bulls for use on his commercial cows in the 1940s, and his son, Ron, continued this program. Grandson Kevin started the registered herd as part of the 4-H project and has built that herd to include 300 brood cows – two-thirds of which are registered and one-third being purebred commercial. The spring breeding program on the farm has been established by the uses of artificial insemination, embryo transfer and clean-up bulls. The farm markets polled Hereford bulls and has tested more bulls in the American Hereford Association's sire tests than any other breeder in the last 10 years. The Kansas Livestock Association nominated Sandhill Farms for the award.

Western Nebraska-based Schuler Red Angus is owned and operated by Schuler-Olsen Ranches, Inc. and the Darrell Schuler family from Bridgeport. Darrell and Mary Lou Schuler started the ranch in 1959 with commercial Hereford cattle. In the 1970s, a registered Red Angus herd was started to develop seedstock for use on the commercial cows. In the 1980s, the seedstock operation grew and was improved through AI, EPDs and intense performance testing. Currently, the ranch sits on 17,000 acres and includes about 1,000 head of spring-calving females. Butch and Susan Schuler and their children Stephanie and David manage the operation today and sell about 150 Red Angus and Red Angus composite bulls and 40 registered Red Angus heifers at their annual spring sale. The Nebraska Cattlemen nominated Schuler Red Angus for this year's seedstock producer award.

Spring Creeks Cattle Company in Wauzeka, Wis., is owned and operated by Bob and Rhonda Mitchell and their sons Matt, Bart and Scott. The Southwestern Wisconsin farm, which includes 3,000 acres of owned and leased pasture and cropland, is home to more than 600 registered Limousin, Lim-Flex and Angus breeding stock. For more than 35 years, the Mitchells have focused on producing sound and productive cattle, and they sell bulls, mature cows, bred females and open heifers off their farm to their customers. The family also strives to raise calves without the use of antibiotics or hormones and promote the naturally lean, meaty beef of the Limousin breed. The family members even appeared on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" to explain how they raise and manage free-raised veal calves. The North American Limousin Foundation nominated Spring Creeks Cattle Company for the seedstock producer award.

Windy Hill Angus farm in Boaz, Ala., is owned and operated by Jack Tate. The farm has produced Angus seedstock for 32 years. Presently, the herd consists of 65 cows and 10 open heifers. All females are bred using estrus synchronization and AI, followed by a clean-up bull. All production weights, carcass ultrasound and average daily gains from and on-farm 84-day test are collected, and performance information has been maintained using Angus Herd Improvement Records the past 30 years. Last year, Windy Hill Angus held its first production sale. Jack Tate is past president of director of the Alabama Angus Association. The Alabama Beef Cattle Improvement Association nominated Windy Hill Angus for the seedstock producer award.

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The Beef Improvement Federation has been a means to standardize programs and methodology and to create greater awareness, acceptance and usage of beef cattle performance concepts for more than 40 years. The 42nd Annual BIF Research Symposium and Meeting, held this year in Columbia, Mo., was hosted by the University of Missouri Extension and other cattle producers, organizations and leaders in the state. For more information about BIF and the conference, log on to [www.bifconference.com](http://www.bifconference.com) or [www.beefimprovement.org](http://www.beefimprovement.org).