

Tyro Award*(continued from page 33)*

least partly inspired by the fact that Dan raised them for years. Eric was born the to Larry and Laura Bergum in

Chester in 1980. Eric graduated from Culbertson High School in 1998. After his graduation he attended Helena College of Technology where he earned both an associates degree in agri-diesel

mechanics and the attention of his future wife, Cassandra Jackson, the daughter of Marilyn and Robin Jackson.

Cassandra and Eric were married on Feb 14, 2004 in Wolf Creek Montana. Cassandra's father, the pastor of Wolf Creek Baptist Church officiated. Eric and Cassandra's marriage resulted in the birth of their first child Autumn. With her birth, Eric and Cassandra started to think about their future, and how they wanted to raise their kids.

They discussed the possibility of running Dan's farm as Eric's uncle Don was planning on retiring. They started running the farm in 2006 and managed not just to raise wheat but also gave birth to two more kids, Kylie and Dawson.

In 2008 they finally made their move into ranching by purchasing 20 cows and five bulls from the Holden Hereford ranch. To pay the bills, Eric works full-time as a conductor for BNSF out of Glasgow. Because of the odd hours and schedules of a conductor, Cassandra has had to keep the farm and the house going when Eric is away.

Eric and Cassandra have faced several hardships including severe illness of their eldest daughter Autumn, drought, and an injury that affected the use of Eric's right hand for more than three months. Despite it all, they are committed to the Montana agricultural way of life and look forward to growing their Hereford business and leaving a legacy for their children, should they decide to follow their family footsteps.

Commercial Breeder - Vukonich

(continued from page 33)

do you start up a place like ours? Where do you begin? And furthermore, at what point do you earn the right to be called a "ranch"? It was then that I realized, wow! All those years of stacking hay and feeding calves, I really had it easy. The hard work was done while I was still soiling my diapers. The hard part was actually creating the ranch I now call home.

Its creation was a process that cannot be measured in days, or even months,

rather it's a process measured in years, 20 to be exact. It was the fall of 1988 when my parents fell into an offer they couldn't refuse. To lease an irrigated place a few miles West of Joliet that they would eventually buy. A place complete with a modest house, huge barn, and beautiful view of the Bear-tooth Mountains and a set of corals that wouldn't have kept in a dead cow. But it was a place with unlimited potential and with the grace of God and a little luck, my father knew it could work. He and mom moved onto their new ranch that October with three kids, an old dog, a trusty horse and a handful of mutt cows that would be the foundation of the heard that's there today, which includes the first heifer born on the place.

Through the first several years we tried our hand at a couple different breeds. We first used Gelbviehs to help us tear down what corrals where there, then switched to Longhorns to teach us how to build new ones. But after all the dust settled the breed that dad always had an inborn fondness for was made our breed of choice, Hereford. Dad began buying registered Line-1 Hereford bulls from Dave and Ron Baker of Silesia and thus began the process of converting a bunch of mixed breed cattle to the herd of Herefords we have now.

By the mid nineties leasing summer pasture to accommodate the rapidly growing heard was an annual spring event, and producing enough hay for the winter became a summer long chore. By 2000 we were strictly a pure bred operation buying and selling only Herefords and breeding for frame, milk and calving ease. But after the dispersion of Baker Hereford we had to travel for bulls to fit our cows and take them to the next level.

It was then that Dad decided to step away from the Line-1 for a while and see what the introduction of Canadian blood would do. The results surpassed any perceived assumptions and allowed us to achieve higher birth weights, higher weaning weights and a larger frame without loosing calving ease. Show calves were competing with the likes of registered breeders, and females were winning best of show at the county fair. This cross of blood lines was so suc-

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800 *F Dakota 502 x Explorer*

BW	WW	YW	M	M&G	REA	MARB
5.0	56	93	17	45	+17	+02



817 *Harland 408 x Centurion*

BW	WW	YW	M	M&G	REA	MARB
4.4	56	89	19	47	+03	+2

He is for sale at private treaty.

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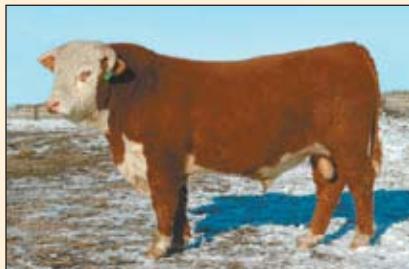
**Selling at Black Hills
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814 *F Dakota 502 x Beef 9059*

BW	WW	YW	M	M&G	REA	MARB
2.3	47	82	14	38	+23	+07

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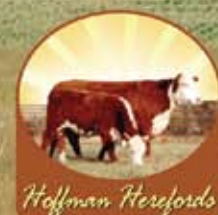
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For More Information:

Colin Hoffman

11341 357th Ave.

Leola, SD 57456

(605) 439-3623

(605) 439-3396

cmbhoffman@msn.com

www.hoffmanherefords.com