

2007 Beef Improvement Federation 39th Annual Meeting

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Touring Colorado

Cattlemen tour Colorado seedstock and feeding operations.

Story & photos by **Eric Grant**



► **Above:** Dallas Horton (right), who owns and operates Leachman Cattle Co. of Colorado, has long been a pioneer in the breeding of consumer-oriented genetics and the development of integrated beef production systems.

► **Right:** Kent Andersen (right), executive vice president of the North American Limousin Foundation, discusses Magness Land and Cattle Co.'s breeding program and the development and usage of LimFlex cattle, a hybrid comprised of Limousin and Angus genetics. Andersen is pictured with Jack Whittier, an animal science professor at Colorado State University.

FORT COLLINS, COLO. (June 9, 2007) —More than 125 cattle producers, researchers and educators enjoyed a tour of Colorado's leading cattle operations on the final day of the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) conference in Fort Collins, Colo.

Tour participants visited seedstock operations Wardell/Walter Angus Ranch and Magness Land & Cattle Co. of Platteville; Fiver Rivers Ranch Cattle Feeding's Kuner feeding facility; and Leachman Cattle of Colorado, Wellington, Colo.

Wardell/Walter Angus Ranch is owned by Roy Wardell, a third-generation Colorado rancher, and managed by Terry Walter, whose family has farmed and ranched near Platteville since the early 1950s. The purebred Angus operation emphasizes the production of maternally strong and structurally sound bulls and females that are easy-calving, easy-fleshing and have quiet dispositions.

"We sell about 70 bulls per year," Walter said. "Many of our customers are ranchers in the mountains and southern Wyoming."

Magness Land and Cattle is a producer of registered Limousin and LimFlex (Angus × Limousin hybrids). Managed by Wendell Geeslin, the operation markets about 750 bulls per year to producers nationwide. Visitors to the ranch had the opportunity to see "LodeStar," the leading Limousin AI bull in the

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► **Above:** Lee Leachman fields questions from BIF tour participants, who saw some of Leachman Cattle Co.'s Angus, Red Angus and Charolais cattle.



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country.

Magness has also worked closely with its commercial customers to add value to their calf crops. The company works with Smithfield Beef Group through Magness's Five Star Beef Systems to reward production of superior feedlot performance and carcass quality.

Five Rivers Ranch Cattle Feeding is the nation's largest feeding company, with a total of more than 100,000-head, one-time capacity. Its Kuner feedlot was constructed in 1974 and is managed by Nolan Stone. Producers on the tour learned more about the demands of the feeding industry and got to see one of the most innovative operations firsthand.

Leachman Cattle Co. of Colorado annually markets about 1,000 head of bulls per year, including Angus, Red Angus, Stabilizers and Charolais. It claims

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► Above, left & below: More than 125 cattle producers partook in BIF's seedstock tour of several leading ranching operations in Colorado. The tour provided participants with the opportunity to evaluate cattle, and to learn from the experiences of some of their colleagues. These photos were taken at Leachman Cattle Co., the final stop of the day.



► Left: During BIF's seedstock tour, participants also had the opportunity to visit one of the largest cattle feeding operations in the country, Five Rivers Ranch Cattle Feeding's Kuner feedlot. The facility has a one-time capacity of about 85,000 head.



► Left & right: Tour participants viewed bulls at Magness's bull development center and a group of Magness females.



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an extensive embryo transfer program and works with a network of cooperators throughout the western United States.

The operation is placing particular emphasis on improving cow maintenance and forage efficiency, Lee Leachman said.



Look for a photo gallery with more photos on the "Photo Galleries" page.



► **Above:** Cattle producers at Magness Land and Cattle Co. evaluate a pen of Limousin females and calves.

► **Left:** Photo taken at the Wardell Walter operation.

► **Right:** Nolan Stone, manager of Five Rivers Ranch Cattle Feeding's Kuner feedlot, explains to tour participants the challenges and opportunities facing the nation's cattle-feeding business.



► BIF's seedstock tour attracted participants from around the world. Here, Wendell Geeslin and Fabricio Fassheber dos Santos (right) take a few minutes to learn more about each other's beef cattle operations. Fabricio is from Brazil; Geeslin is manager of Magness Land and Cattle Co.



► Roy Wardell (left) and Terry Walter represent a unique partnership in seedstock production and marketing. Wardell's family homesteaded near Platteville, Colo., more than a century ago. Walter's family farmed and ranched nearby since the 1950s until the two merged their operations in recent years.



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