

Raising livestock & 4-Her's

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Larry Peterson inducted into county cattlemen's hall of fame

Livestock and 4-H to Larry Peterson are synonymous.

Larry, a third-generation livestock producer and farmer, has raised plenty of cattle, hogs and grain.

The 72- year-old also nurtured plenty of 4-H'ers including his own children and grandchildren.

Inducted into the Dawson County Cattlemen's Hall of Fame Saturday night in Lexington, Larry's roots in the cattle industry can be traced back to Peter Robert Peterson.

His grandfather, Peter, bought a quarter section of land eight miles northwest of Gothenburg in 1898.

Family members said Peter and his wife, Amanda, moved to the plains from Illinois where they had grown tired of the rain and mud and sought higher and dryer land in Nebraska.

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Their youngest son, Alton, was Larry's father. Alton and his bride, Anna Stevens, settled on the family farm in 1930 and implemented mechanical practices less dependent on horse labor.

Along with grain, the Petersons raised Hereford cattle. Given a bucket calf when he was 6, Larry later traded the steer for a heifer he named "Mamie" after the wife of soon-to-be President Dwight Eisenhower.

Mamie's offspring led to a herd of Herefords that Larry raised on the family farm.

In 1963, he married Carolyn France of Gothenburg and the couple ended up on the Peterson farm four years later where they raised livestock, grain and four children—Stephanie, Crystal, Page and Paul.

Described by his children and other family members as a thinker "outside the box," Larry made many improvements to increase the efficiency of the agricultural operation including the installation of more miles of underground natural gas lines to make irrigation and grain-drying costs more reasonable and center pivot irrigation.

Sometime in the early 1990s, Larry implemented no-till irrigation on the family's irrigated and dry-land corn that led to less wind and soil erosion and conserved soil moisture

Although Larry got out of the cattle business for a few years, the Petersons returned to that livelihood after his two sons graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

PR Partnership, derived from Peter Robert Peterson's name and cattle brand, was formed. Today, the family uses the nearby Sandhills to pasture their black Angus herd and other acres to raise food-grade corn, corn for livestock feed and wheat.

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~~Elizabeth Barrett is a writer and a 4-Her. She has been a member of the 4-H organization since she was a child. She has written several books and articles about 4-H and livestock raising. She is currently a member of the 4-H organization in her home state of Ohio.~~