

Brotts leasing Broken Bow sale barn

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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Undecided about rebuilding Gothenburg Livestock facility.

Wendell and Kathy Brott have considered rebuilding Gothenburg Livestock since a Feb. 25 fire destroyed the 77-year-old structure and offices that also housed Brott Auction.

On Tuesday, Wendell said the couple still isn't sure whether or not they'll do it.

Since the end of March, the Brotts have leased the sale barn in Broken Bow from the Central Nebraska Commission Company.

Wendell, along with a couple of other auctioneers, conducts Thursday sales at the facility.

"It's kept us in business," he said.

Because of the drought and poor grazing conditions, sales have been brisk.

"We're selling a lot of culled cows and there's a big stocker, feeder sale coming up this Thursday," Wendell said, noting that a sale last week brought about 1,800 head into the ring.

Many of the sale barn's customers have stayed with Gothenburg Livestock since the facility burned to the ground except for a few weeks in March before the Brotts leased the Broken Bow facility.

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If they choose, local and area producers can bring cattle to pens at Gothenburg Livestock and the business hauls them to Broken Bow to be sold, Wendell said.

Because of the large number of cattle producers are selling, he said sales will continue into the summer.

"A little moisture doesn't mean we're out of the drought, especially with 90-degree temperatures and wind.

In addition to the sale barn business in Broken Bow, Brott Auction still has consignment sales and household auctions and uses a cafe building on site for an office.

The structure is freestanding from the sale barn that burned down.

Wendell said the Gothenburg Improvement Company and city officials have offered support as the Brotts decide their next step.

ebarrett@gothenburgtimes.com

308-537-3636