



Left: Tom and Carolyn Perrier were “thrilled” when Matt and Amy decided to come back to the family ranch. It meant their baby granddaughter Ava moved back, too. Now 17, Ava is a big help on the ranch, along with her siblings Henry, Lyle, Hannah and Hope.

## Dalebanks Angus earns CAB seedstock honors.

Story & photos by Miranda Reiman, Certified Angus Beef LLC

**D**oing right by their customers means raising the best cattle they can. For the Perrier family of Eureka, Kan., that’s a philosophy, business model and family code all wrapped into one.

Matt, Amy and their children, along with his parents, Tom and Carolyn Perrier, operate Dalebanks Angus. The designation traces back to ancestors who kept a bit of their English heritage alive with their farm name when they settled the Kansas plains.

“Our breeding philosophies are generations deep,” Matt says. Seeing these “unique” cattle at the American Royal, his great-grandpa brought the first Angus to their ranch in 1904. He crafted a simple phrase the family has distilled to a tagline for their whole program: *Practical, profitable genetics.*

The Perriers say strength in their customers’ bottom line means strength in their own. Profitability has to happen at every step in the beef chain. That outlook earned them the 2020 Seedstock Commitment to Excellence Award from the *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> (CAB<sup>®</sup>) brand.

As a boy, Perrier remembers concerns with lower beef demand and a fledgling high-quality Angus beef brand.

“They got laughed at,” he says. “When I see that logo, I see folks who believed there was a reason to breed cattle that met consumer demand. I see folks who shrugged their shoulders and said, ‘I don’t care that the rest of the industry is telling us to go the exact opposite way.’”

Yet, it took an entire shift in the industry before it made sense to everyone.

“We needed a way for cattle that were more desirable for our consumer to get rewarded,” his father says. “It wasn’t happening in the ’80s and early ’90s. Now it has accomplished what it set out to do, and I’m glad that we’ve been a little part of that.”

It’s one of the reasons Matt carries on the tradition of keeping

cattle consistent, moderate in size and balanced for all traits, while making improvements on multiple fronts.

“We know we could breed cattle that are fancier, but we also know through the centuries our customers have looked to us, not just for prettier cattle or cattle that excel in one trait, but that are profitable for them,” Matt says.

The Dalebanks sale book is full of cattle that bear the *Targeting the Brand*<sup>™</sup> logo, signifying bulls with a higher likelihood of siring calves that reach 50% CAB brand acceptance or better. Their 2019 sale book featured 109 bulls — 73% of the offering — with the mark.

“Hopefully that proves, even though we breed for bulls and females that are of exceptional maternal value, we’re making simultaneous improvement in both of those areas,” he says.

### Coming home

Perrier spent seven years as a regional manager and later director of commercial programs for the American Angus

Association, and Tom served on the American Angus Association Board in the 1980s. They both know programs only work with participants, and breed advancements only happen when data informs selection tools.

Mother Nature can be a powerful ally or enemy, Matt says. “If we try to use technology and overcome her completely, and feed our way out of ‘problem cattle’ to cover up an issue in the genetics that should have been allowed to show, then we get ourselves in trouble.”

He’s honest with himself, and the cattle are honest with him. They learn to walk to water and travel on the rocks and hills, or they don’t stay.

But the family that came back to the ranch? They’re here for the long haul.

“I watched my mom and dad fight through the ’80s and keep the thing together. I heard stories about my grandmother and others in the family keeping it together though the Depression and a couple of world wars and everything else,” Matt says. “There was a certain amount of duty that I felt, that I had to make sure it didn’t end with my generation.”

There are plenty of opportunities for teaching the next generation both technical skill and the value of hard work. It’s proven a great place to learn about life.

“We try to be constant learners and get better every day in whatever we’re doing. With our faith, with our sports and activities, with our school and learning and with our work around here,” Perrier says. “We try to make ourselves and those around us better every day.”

Editor’s note: Miranda Reiman is director of producer communications for CAB.

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COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AWARD