

# Foundation in Faith

## South Dakota Angus family values Angus cow herd and the ranching lifestyle and community that come with it.

by Kindra Gordon, field editor



**A**claimed mathematician and scientist Sir Isaac Newton is known for attributing his success to the opportunity to “stand on the shoulders of giants” — those who came before him and worked alongside of him. In similar fashion, Ty Dieters, 40, has had the opportunity to be shaped by several giants throughout his journey of becoming an Angus breeder.

As a culmination of those experiences, today, Dieters, wife Kari, their four children and niece comprise the driving force at Turtle Creek Angus, located 30 minutes west of Faith, S.D. The cow-calf operation, which is the original home of Ingalls Centennial Angus, sits amidst the scenic, native prairie and includes heifers calving mid-February, cows calving in early March, and an annual production sale hosted in April at the ranch.

“We strive to keep the Angus cow at the forefront, with a focus on maternal performance in our diverse environment,” Dieters says. He notes that their goal is to produce complete, balanced-trait cattle that will perform for their own western South Dakota ranch, as well as that of their customers’ herds.

### The best thing

Equally important to Dieters and his wife is the ranch lifestyle.

“The best accomplishment from ranching is raising your family in it,” Dieters says.

“The work ethic and skills gained from farm and ranch life make our kids the greatest reward in the world that we produce.”

Noting the lessons in responsibility and morals he sees his young family learning, Dieters says, “This ranching community that we are a part of ... we wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.”

The family includes daughter Tez, 16; niece Jewel, 15; sons Everett, 13, and Chase, 11; and daughter Baylee, 8. The children attend country school in Maurine, S.D., then high school in Faith. They show cattle and sheep and regularly exhibit at area pen-of-three shows.

Likewise, while the family occasionally

enjoys fishing and building things together, Ty says their main hobby is cattle.

“We just love cattle,” he emphasizes, adding: “The new calf crop is always exciting.”

### Early spark

Dieters credits his own agricultural upbringing near Brandon, S.D., for sparking his passion for agriculture — and especially cattle. His grandfather Leo Heggen of Brandon was one of those first “giants,” along with other family members who taught him lessons in dairy, beef cattle and row crops and developed his work ethic and affinity for agriculture.

While attending South Dakota State University (SDSU), several more giants influenced Dieters’ life. He worked at the campus-run feedlot with highly regarded feedlot nutritionist Robbi Pritchard. He also met his future wife, Kari, who was from Faith. That led to an introduction to — and subsequent ranch work with — Hugh and Eleanor Ingalls at Ingalls Centennial Angus.

Married in 2004, Ty and Kari worked for the Ingalls, then spent time in eastern South Dakota working for Ty’s uncle, and then three years in North Dakota at Schaff Angus Valley where Ty was herdsman. Ty credits Kelly Schaff for being an



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influential mentor and providing valued knowledge that helped shape his cattle acumen.

In 2008 the young couple returned to Faith and began working full-time with the Ingalls, while also building their Turtle Creek Angus herd. In 2020, with Hugh and Eleanor’s retirement, Ty and Kari transitioned to leasing the Ingalls’ ranch headquarters and a portion of their pastures.

“We have felt blessed for the opportunities,” Ty says. “I’ve learned a lot from Hugh and hope to continue working with Hugh and his family for many years to come.”

### Long-term view

Looking ahead, Ty says his cattle goals are to continue to provide quality genetics and service to their customers. He also

hopes to expand their purebred herd using embryo transfer.

While startup costs and input costs continue to be challenges, as does timely rainfall, Dieters says, “It is an exciting time to be in agriculture. The next few years look good [for the cattle market], if we can get the moisture we need.”

He has learned that because of the ups and downs in agriculture, diversification is necessary. To do this, he operates a hoof-trimming business and provides custom artificial insemination (AI) services in the spring.

The couple is community-minded and serves in several volunteer roles. As examples, Ty is current treasurer for the Black Hills Angus Association, and is a past breed representative on the Black Hills Stock Show and Central States Fair Livestock committees. Currently he also

serves on the South Dakota Angus Association Board of Directors and is a trustee at Prairie Home Church.

With all of those entities, Dieters notes, “We try to find balance with family, and keeping our perspective and priorities.”

That said, his advice to others is this: “Do things for the right reason. Have a vision for your operation and your goals, then build on that.

“Be willing to get input from others. I have learned a lot from others, and if you pay attention, even if someone is not teaching you, you’ll learn something,” he continues.

“Most importantly,” he concludes, “always look up.” **ABB**

Editor’s note: Kindra Gordon is a freelance writer and cattlegirl from Whitewood, S.D.