

# *R.A. Brown Ranch*

## **R.A. Brown Ranch**

**Spring 2020  
Newsletter**

PO BOX 727  
THROCKMORTON, TX 76483  
940-849-0611

[www.RABrownRanch.com](http://www.RABrownRanch.com)  
[info@RABrownRanch.com](mailto:info@RABrownRanch.com)



## **Ready, Set... GOALS**

by Kayla Jennings  
Reprint courtesy of *The Cattleman*.

**Plan the work and  
work the plan for  
success on the ranch.**

**S**et goals, achieve the goals, and then set more goals. The notion seems elementary, really. This age-old concept of establishing goals to achieve a desired outcome does not strike as challenging in the least during the immediate. However, the road to reach said targets can prove otherwise.

While every ranch is different and requires a unique strategy to accomplish its long-term mission, most share similar overarching ideas. Thus, ranchers can follow a basic outline of considerations when developing a management plan, goals, and a long-term mission.

Hugh Aljoe, director of producer relations at Noble Research Institute, works one-on-one with producers daily to aid in improving their operations. Each day he is faced with a different scenario, but he says there are typically two big-picture goals no matter the operation — stewardship and profit.

“Producers want to be good stewards of their land and their livestock, but they also want it to be a profitable enterprise,” he explains. “Then you get into the point of asking what can they

do operationally to begin to be more profitable? Those are areas where you begin to focus your goals.”

### **Evaluate, evaluate, evaluate**

Aljoe says setting goals and developing a management plan go hand-in-hand. Put simply, one can set goals, but if they are not in line with the ranch resources the effort was for naught.

“That’s where a management plan helps — it looks at the entire ranch’s resources,” he explains. “You’re looking at your human elements; your soils, forages, and livestock; marketing plan, and the record-keeping system; and the timing of critical activities.”

Identifying these elements is critical to productive goal setting. “It’s kind of like doing triage,” Aljoe explains. “You go in and discover where they were bleeding the most. Take care of the big arteries first, and then you can come back and begin to work it down to where you begin to fine-tune it.”

Craig Watson, a beneficiary of these principles, echoes Aljoe. Watson, rancher and lawyer west of Sherman, Texas, has put many of these practices

# READY, SET...GOALS

to use — and it has paid off. Watson got his start in the cattle business in the early 1990s and worked as a certified public accountant in his past career. Today, in addition to his law firm, he operates a business focused on buying replacement-quality Angus heifers in the fall, artificially inseminating them, and then selling them as bred heifers the following year.

It has taken Watson many years and much planning to arrive where he is today. A past cow-calf operator, stocker and even hay man, he is not afraid to try new things. He knows to achieve his larger goals he must keep an open mind and shift with the market.

“My goals are to be sustainable economically and ecologically,” he explains. “I want to be responsible for the soil and the resources and leave it better than I found it, but I require that I also make a profit.”

In order to reach sustainability in both arenas, Watson is regularly evaluating and researching what the future holds as it relates to his finances, the weather and the cattle market. In his evaluation, Watson lays it all out on the table, per Noble consultant recommendations.

On the same note, Watson always writes down his goals. While they may not be extremely detailed, he says they assist in keeping his operation on track. The analogy, “you cannot hit a target that you cannot see,” certainly proves true in the case of goal setting.

## Swing for the fences

Once the evaluation of the operation has taken place, it is time to think specifically about short-term and long-term goals. “Your long-term goals should represent the final vision of the operation,” Aljoe clarifies. “The short-term goals are those key objectives that have to occur in sequential order to make progress toward that final outcome

that you’re describing with your long-term goal.”

As an example, a long-term goal for Watson is to enhance growth opportunity for his heifers through health and nutrition protocols. He has implemented the use of a solar-powered pump in one of his stock ponds as a resource for more fresh, clean water for the cow herd. The goal is for the solar pump to prove effective, and the next short-term goal may be to enhance feed or water quality further. These goals will continue to build upon one another until Watson is satisfied with the feed and water resources as they relate to cattle health — the long-term goal.

In theory, these principles are flawless. Unfortunately, though, the ranching business can bring some unexpected turns which delay achieving some goals. This is when producers must maintain optimism and go back to the drawing board.

“One big thing is just to evaluate why that didn’t work,” Watson notes. “I think in the ranching business, you have to constantly be looking to see if you need to be doing things differently, and if so, how? With a big goal or a little goal, it’s necessary to be observing and evaluating.”

## Follow through

If a goal is not successful the first time, Watson and Aljoe encourage producers to assess why and push forward. Perhaps the management practices could improve, so by making that adjustment to the management plan, the goal can be attained the next go round. In other cases, a goal may just not have been realistic to begin with.

“As you set the goals, you have to make sure that those goals make sense to your management plan,” Aljoe expands.

Therefore, Aljoe and Watson say it is crucial to conduct an operational assessment more than once a year.

Many things can change from month-to-month, so it is imperative to adjust the management plan and goals as the environment, both economic and ecological, changes.

“The management plan is the road map to achieve the goals of the operation,” Aljoe explains. “Sometimes obstacles prevent us from taking a direct route, but with the map, the plan, we don’t lose sight of the destination.”

While these steps can be taken individually, Aljoe and Watson note finding a consultant is another viable option.

“I just think it’s important to tell people your goals,” Watson advises. “It’s critically important for a consultant to know your overarching goal because that will impact his answers to your specific questions.”

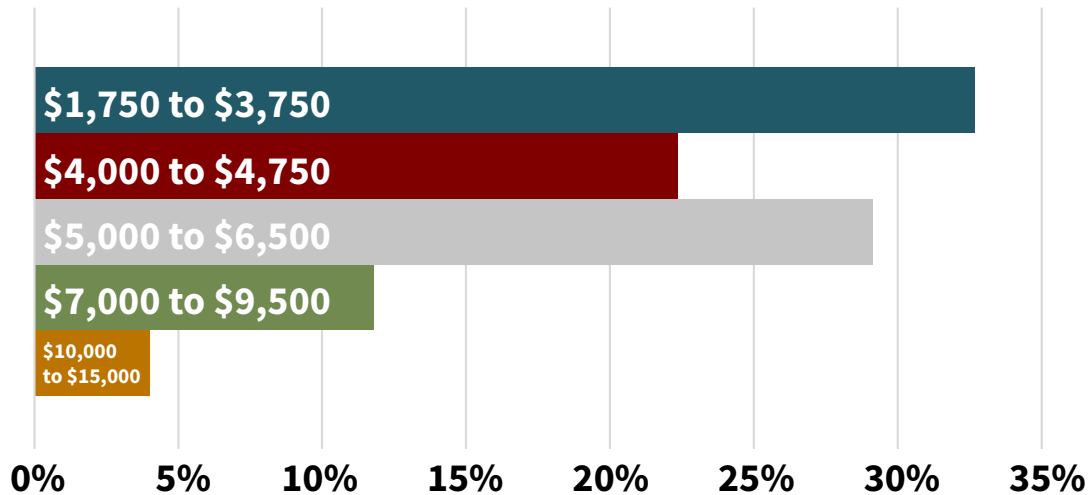
Watson and Aljoe both agree it is important to level with those aiming to help. Recognizing the resources including land, forages, money, labor situations and otherwise, only enhances the value of time with a consultant. Aljoe puts it plainly, “We want to make sure that first we understand before we seek to be understood.”

At the end of the day, Aljoe and Watson can both agree perseverance is the name of the game.

“When you get it in there and have a realistic management plan, be committed to your goals for at least three years so you can see the trend in improvement in these areas that are important,” Aljoe concludes. “After three years, you have enough information to determine what next level of adjustments is needed or if new goals or strategies are needed. Chasing the latest fad is never, or rarely, beneficial, and is usually best avoided. Once you have a realistic management plan in hand, hold true to it until you’ve got enough information to determine whether a drastic change is warranted.

# VALUE-A-BULL

These values are reflective of the last two March sales, including all breeds and 398 head of bulls.



## Advantages & Incentives of Choosing R.A. Brown Ranch Bulls

We believe our job description is to increase your profitability and sustainability in the beef production business. To do the best job for you, we choose to use fact, not fiction, and sound science, not mere opinion.

### 1. We do all we can to design bulls that can increase profitability for you in a PREDICTABLE package.

- This isn't our first rodeo, and it's all we do! We've been in the seedstock business since the late 1800s.
- We research, travel, have discussions with some of the world's best geneticists and even serve the industry in leadership positions which helps keep our finger on the pulse.
- We have invested heavily in all the latest technology to weigh, measure, and accurately describe every animal, including a state-of-the-art feed efficiency testing system (GrowSafe).
- We turn in all data to the breed

associations and even pay for a third party genetic evaluation that gives us another perspective and evaluates additional traits and indexes to help us most accurately produce the best cattle for your needs.

- Every animal is DNA tested to confirm parentage and, more importantly, to enhance the accuracy of our EPDs so we can provide you with the most PREDICTABLE genetics in the business.
- All of our bulls are tested for performance and efficiency while being developed for longevity. They are all age-advantage 18-20 month old athletes ready to work.



### 2. We provide QUALITY in QUANTITY to choose from. We sell a total of 850 bulls each year at our October and March Sales.

- We evaluate all of the bulls more intensely than anyone else we know for performance, efficiency, structure and docility. We cull hard with the goal of providing you with user friendly bulls that are built to last.
- All of this information (EPDs, Genomics, Performance, Structure, Docility) are boiled down into an

exclusive, scientifically-designed, and user friendly STAR RATING system and \$Profit Index that compare all the bulls, across all the breeds, for the economically relevant traits which influence your profitability and sustainability in the business.



**Donnell & Kelli Brown**  
Throckmorton, Texas

**3. More money for your calves. Through the years, we have established relationships with many individuals who are actively searching to feedlots with RAB genetics.**

- We list customer's calves on our website, and promote them to potential buyers in many ways. Our track record speaks for itself; RAB bull customers' calves have topped their respective weight ranges across all regions nationwide twice in the past six months. The earlier we know about your calves, the better we are able to bring the players to the table.
- RAB customers are given the opportunity to market their commercial heifers (bred to and/or sired by our bulls) in both our March and October sales.
- We invest money and time to add value to your calf crop.
- We share what we learn with our customers. Annually, we work with

cattle feeders to harvest carcass and/or feedlot performance data which we return to our bull customers.

**4. Purchasing incentives include:**

- Volume Discounts
- Free Delivery for all bull purchases totaling over \$15,000.
- Fertility Tested and ready to go to work.
- Price Range. We are proud to offer over more than 1,100 bulls in the last three sales with a price range of \$1,750 to \$15,000. There is truly something for everyone!

**5. Our personalized BULL SHOPPER, (aka Donnell Brown) would love to assist you on the front end with selection or what we call our "Built to Order" service.**

- Live Streaming of the auction through DV.

# RANCH RODEO TRAIL

Our ranch rodeo team had their first outing of the year during the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo Best of the West Ranch Rodeo. Coming off a great year of ranch rodeo, qualifying for the world finals in Amarillo, these guys are ready to hopefully repeat! Check our calendar to support them at ranch rodeos near you! In addition, IMA WYNNA RAB won Top Horse honors at the World Championship Ranch Rodeo. Contact us if you would like to use breed to some of our top Stallions. Pictured below (l to r) are some of the ranch rodeo team members: Myles Brown; R.A. Brown; Lanham Brown; Ben McCartney; Dewayne Phillips; and Paul Osgood on the bronc.



# MEASURE WHAT YOU MANAGE

by Donnell Brown

**W**e firmly believe that we can best manage what we measure. For decades the R.A. Brown Ranch has measured and evaluated a multitude of traits.

1960s: Birth Date, Birth Weight & Weaning Weight

1970s: Calving Ease & Yearling Weight

1980s: Carcass Traits through structured progeny testing and actual harvest data

1990s: Carcass Traits via Ultrasound, Yearling Height, Scrotal Circumference, Cow Fertility & Longevity - Stayability

2000s: Heifer Pregnancy & DNA testing

2010s: Feed Efficiency, Feet, Teats, Udders, Disposition, Hair & \$Profit

Don't we all want cattle that are sound, functional and easy to handle? These traits have good heritability and, therefore, you can make significant change in them — good or bad — depending on the bulls you use. That is why we invest hundreds of hours each year evaluating and measuring cattle for these traits. If a bull is going to give you trouble, it is usually when you sort him off by himself. That is why we go the extra mile to measure docility on every bull we sell by sorting them off by themselves and measuring how they respond. We take a group of animals into a narrow alley and with the help of one other person, I sort out each bull, one at a time, and hold them between the two of us. We hold them there for several minutes while we evaluate all four feet and their structure for soundness. Animals identified to have problems with their feet or structure are never sold in either of our annual sales. Some programs trim feet on their sale bulls, but we do not.

During this evaluation is a great time to help train the animals to respect us as humans and yield to our pressure. We then score each animal for docility on a scale of 1 to 6. The photo to the right is a visual of what this process looks like at the ranch.

- 1) Stands calmly
- 2) Is comfortable, but walks around some
- 3) Is noticeably uncomfortable and begins to trot some with the desire to get back with the herd

*\*Scores of 4, 5 and 6 get continuously more aggressive and are culled.*

We score teats and udders on every cow twice annually. The first time is at birth when we tag and weigh every calf. The second time is when we evaluate each cow and decide which bull to breed each cow to via artificial insemination (AI). Just like the process above, they are also scored each year again for feet, structure and docility. We evaluate each cow when we work their calves and give their first vaccinations. To insure the best evaluation of their udder, we gather the pairs at daylight and sort the calves from

the cows as soon as we get to the pens. We work all of the calves during the morning and then evaluate each cow after lunch, so they have had time for their teats and udders to get full. Each cow is scored on a 9-point scale and any problem cows are culled.

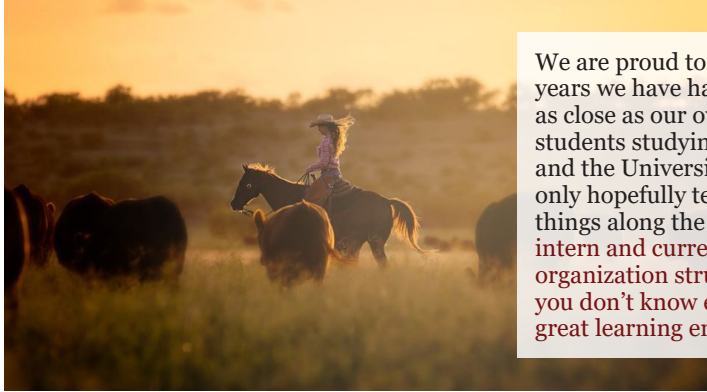
All of these scores are then reported to our breed associations and the \$Profit Share Team where they are used to calculate EPDs (expected progeny differences) for these new traits. In addition to culling the problem animals, we also use these evaluations to select the best cows to become embryo donors. We have been in the bull business for 125 years because we work hard to provide you with bulls that work and by taking care of our customer's needs. You deserve to buy bulls that are fully measured for all economically relevant traits, managed and trained to respect people on foot and on horseback all while being developed for longevity. We work harder so our cattle produce more valuable offspring that last longer, stay calmer and make you more money!



# NEWS

## Interns Take The Spotlight

For more than 20 years the ranch has opened its' gates to college-aged individuals seeking an opportunity to glean insight to the ranching business we know and love. These select individuals come from all ends of the Earth, and they all leave here with an experience to enhance their career beyond their internship with us.



We are proud to say we have interns from across the globe — literally! Over the years we have had the privilege of hosting interns from as far as Australia and as close as our own hometown. It is so fun for us to see applications roll in from students studying everywhere from Texas A&M and Texas Tech to Clemson and the University of Florida. Bringing young cattleman and women here not only hopefully teaches them a thing or two, but it also teaches us a few new things along the way. For those who may be nervous about leaving home, past intern and current pre-vet student at Texas A&M Kyler Spell shares, “The family organization structure here makes it fly by. Also, don’t be hesitant if you think you don’t know enough, or you think you may not enjoy the ranch. It is such a great learning environment, and I would definitely recommend.”

At the end of each internship, the ranch asks the interns to complete an internship reflection. This reflection gives us ideas on how to improve the program each year. We strive to teach beyond the bounds of cattle ranching and into life lessons, and it is always rewarding to hear when we succeed. Past intern and current Government Affairs Manager for the U.S. Beet Sugar Assoc. Brandon Reeves, J.D., says, “Aside from learning how to control my chi around cattle, the biggest takeaways for me were how to prioritize things and go about your business. The RAB’s vision and the integrity with which the whole team pursues it is inspiring to say the least. It is difficult to be on the cutting edge of an industry and at the same time maintain focus on the values and traditions that got you there in the first place. The RAB’s ability to balance those oftentimes competing interests is impressive and has helped me better define and prioritize the values and goals I have for my life.”



While our internships are offered year-round, they do sometimes require a semester off school. This can be challenging, but it is completely doable if students can plan with their college advisor. The advantage to spending a semester with us rather than only a summer is the ability to truly embrace our production sales and the calving seasons. Summer has its own perks, as well, but beginning the summer and staying through the fall, for example, creates an array of experiences a summer-only opportunity may not offer. Plus, you don’t want to miss out on building the memories many of our interns leave with. South Carolina veterinarian Justin Martin recalls his favorite memory, “We were driving a herd of cattle up off the McCluskey pasture with George Self. This was right after I had come there and was the only intern/worker that was from anywhere but Texas. It took a couple of weeks for the others to warm up to me, but George treated me like he had known me my whole life. We gathered the herd of cattle that morning with great conversation and insight. After that morning I knew I was going to have one of the best summers of my life. Life lessons and values I learned from George and everyone on the RAB have stuck with me for years and always will.”

## APPLICATION DEADLINE APPROACHING

SUMMER/FALL (FEB. 1) | FALL (APRIL 1) | SPRING (SEPT. 15)

APPLICATION AND OTHER DETAILS CAN BE FOUND AT [RABrownRanch.com](http://RABrownRanch.com)

# You're Invited...



## R.A. Brown Ranch 5th Annual March Sale

March 11, 2020 | 10 a.m. | Throckmorton, TX



### OFFERING

#### 175 Age Advantage Bulls

(Red Angus, Angus, SimAngus)

#### 50 Bred Registered Females

(Red Angus & Angus)

Birth, Growth, Carcass & Reproductive Data

DNA Tested

Elite \$Profit Bulls

Feed Conversion EPDs

*Committed to adding value and promoting your R.A. Brown Ranch sired calves.*

## Stoecklein Photo Workshop | R.A. Brown Ranch

Throckmorton, TX | April 24-26

Stoecklein Photography Workshops are designed to enhance photographic skills through priceless experiences in the field and in the classroom. These workshops are open to all ability levels, enriching the skills of everyday photographers and professional talents. These are intimate, educational courses, and each workshop has a maximum of 12 students.

As R.A. Brown Ranch serves as the host for this particular workshop, the focus is on the ranch's Quarter Horses and cattle program. In addition, you will gain the opportunity to see some of the most beautiful West Texas scenery around. Below is a photo taken at last year's workshop, and there are many more like it on the workshop website. Visit [WesternPhotoWorkshops.com/Workshops/Quarter-Horse-andCattle/](https://WesternPhotoWorkshops.com/Workshops/Quarter-Horse-andCattle/) to sign up and view details about this amazing opportunity available this spring offered through Drew and Mary Stoecklein. We look forward to seeing you with all your camera gear ready to embrace our lifestyle.

See you on the trail!



# EVENTS

## SEE YOU ON THE TRAIL!

### February 1

Summer/Fall Internship Application Deadline

### February 5-7

Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show  
San Antonio, TX

### February 13-22

NRCHA 2020 World Championship Show  
Ft. Worth, TX

### February 28

March Sale Videos on RABrownRanch.com

### March 11

R.A. Brown Ranch 5<sup>th</sup> Annual March Bull Sale  
Throckmorton, TX

### March 27-28

TSCRA Cattle Raisers Convention  
Ft. Worth, TX

### April 1

Fall Internship Application Deadline

### April 6

Turn the studs out with the mare bands

### April 24-26

Stoecklein Photo Workshop, R.A. Brown Ranch  
Throckmorton, TX

### April 26-29

Hemphill County Beef Conference  
Canadian, TX

### June 5-6

Wild Horse Prairie Days  
Haskell, TX

### June 9-12

BIF Research Symposium and Annual Convention  
Orlando, FL

### June 22-25

Florida Cattlemen's Association Convention  
Marco Island, FL

### June 23-28

AQHA Versatility Ranch Horse World Championships  
Guthrie, OK

### July 1-4

Texas Cowboy Reunion  
Stamford, TX

### July 17-18

Texas Ranch Roundup  
Wichita Falls, TX

### September 15

Spring Internship Application Deadline

### October 13-14

R.A. Brown Ranch 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Bull, Female and  
Quarter Horse Sale  
Throckmorton, TX



# REQUEST YOUR MARCH SALE CATALOG TODAY

940-849-0611 | [RABrownRanch.com](http://RABrownRanch.com)

Featuring Angus, Red Angus and SimAngus Bulls, and Registered Red Angus and Angus Females