Comeaux family takes stock, watches hobby grow into herd

By The Acadiana Staff

What began as a 4-H project has grown into one of the largest registered Angus beef cattle herds in Louisiana. Cquin Angus Farm of Scott, owned by Vernal and Joan Comeaux, recorded 40 head with the American Angus Association last year.

That earned the Comeauxs the ranking of fifth in the state among registered Angus breeders.

But their success didn’t come overnight.

The Comeauxs have been raising cattle for more than 25 years.

“When the kids were growing up, we wanted to find something they could get involved in — something for them to do,” Vernal Comeaux said. “So they joined 4-H and we purchased them a couple of heifers which became the nucleus of our herd,” he said.

“We spent more than 25 years in 4-H by the time all the kids were through,” he said.

But raising livestock was “old hat” for Comeaux even though his professional background is in engineering and he works fulltime for the Lafayette Parish School Board as director of maintenance operations.

“I grew up on a dairy farm in Scott,” he said. “My father was in the business back when there were dairy farms all over southern Louisiana,” he said.

“It was hard work milking the cows everyday,” he recalled. “Cows don’t know when it’s Christmas or Easter. They still have to be milked.”

Vernal Comeaux

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With that in mind, Comeaux recommended that his children raise Angus and soon they joined the American Angus Association as registered breeders.

The Angus Association needed a name for our farm, so we came up with ‘Cquin,’” he said. “The ‘C’ stands for Comeaux and ‘quin’ means five and there are five of us,” Comeaux said.

The Comeauxs have stayed active with the association and attend annual shows across the country. They also visit Angus farms as far away as Missouri and Montana.

“Angus were and still are a good choice for us,” he said. “They are relatively easy to grow out. They don’t have horns, and they aren’t prone to disease like some breeds,” he said. “They are premium livestock.”

The herd on Cquin Farm grazes on more than 150 acres.

The Comeauxs own some of the land and lease additional acreage. Currently, they have a 45-cow herd and a total of 85 head of livestock.

This includes heifers which are not in production and bulls.

Cquin has produced several bulls which have earned the distinction of being named test station winners at LSU.

The bulls are generally sold before they are two years old.

“What we do as breeders is grow out the cattle and sell them for breeding purposes,” Comeaux said.

Generally, the calves are born in January and are sold in the fall.

There is also a calving season in September but it is much smaller.

Although the Comeaux children are grown now, raising cattle is still a family operation.

Comeaux’s daughter Millie and her husband raise Angus near Marksville and his oldest son Zach is his partner.

“We split the work 50/50 — except when he’s offshore for seven days at a time — then it’s 100/0,” Comeaux said. “But he’s still a good partner.”

“My wife Joan is our in-house vet,” he said. “She takes care of the calves and sees that the animals are vaccinated and stay healthy. It’s a big job.”

As a breeder, Comeaux said his goal has always been to raise quality seed stock.

“We’ve become a reliable source and we’re proud of that,” he said.

“I guess we have all enjoyed raising Angus,” Comeaux said. “It’s a business but it’s also something we can do together as a family. It’s our hobby, our interest.”