

In the Genes

Carrillo family continues Beefmaster tradition.

By Chel Terrell, The Beefmaster Cowman

For the Carrillo family, raising Beefmasters in South Texas is in their blood. As the fourth generation joins the family ranching endeavors, it's evident that their commitment to the breed will continue into the future.

"Having four generations in one family raising strictly Beefmasters is pretty special," said Rocky Carrillo. "How often do you hear that in our breed? I believe it talks more about the breed and the fact that through all these years, Beefmaster is still productive for our family."

This dedication to the breed will be recognized at the upcoming Live Oak Beefmaster Breeders Association (LOBBA) annual bull sale when Rocky will receive the 2016 Live Oak Legend Award on behalf of his family.

"The Live Oak Beefmasters Breeders Association is proud to make Ramiro D. Carrillo and family our 2016 Legend award recipient," said Bob Siddons, satellite president. "Live Oak and the entire Beefmaster family are grateful to Rocky and the Carrillo family for their multiple generational contribution to our breed."

Although honored and, in his words "very surprised" to receive this special recognition, Rocky is quick to point out that in his opinion, the true "legends" are the cattle more than the person or family.

"We've gone through some pretty bad droughts down here, but yet we still raise Beefmasters. They just perform," he said. Carrillo, his five siblings and a nephew are carrying on the family tradition that began over 50 years ago when his father, Ramiro D. Carrillo Sr., began purchasing and raising Beefmasters.

"Our family has been in the cattle business for many years, going back to my great-grandfather," he said. "Dad started in the Beefmaster business around 1967 and my older brothers began showing the cattle in county fairs in the late 1960s." Carrillo notes the popularity of Beefmasters in their area during that time.

"The Lasaters had part of their ranch in Duval County, so the Beefmaster breed was very popular back then in our part of Texas," he said. "Dad saw that if he used Beefmaster bulls and crossed them with the Brahman cattle that he was running, he was getting an outstanding offspring. So he went into the purebred business.

"In addition to raising his own Beefmasters, Dad would make trips up to Colorado – after the Lasaters moved their operation there – with 18-wheeler cattle

trailers and load up bulls to bring back to South Texas."

Although he dispersed his registered herd in 1979 with a sale at the LOBBA barn and converted to a commercial operation, Carrillo Sr. continued to raise strictly purebred Beefmasters in his operation. His herd grew to around 200 head before severe drought struck in 2011, forcing him to cull down to 40 head. He continued close management of his herd up until his passing two years ago.

In the late 1980s, Rocky and his brother Jaime returned from law school and established the Carrillo Brothers Beefmasters operation. They currently manage a registered herd of 40 animals and are incorporating the fourth generation of Carrillos into their Beefmaster business.

Live Oak Legacy

The family has been active members of LOBBA for many years, and the satellite remains a very important part of their operation.

"Dad became involved with Live Oak when he began raising Beefmasters. He served on the board of directors and was involved in the negotiation and purchase of the land and building where the Live Oak sale barn is," Rocky said. "Live Oak is very important to the family for our herd. Dad bought all his bulls through Live Oak sales and many of his females, too."

The continuing generations return there to add genetics to their herd as well.

"To this day, the majority of our cattle are purchased at Live Oak sales," Rocky said, who himself has been active with the satellite, serving as president and several terms on the board of directors.

"Rocky's father and uncle were raising Beefmaster cattle before there was even an association to register their cattle," Siddons said. "The Carrillo family truly dates back to the very origin of our breed. Rocky also founded the Southmost Sale, which helped bring top Beefmaster genetics into the lower valley and Mexico."

"Dad would always speak about the breeders who consigned to Live Oak sales. He felt these breeders were individuals who were looking to improve the breed. He said that when you buy from Live Oak, regardless of who the consignor is, you're buying from people who are always trying to improve. You're getting a good product. He'd also say that he never had any problems or issue with an animal. The breeders in Live Oak would always stand behind their cattle."

The family continues to consign cattle to LOBBA sales as well as selling private treaty to buyers primarily in South Texas and Mexico. They're excited about the younger family members' involvement in their operation now.

"We have the vigor now of the next generation coming in," Rocky said. "The fact that they have the energy and want to get involved has given us a renewed drive to get involved as well. The market for the Beefmaster breed is tremendous and we're looking to continue our father's legacy."

