

News from University of Missouri Extension – Adair County



Oscar Mensa named 2018 Missouri Livestock Person of the Year

Oscar Mensa, a long-time rancher from Milan, MO, will be honored at the 2018 Missouri Livestock Symposium on Friday, November 30, 2018, when he will be inducted into the Missouri Livestock Symposium's Livestock Person of the Year Hall of Fame. Mensa is the 16th person to be selected for this honor. Those selected have made significant contributions to the livestock industry in northeast Missouri and beyond.

Oscar was raised in Dorila in the La Pampa Province of Argentina. His parents were livestock and row crop farmers. They raised beef cattle, sheep, and hogs. In his youth, Oscar was the first president of 4-A, (Argentina's version of 4-H) in his hometown. He attended industrial technical school in General Pico, La Pampa. At the age of 20 spent a year in the Argentina Army. In September 1971 he

married Valentina.

Oscar worked on and managed farms in Argentina for John Goldstein. After traveling much of the United States, John decided north central Missouri was the best place to raise cattle in the United States. John Goldstein bought land outside of Milan in 1972 and asked Oscar and Valentina to come to the United States to manage his farm.

Oscar, Valentina and their 2 boys, Marcelo and Gaston, at the time ages 2 and 1, arrived in the U.S. in March 1975. It was winter when they left Argentina and arrived to snow in Missouri. It was unusual to see snow, as it never snowed in La Pampa. They couldn't speak any English when they arrived. Oscar taught himself English by talking with local people around the farm and in the coffee shops. Valentina went to Truman State University to learn English and subsequently helped Oscar. Oscar became a U.S. citizen 1983.

Adrian Farm started with 1,200 acres and grew in size over the years to approximately 5,000 acres. They started with Hereford and Angus cows on the farm. In the early 1980's the Herefords were sold and Angus cows were raised after that. The herd started with 250 cows and grew to 1,250 cows. They purchased their first Charolais bulls in 1985 from Derry Brownfield, making the notable black nose Charolais calves that Adrian Farm is known for today. Buyers compete every year to own those Adrian Farm calves.

Oscar has been heard saying, "The Green Hills are meant for grass, not farming. Leave the green hills green."

Oscar was an early supporter of University of Missouri Extension, having previous experience with governmental agents in Argentina. He built a feedlot on Adrian Farms with the help of Dale Watson and Don Rains, Extension Livestock Specialists. The feedlot was used for backgrounding calves. Oscar helped start the BQA (Beef Quality Assurance) program for

Missouri, working with Dr. Rick Kent, with the initial meeting in the Extension office in Kirksville, MO around 1990.

Oscar is an innovator. He was the first guy to plant soybeans in La Pampa in 1973. He experimented putting false teeth in cattle in the late 1970's. He was an early experimenter with implants, pinkeye studies, different vaccine regimen studies, different grass establishments, and various de-worming strategies.

In 2004, Oscar started The Mower Shop in Milan, MO. He built the business from the ground up, becoming a dealer of Cub Cadet, Vermeer, Grasshopper, Stihl, Danhauser, and Yanmar. In 2017, he sold the Mower Shop.

Oscar is a lifetime member of the Missouri Cattlemen's Association, and is a member and past director of the Sullivan County Cattlemen's. He was an early supporter of the beef checkoff and helped it pass in Sullivan County, when everyone said it wouldn't pass. Oscar supported the building of the Missouri Cattlemen's Association (MCA) office in Columbia, MO and was an active volunteer at the MCA Beef House at the Missouri State Fair.

Oscar is a founding committee member and treasurer of the Missouri Livestock Symposium committee. He is a member of the Sullivan county Farm Bureau and an advisor to the University of Missouri Commercial Agriculture Program. Oscar hosted the Commercial Beef Tour in 1993.

Oscar, Steve Foster, and Fred Fleshman won a cattle working contest for the fastest time in Missouri for implanting, vaccinating and tagging 3 calves. Oscar is a big sports fan. Oscar and Valentine have always supported 4-H and FFA programs. Their children were members of both organizations and they have been a supporter of the youth livestock sales in Sullivan County.

The Missouri Livestock Symposium is proud to add Oscar Mensa to the Missouri Livestock Symposium's Hall of Fame and recognize him as the 2018 Missouri Livestock Person of the Year.

The Missouri Livestock Symposium will be held Friday, November 30 from 4 to 10 p.m. and Saturday, December 1 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Symposium features nationally known speakers on beef cattle, horses, forages, sheep, meat goats, stock dogs, around the farm and home topics and more. It also features a free dinner on Friday evening, November 30 and a free Governor's Style Luncheon on Saturday, December 1 at noon. No registration is required to attend and there is no cost to attend.

For additional information on the Symposium program or trade show, visit our Facebook page, our webpage at www.missourilivestock.com or call the Adair County Extension Center at 660-665-9866.

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