



2007 Northeast Missouri Livestock Person of the Year Mr. Kenneth Eitel

Green Castle, Missouri

The Eitel name is synonymous with top quality Angus cattle. Kenneth Eitel and family have been involved in the cattle business for over 70 years. He has been a member of the American Angus Association since 1945 and is a Charter Member of the Missouri Angus Association where he served as a board member and has been a member ever since. According to Kenneth, and wife Barbara, their Catalpa Grove Angus Farm has been a family blessing. Not only did their cattle do extraordinarily well, but they provided the family with both a good living and college degrees for their five children and Barbara.

Kenneth became known nationally through his successes in the show-ring (he has been the only exhibitor to have shown 3 Grand Champion steers at the American Royal!). The legendary Catalpa Grove Angus herd has produced champion and high placing steers and breeding cattle at the National Western Stock Show, American Royal, Southwestern Livestock Exposition at Fort Worth, the Chicago International, and the Houston Livestock Show. He has also exhibited cattle at the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville and, locally, has exhibited numerous champions at the Northeast Missouri District Fair. Recognized for his keen eye, Kenneth judged cattle shows all over the Midwest.

The Eitels' were also strong supporters of performance testing. In addition to serving on their boards, Kenneth had several champions and top selling animals at the Missouri State Angus Show and Sales, the N.E. Missouri Angus Association Sales, Green Hills Angus Association Sales, and the Chariton Valley Angus Association Sales. During an 11 year period the Eitels consigned 8 top selling bulls, 2 second high selling bulls, and an A minus graded bull at the Northeast Missouri Beef Cattle Improvement Association Bull Sales in Palmyra, Missouri. These accomplishments and others were instrumental in Kenneth being awarded the coveted Outstanding Seedstock Producer Award by the Northeast Missouri Beef Cattle Improvement Association.

The Eitel herd was completely dispersed on Saturday, December 16, 2006, to a standing room only crowd of eager buyers. The Eitel cattle were bred, according to Kenneth, "with the whole picture in mind". He always believed strongly there should be a correlation between the type of cattle that made good registered, breed "curvebenders" with important traits like calving ease, outstanding weaning and yearling weights, appropriate frame scores, and carcass value – all of which contribute to the profitability of breeders, feedlots, and packers.

In addition to being a nationally recognized Angus breeder, Kenneth and family have always been active in their community. Kenneth enjoyed helping 4-H and FFA youth and seeing these young cattle producers evolve. He "mentored" several outstanding young people by taking them along to shows and teaching them some of the "ins and outs" of the purebred business. A graduate of Kirksville High School where he was an FFA member, Kenneth was also a member of the Liberty 4-H Club starting at age 8 (his father started Liberty 4-H in 1934). He was a 4-H leader for 25 years, served on the Adair County Extension Council, was a Sunday school secretary for several years, and a 50 year member of the Pure Air Church. He also served on the FHA Board. Kenneth also has received the Outstanding Young Farmer Award from the Kirksville Junior Chamber of Commerce; a prestigious Recognition Award from the Chamber of Commerce, Kirksville Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the Kirksville Kiwanis Club; and an Adair County 4-H Council award presented by the Bank of Kirksville (recognizing all of his Grand Champions at major shows). He was also a member and board member of the Adair-Schuyler Cattlemen's Association.

Over the years Kenneth provided grooming and showmanship clinics for area youth, hosted numerous 4-H, FFA, and University judging teams for practice sessions, hosted the University of Missouri Extension statewide cattle tour, was a stop on a Chamber of Commerce Farm Tour, and hosted the Kiwanis Club Picnic.

All of the Kenneth and Barbara Eitel family children (Kent, Ann, Lee, Layton, and Chanda) were 4-H members following in the footsteps of their father. Kent, Lee, and Layton were also members of the Kirksville FFA Chapter.

On behalf of the Missouri Livestock Symposium Committee, the Missouri agriculture industry, and the many communities that have benefited from the efforts and accomplishments of Kenneth Eitel, congratulations to both him and his family in being selected as the 2007 Northeast Missouri Livestock Person of the Year and being inducted into the coveted Northeast Missouri Livestock Person of the Year Hall of Fame.