

# for immediate release **NEWS**

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Mary Lou Bradley, Bradley 3 Ranch, (940) 937-6908

## **No easy route**

*B3R wins CAB Commitment to Excellence Award*

The Bradley family has never been one to take the path of least resistance.

That spirit was first illustrated when Minnie Lou (Ottinger) Bradley, family matriarch, headed to Oklahoma State University as the first female animal science student and member of the livestock judging team.

Decades later, daughter Mary Lou left the Bradley 3 Ranch to pursue an accounting career – only to return with the determination it takes to forge a success in the meat business. The B3R Country Meats packing plant was built in nearby Childress, Texas, and Mary Lou was traveling across the country marketing “Beef like ranchers feed their families.”

That resolve to always produce what the customer wants, from the bull buyer to the consumer earned B3R Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) recognition. Minnie Lou, along with Mary Lou and her husband James Henderson, accepted the 2009 Seedstock Commitment to Excellence award at the brand’s annual conference in Scottsdale, Ariz., Sept. 18.

The family has a long history with CAB, first as American Angus Association members who ultimately own the brand and later through B3R Country Meats. In 2004, the plant was licensed as the first *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> (CAB<sup>®</sup>) Natural producer, giving consumers the highest quality choice in that category.

Shortly after Minnie Lou and Bill Bradley were married they bought the first 3,500 acres and ran yearlings on it. In 1958 they purchased their first registered Angus stock and began building to the 12,500 acres and more than 400 cows in place today.

“We are trying to fit the cattle to the environment,” Mary Lou says.

Minnie Lou adds, “You don’t have a customer if he’s not going to make money off your product. So we strive to produce that kind of bull. Not only will he have some longevity to him, but after he gets that cow bred we want that cow to calve easily. Then we want him to just pop and start growing.

“Then, we want an endpoint out of the feedlot where he will marble and finish up,” she says.

They select for fertility by requiring the cows to rebreed in a 60-day window, using DNA as a tool that lets them use several sires per pasture.

“Anything that’s open at preg-check we ship,” James says. “It seems everybody is so worried about quick turnover, but for a commercial guy, there’s nothing that makes him more money than fertility and longevity.”

They lead Texas in the number of Pathfinder cows (21) in the 2009 Association report. That shows they’re committed to fostering good females.

The family has a history of educating their customers.

“Because we had so many years in the meat business and we gave people a lot of information, then drug them through the cooler and made them look at their cattle, we have real sophisticated buyers,” Mary Lou says. “We turned that data into information.”

Looking to the future they say they will continue to place importance on all traits in balance, while being sure they please that ultimate customer.

**END**