

# 2013 Beef Tour Set For Aug. 24 In NE Missouri

**COLUMBIA, MO.**

The 2013 Commercial Ag Beef Tour will be held on Saturday, Aug. 24, in Marion and Lewis counties in northeastern Missouri. The tour begins at Greg and Sue Drebes' Prairie View Farms, 6096 Highway Z, Monroe City, at 12:30 p.m.

The tour will have a "progressive supper" format. At each tour stop, visitors will hear presentations from the owners about their operations and challenges they have faced. Each stop will also feature talks from experts on subjects important to raising and marketing cattle. The tour concludes with a complimentary beef dinner at Terry and Marilyn Little's TL Ranch in Monticello.

The 2013 Beef Tour is the 17th annual tour sponsored by the University of Missouri Extension Commercial Agriculture Program, under the direction of Rex Ricketts. Justin Sexten and Craig Payne worked with MU Extension livestock specialists Zac Erwin and Daniel Mallory to select operations highlighting a variety of production and marketing systems.

Visitors at Greg Drebes' Prairie View Farms will tour his modified open-front building. Drebes will explain how he decided on the design and how well it has worked for his purebred Simmental and Sim x Angus breeding program.

Drebes plans to maintain his herd of 200 purebred cows while continuing to improve the quality. "I am a fanatic on quality," he said.

Mark Lehenbauer, of Lehenbauer Farms in Hannibal, represents the fourth generation to run the family farm since 1959. "My goal is to continue to grow and provide a solid foundation for many generations to come," he said. "We are a diversified family farm focused on innovation, sustainability and profitability."

Lehenbauer's operation includes an Angus-based commercial herd and a confined finishing operation under roof.

Tour attendees will visit John Wood's forage finishing business in Canton. A founding member of US Wellness Meats, Wood grazes cattle in 30- to 45-day grazing cycles using a variety of forages.

He says his greatest challenge is "to be competitive in an era of high-priced grain and to make better use of forages in the winter. Seven-dollar corn changed everything."

Wood advises producers interested in direct marketing to market to their local communities. He prides himself on marketing his beef products on their merits, not by negativity toward producers who use conventional cattle feeding methods.

The final tour stop will be at Terry and Marilyn Little's TL Ranch in Monticello. Terry Little started in the cattle business with his grandfather in the 1950s. Now he is a semi-retired Angus breeder who promotes continued breed improvement.

"The greatest thing to happen in the Angus industry was when open AI began in 1972," said Little. "Before that happened, the popular thought was purebred Angus were a thing of the past."

Now he believes using sexed semen is the prime opportunity for improving the Angus breed or any cow herd in general. "Buy the best cleanup bull you can find," he advises. Having been in the business for more than 50 years, Little provides an interesting perspective.

Visitors will tour the TL Ranch facilities and hear Little and other speakers on the past, present and future of genetic improvement.

A beef dinner will conclude the event at TL Ranch. During dinner, participants will have another opportunity to converse with all the owner/operators and guest speakers.

For more information, contact Zac Erwin at 573-767-5273 or [erwinz@missouri.edu](mailto:erwinz@missouri.edu), or Daniel Mallory at 573-985-3911 or [mallo-ryd@missouri.edu](mailto:mallo-ryd@missouri.edu). △



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