

"The graphics and story development were the reasons this entry was selected as the winner as they really stood out."

- 2019 Iowa Newspaper Association Better Newspaper Contest

Northeast Iowa Farmer



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Regel Boer Goats sees success at shows and sales across the U.S., expanding operation with new barn

When people think of agriculture and farming in Iowa, crops like corn and soybeans and livestock like cattle and pigs come to mind. Northeast of Sumner in Fayette County the family of Joel and Amy Pagel, including their children Carly Parker, Austin, Cassidy and Jenna, has been involved with raising and showing Boer goats since their son Austin was in fifth grade.

In 2012 the family sold their dairy cattle and moved to where their farm is now located and have taken showing and raising Boer goats more seriously since then, and they own and operate Regel Boer Goats. Austin remarked Boer goats were brand new at the local county fair so they started showing goats right away, and the family was familiar with breeding stock in genetics with cattle so they wanted to continue the work with Boer goats.

"We started out with probably 20 does and one buck and now we run anywhere from 150 to 200 goats. It just depends on the time of the year," he added. "A majority of those are recipient does so we utilize embryo transfer, which some people call flushing. Basically we harvest the embryos out of superior donor females and implant those into the recipients which are just average commercial does."

When harvesting embryos from a superior donor, Austin stated the doe could have won a lot of shows or has really good genetics. The Pagels also do invitro fertilization, artificial insemination and normal breeding as well. The gestation of a Boer goat is five months, and once the kids are born they stay with the doe for around three months before being weaned as 12 to 13 weeks of age. The Pagels kid year-round to try and hit the top of the classes at nationals in the junior division. These classes include zero to three months, three to six months and six to nine months.

"You're trying to kid March 1, June 1, Sept. 1 and Dec. 1. In December we kid 11, in March it'll be around 25, but with increasing numbers and putting up the new building we'll be looking to kid out 30 to 40 every three months," he explained.

In caring for the Boer goats, Austin and his family feed them a well-balanced ration they get from an area co-op twice a day along with hay. If the goats are lactating or pregnant they will receive alfalfa hay but when they aren't the goats are fed grass hay. The young kids are fed a creep feed, which is a bagged feed, and it is fed until the animals are nine months old and then they are switched to a 50/50 with the regular ration the other animals eat.

Austin commented they do a lot of dry lots so they feed a lot of hay on their farm and the care or feed does not change from season to season. The change comes based on the stage of life the animals are in including if they are pregnant or not. The Pagels attend many shows and sales throughout the year so they work to condition the goats differently along with looking for different qualities.

"We look for structural correctness so that's looking at the feet and the legs. We're part of the American Boer Goat Association (ABGA) so all of the shows are sanctioned by the ABGA. They do have breed standards so we're trying to follow those as closely as we can but then also put our stamp on it," he explained. "We look for does who are capacious, have big, big feet and legs, big boned and animals that are good headed. Just something that's going to have longevity and animals we like to look at when we're choring daily really. Every farm has their own characteristics and genetics which sets them apart and that's kind of what makes them more desirable when it comes to sales."

There are various qualities Regel Boer Goats looks for

in their animals including something which will compliment the bucks they have on site as they use a lot of bucks they raise on the farm. Austin remarked they rarely purchase outside genetics.

The Pagels used to show in the 4-H shows but Austin commented his sisters have been out for about five years. Now they are participating in regional and national shows and have seen success at the national level. Each June the ABGA holds a national show and this year Regel Boer Goats sold a doe which won junior fullblood doe out of approximately 600 entries in the junior show, and junior means youth.

"We also showed one of our own bucks we raised that was reserve junior national champion buck. We've also exhibited at Louisville and sold goats that just two weeks ago showed there and won their classes," he added.

This January the Pagels will be competing in two major shows including in Denver and Fort Worth. When competing at the state fair they set the goal to always win it and they never have until 2022. Austin explained they took around 12 goats and were awarded overall grand champion fullblood doe, reserve fullblood doe, reserve buck, premier exhibitor and premier breeder. The whole Pagel family was there and the success they saw was with goats they bred and raised on their farm.

Each show will have judges set and announced so they will take different goats depending on who will be judging the show, which Austin stated is half the battle. They feed the goats and work the animals' hair in a specific way to prepare for certain shows months in advance. When working the hair this entails rinsing, shampooing, combing it and blowing the animals out several times each week which takes around 45 minutes each time per animal.

"The big measuring stick is the national show where people from all over the country go. We had a lot of success there so that was a big measuring stick for us every year, competing and doing the best we can," he added. "Aside from our own personal success I like to see our customers have success. I like to see like this spring one of our customers bought a doe from us and it is a very young family where the kids are just getting into 4-H."

"They did all the work themselves as far as clipping, fitting legs and that type of thing and then they took her all the way to be reserve junior fullblood doe at the junior so that was really cool at nationals. You don't see that kind of suc-



Austin, (center), Cassidy and Jenna Pagel with Regel Boer Goats, Hawkeye, proudly display their buck which was named 2022 National Reserve Grand Champion Junior Full-blood Buck in Grand Island, Neb., out of over 900 goats. (Photo submitted)

cess with a young family with the kids being 10, 12 years old and doing the work themselves so that was pretty cool to see."

Being involved in agriculture, what Austin enjoys the most is his family's history because both sides of his family have a rich history with agriculture and farming, primarily in livestock. He commented it's something they really love to continue on and all six members of his immediate family are involved in some facet. Another aspect he enjoys includes the people they meet at the Boer goat shows they see every weekend.

The Pagels are in the process of expanding their operation as a new barn is being constructed on their farm. Austin remarked they should be able to have 60 head of goats to their herd as the building will include five big group pens and five individual pens with runs for the bucks.

"That's two-thirds of the building and the other third will be a kidding room and then a lab where we'll do embryo transfer in, buck collection and washing and clipping. We have a small little office we added too," he stated. "Right now we're in about a dozen sales so we're not raising enough goats to meet the demand for our farm and our genetics."

Around the country Regel Boer Goats is involved with some of the prestigious sales primarily in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio and Iowa. They are in four to five sales in the spring and around six in the fall, and the Pagels have sold goats to Mexico, Thailand, the Philippines and Puerto Rico.

"This fall we've had high selling bucks at the Heat Seekers buck Sale, which is probably the biggest buck sale of the year," remarked Austin. "We have a lot of demand to do custom flushes for customers meaning we'll bring their does in, house them, give them the hormone shots to have the over ovulate, breed them to our bucks and then harvest the embryos. We also do a lot of customer flushes and breedings just to our bucks we've raised here on the farm."

"A lot of our bucks and does are known throughout the country so that's pretty cool our genetics have been in demand. What makes them in demand is going to the shows and doing well, you have to market your own stuff. The shows and sales go hand in hand."



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A Look at Agricultural Law...

By Patrick B. Dillon, Attorney

Disclaimer: Matters discussed in this column are of a general nature and should not be construed as applying to any particular fact pattern. Readers are encouraged to seek legal counsel regarding the issues discussed in this column. No attorney-client relationship is established by this general news article nor should it be taken as legal advice.

FSA, NRCS, NH3, PNK, CCC and now ESG

The ESG is environmental, social and governance reporting. This is a concept adopted by large corporations to set standards for how they operate so their end consumers feel good about doing business with them. This can take lots of different forms, from requiring its vendors to avoid excess printing of documents, adopting diversity and inclusion programs, to commitments to stated goals on energy reduction and consumption of more "green" sources.

The idea is to make great soundbites, build brand loyalties and build a better company. The concerns come in when those goals are not made. Were they even attempted? Or was it all a smoke show? Can a consumer sue for the company not living up to its stated ESG goals or policies? For traded companies, the SEC is going to make rules.

How does it impact ag? Ag provides carbon capture, renewable energy, biofuels and conservation practices which corporate America would love to latch on to and say they were involved with it. Farmers already use production data and soil regeneration techniques which can be quantified and laid in spreadsheets in boardrooms and in talking points.

ESG might frame who these companies deal with. The tell if you will. The end purchase of your product or ser-

vices telling your operation we are not going to do business with you unless you have an aligned ESG program. Sounds a lot like quality assurance programs farmers are already doing. Here is another example, at least one large ag lender has a policy regarding paper use reduction and waste. That will prevent a large litigation firm who notoriously requires paper copies of all documents and pleadings (to increase litigation costs) from ever doing business together. Pay is the other end from tell. Companies may pay producers who adopt ESG policies a premium to ensure a line of products which meet their ESG goals. Really it is no different than a niche marketing premium like organic, waxy corn or food-grade soybeans.

While I don't think it's coming in 2023, farm operations can plan now on the eventual ask or incentive from the companies where its end product lands. A forward-looking ag operation in Northeast Iowa is going to pay attention to Quaker Oats, Tyson, Hormell Cargill and ADM adopt as ESG policies. It probably wouldn't hurt those same operations to look at the ESG policies of the companies they do business with. Are green painted tractors made by a company that shares your views? Are blue planters governed by a corporate mission statement you agree with?



MARK & JANICE WENDLAND, FREDERICKSBURG

Jace Brinkman wins mystery farm contest

Jace Brinkman, Fredericksburg, was the winner drawn for the November mystery farm contest. The contest proved to be a challenge as Brinkman's entry was the only entry submitted. The November mystery farm is owned by Mark and Janice Wendland, Fredericksburg. Brinkman has won a \$25 gift card to Norby's Farm Fleet.

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