

A Cattlemen's Road to Success

Alyssa Scholz

"Work hard in silence and let your success be the noise." This famous quote echoes the work ethic of a unique individual living in western Nebraska. Steve Scholz is a brand built on hard work, honesty, integrity and determination. His commitment to his business, his employees and the agriculture industry as a whole is a unique characteristic that sets his lifestyle apart from every other cattle producer in the nation.

No shortcuts were taken on this cattleman's road to success. Steve grew up in the sandhills on a small ranch and dairy farm. As the oldest of four children, Steve started operating equipment on the family farm at the age of eight. He finished his animal science degree at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and started his herd with a few Red Angus cows from Montana. After college he started his career working at a small feedlot. This encompassed his love for cattle but when he was offered a position at a feed mill, he jumped at the opportunity to use his Animal Nutrition education. His knowledge of feeding cattle and honest demeanor towards other people set him apart at this job. As time progressed he began to miss working around cattle. Steve decided to continue his journey at a different feedlot in Wallace Nebraska, managing an entire yard. After five years there, he decided it was time to shoot for the stars and start his own business. In the small town of Stapleton Nebraska, Scholz bought an empty 5,000 head capacity feedyard. Through many years of obstacles, he grew this yard to its current status of 40,000 head.

Each employee or friend of Steve's can speak of his brilliance and determination. In an informal interview one employee compared Steve to an ant. When asked why, he responded with a laugh and a simple question, "What happens when you put your foot in front of an ant?" He paused, then answered, "The ant goes around it. What happens when you put your foot in front of it again? The insect goes a different direction." The anonymous employee continues to reflect on this, "Steve never quits when faced with an obstacle. He inspires all of us to keep striving for a solution, and it is such a blessing to work and learn from a man like that."

Steve leads by example in all that he pursues. All of his employees can attest that even as CEO, he is at the yard the earliest and the latest, seven days a week, three hundred and sixty-five days a year. Steve can be seen doing the dirtiest of the dirty work around the yard, setting a phenomenal example of what it means to be a true leader to his employees.

Many people say that the only way to do great work, is to love what you do. Scholz's passion for cattle can be seen from the moment you step onto the yard. "Since the day he started walking, Steve has been interested in cattle." His father Marvin reminisces on the early moments of his son's passion. "When he was two years old we bought a new automatic pickup, I stepped out to feed the cows and he crawled into the driver seat. Before I knew what was happening, he had pulled the lever down into drive and started steering it around to look at the cattle." And the rest is history. His career has overflowed into a lifestyle and encompasses Scholz's outlook on maintaining the current wellbeing of his employees and preparing life for the future generations.

As a cattleman, a friend, a son, a brother, a husband, a father and an uncle, Steve Scholz is a one-of-a-kind individual. Just as his cattle brand shows, love truly does flow through everything he pursues.