

The Next Generation of Cattle Breeders

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The Oklahoma Youth Expo Futurity Sale and Show continues to be an event blending cattle genetics with young exhibitors. This year's event saw breeders, exhibitors, and industry professionals come together to share a passion for cattle, competition, and the future of the Oklahoma livestock industry.

Lomega High School freshman Chloe Golbek, an exhibitor in the OYE Futurity Sale and Show, said the sale holds a deep significance to her.

Golbek has shown livestock since third grade, but she transitioned from pigs to cattle by the time she reached the seventh grade.

She is now a seasoned exhibitor who has used the OYE Futurity Sale as an opportunity to continue to build her show string, Golbek said.

"The futurity sale is how I got my first steer," Golbek said. "We keep coming back year after year, looking at the livestock, and we have been able to find quality animals that have helped us earn success in the ring."

This year, Golbek showcased her steer named Maverick, which was a purchase from a previous sale.

Preparing him was no small task, she said as, it required dedication and consistency daily.

"He was a calm steer, but he was terrified of my dog," she said with a laugh.

The heifer ring has caught her interest now, Golbek added. Her experience in the steer division holds value, she said, and credits the sale for continuing to help her grow as a showman and cattlegirl.

“Every year, I learned something new about what makes a good show animal,” Golbek said. “It’s not just about how they look. It is also about how they move. The breeders at the sale take the time to explain their breeding programs, and that’s helped me understand cattle genetics better.”

Aspyn Dunsford and Jackson Ray, breeders who participated in the 2025 OYE Futurity Sale, understand the importance of offering quality cattle to meet the needs of young showmen. Breeders play a crucial role in the OYE Futurity Sale, providing top-tier cattle for the exhibitors, Dunsford said.

Dunsford, who partnered with TTT Cattle from Texas, always sees the importance of the selection process, she said.

“We focus on bringing cattle that would be a good fit for Oklahoma exhibitors,” Dunsford said. “We wanted structurally correct, well-balanced animals that would excel in the show ring.”

Ray, owner of 360 Angus, is a breeder specializing in purebred Angus cattle.

“Structural correctness is our biggest priority,” Ray said. “I like my cattle to have power and good movement, and for the futurity sale, we ensure they’re well-prepared so young exhibitors can handle them with confidence.”

Dunsford and Ray both said a growing trend exists in the number of first-time buyers and young exhibitors.

“The OYE Futurity sale makes it easy for newcomers to get started,” Dunsford said. “They can see what’s available, talk to breeders, and make informed decisions about their purchases.”

Ensuring the OYE Futurity Sale was a success were individuals like Colton Pratz, who played an extensive role in coordinating the event, he said.

“My job is to manage the sale, coordinate logistics, secure sponsorships, and make sure breeders and exhibitors have everything they need,” said Pratz, Director of Association Marketing and Cowman Editor.

One of the biggest challenges is balancing the multiple moving parts, Pratz added.

“We have to ensure high-quality cattle are available, keep communication flowing between breeders and exhibitors, and make sure the sale runs on schedule,” Pratz said.

Despite the challenges, Pratz finds fulfillment in watching young exhibitors grow and succeed, he said.

Young exhibitors gaining confidence and developing their skills is the best part, Pratz said. The OYE Futurity Sale is not just about selling cattle but more about investing in the future of agriculture, he added.

The OYE Futurity Sale and Show will always be more than a marketplace Ray said because it provides a stepping stone for young cattlemen and women. The event helps foster relationships between a seasoned breeder and an aspiring exhibitor, Ray said. The important thing is to ensure the knowledge and experiences are passed down to the next generation, he added.

The sale helped Golbek understand the hard work that goes into cattle breeding and selection, she said.

“Talking to breeders and learning how they raise their cattle has taught me so much,” Golbek said. “It is about more than just showing – it’s about understanding the industry.”

The sale has introduced Golbek to mentors in the industry, she said.

“I have met so many people who are willing to help and give advice,” Golbek said. “It is a great place to learn and grow.”

Breeders like Ray recognize the OYE Futurity Sale as an opportunity to mentor young cattle enthusiasts, he said.

“You have to love what you do, and if are not excited to go to the barn every morning, this is not the business for you,” Ray said. “We are not just raising show cattle – we are helping raise kids by teaching them responsibility, dedication and the value of hard work.”

Breeders like Dunsford and Ray said the OYE Futurity Sale continues to grow and influence the future of Oklahoma’s cattle industry.

With the added incentives and the quality of cattle entering the sale, upcoming inspiring industry leaders will elevate it to new heights in the coming years, Dunsford said.

“The sky’s the limit,” Ray said. “With the right focus on quality and youth involvement, this sale has the potential to be one of the best in the country.”

For those looking to get involved, the advice is simple from Dunsford: Ask questions, build relationships, and be willing to put in the work.

“Most breeders are more than happy to help – it is just about having the confidence to reach out and learn,” Dunsford said.

With each sale, Oklahoma’s youth are gaining more than just cattle, Ray said

“These exhibitors are gaining the skills, knowledge, and connections to carry the industry forward for generations to come,” Ray added.

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