

OLSON LAND AND CATTLE, BARN #8

Hereford Texas

Most people don't have Hereford, Texas, on their vacation bucket list. A feedyard town in West Texas, surrounded by wind turbines, it's not a traditional tourist destination. Yet many of the world's most prominent chefs have made their way to an Angus ranch just outside Hereford city limits. The cattle graze green grass (when the rain cooperates) and are tended by caring hands.





What sets this place apart is, the people who raise them think all should know where their beef comes from. That's why Steve and Ginger Olson open their gates, their kitchen and barn door to curious minds.

"We've been blessed to have the opportunity to be a part of production agriculture, to live on the land, to raise our family, to take care of God's resources, and to interact with other people and share with them what it's like to be here and to do this," Steve says.

No tour of Olson Land and Cattle is complete without a key stop.

"This barn is the essence of what we do," he says. "It is the centerpiece — where we work cattle together as a family."

A newer addition to the ranch, it was built with care for the cattle and people. The pens, alleys and chute that flow in and out of the barn are crafted from the ideologies of leading animal welfare expert Temple Grandin. It keeps the elements of Texas weather outside when the animals need extra attention. The place looks different from the land Steve's ancestors cultivated, but the third generation to tend the land his family homesteaded, he won't be the last. What may appear as simple fencing upgrades and new water sprinklers and ponds fade into the normal scenery. However, each is placed with strategy, coordinating what is best for the land and will use the least amount of natural resources.

The seven Olson grandchildren can be found throughout the pastures doing chores (some with years enough to help, others just there to learn).

"Pa, are you going to have enough land for all seven of us?" the youngest questions his grandfather. "I didn't know that was my assignment!" Steve replies in jest.

But each investment in the livestock and land is mindful of the future for his children and the environment.

"Sustainability is really about four segments in my mind, the first one being taking care of the animals that are on the ranch," Steve says. "Their welfare as far as health, nutrition, and all of the elements they need to be comfortable."



“The second part is taking care of the land natural resources that God gave us. Not overgrazing but continuing to nurture and conserve the water resources and utilize those products with good stewardship. “The third is taking care of the people. People are family and how we treat each other and certainly the people that work for us, their time here needs to be one that’s good for them and also their financial wellbeing. “The fourth part of that in my mind is it takes a profit to maintain all of these things and to keep it going, and the *Certified Angus Beef*® brand has helped us to do that.”

His vision for a ranch that accomplishes all these tasks paints a picture of a destination all can put on our lists.

