

## Burke Cattle Proven In The Show Ring And In The Field

Father and son, Ed and Tim Burke, of Genoa, Nebraska, have established their purebred Maine-Anjou beef herd in show rings across the United States.

The Vigortone program has been beneficial to the Burke operation. ***“Our conception rate went up 15 to 20 percent, and the only thing we did differently was add the Cattle Breeder mineral,”*** comments Tim.

Adequate supplementation is essential in the area where the ranch is located. Just 5 miles north of the Platte River and 3 miles south of the Loop River, the Burke pastures are similar to Sandhills grass. Explains Tim, ***“The grass around here takes a little longer to spruce up. I’ve played around with some different minerals, and I know this is working. There are lots of competitive minerals out there, but I prefer Vigortone.”*** Tim and Ed believe there are well over 100 different kinds of grass in their pastures and that it takes a full year to replenish the pastures. Specific rotation and conservation measures are taken to protect their forages.

Approximately 300 cows and 100 replacement heifers are backgrounded each year. After breeding, half of the heifers will be sold. Cows will be moved to dry lot during calving.

Cattle receive Vigortone mineral year round. **Vigortone Cattle Breeder (CTC)** with amino acid chelates is fed in the spring and winter during breeding and calving season. The Cattle Breeder mineral is sometimes also used in the total mixed ration for bulls. **Vigortone 32SCTC Plus** is offered during and summer and fall grazing.

Tim purchased the base of the Maine Anjou herd from a producer in Canada several years ago. He has spent the past few years showing cattle to establish the genetics. Honors include four bulls of the year, reserve champion in Kansas City, champion in Denver, and state fair premiere exhibitor in 2000.

A significant amount of breeding is done through artificial insemination. Some embryo transfer work is



One of the Burkes' prize-winning Maine-Anjous.

done if recip cows are available. Some semen will be sold and traded with other breeders.

Cattle are marketed primarily through two sales each year — a steer sale in October and a heifer sale in November, both held at the Burke ranch. The year 2002 will mark the 12th year of the steer sale and the 5th year of the heifer sale.

Bulls will be weaned in the 500-pound range in September and will weigh 900-1,000 pounds in May. Bulls are on a roughage diet and given some corn as well as Vigortone mineral. Tim adds that he AI's for steers and does not sell steer-bulls.

The bull program has been successful. ***“I don't want them to melt when they leave here. Everyone that buys a bull comes back. Everything is sold with an unconditional guarantee for the first year,”*** says Tim.

In addition to the results he has seen with Vigortone, Tim appreciates the customer service he receives as a Vigortone customer. ***“Honestly, service is what I've been happiest with. Our area sales manager does a good job. We could go a lot of places and probably spend less, but I know the service from Vigortone will always be better. Customer service probably carries more than the value of the mineral. I think it's a good product. If I didn't, I'd tell you,”*** says Tim.