

THE SUN **YUMA** AND REGION

## The Reference

**Local cattle breeder named to hall of fame**

By JOYCE CHRISTIE  
The Yuma Daily Sun

"Really surprised" was Yuma area Brangus breeder Alex Dees' modest reaction to being selected recently for induction into the Heart of America Brangus Breeders Hall of Fame.

With the induction, he joins a prestigious group: the very top people nationwide in Brangus breeding. Started in 1976, the hall of fame now has 13 members. That is out of 6,000 members of the International Brangus Breeders Association.

The induction was a double honor because he was selected along with pioneer Texas breeder Jim Eller, "a good friend ... very successful in agriculture and cattle," Dees said. "I think it's great."

He also was following another early-day Yuma area Brangus breeder, Floyd Newcomer, with whom Dees got his start in the Brangus breeding business in 1960. Newcomer, owner of the Yuma Valley Cattle Co., was the only other Yuman ever named to the hall of fame.

One of 16 children raised on a family farm near Yuma, Dees acknowledged he might be considered a pioneer in Brangus breeding too. While in high school in the mid-1950s, he already was excelling in showing cattle. Twice he won the showmanship championship at the Yuma County Fair.

After a 2½-year stint at Arizona State University, he returned to Yuma and worked for a time at a local dairy — until he had a visit from Newcomer. Newcomer, who had

kept track of Dees throughout high school, hired him on as herdsman.

While with Yuma Valley Cattle Co., Dees helped develop the "Black Duke" Brangus bloodline and showed cattle for the operation.

Dees moved up the ladder quickly, being named ranch manager for Newcomer in 1965. Shortly thereafter, Newcomer died and Dees took over complete management of the herd for new owner John Todd of Tucson.

Dees returned to the family farm in 1970 and began his own registered Brangus operation. He built his herd around the "Black Duke" bloodline and concentrated on showing competition.

Today, he operates a 250-acre ranch, Dees Brothers Brangus, near Bard where he runs 200 head of breeding stock. He is a key

person in all major livestock shows in the Southwest.

Currently a director of the Southern Arizona International Livestock Show, he helps with local and state youth groups. A past six-year member of the International Brangus Breeders Association, he has also served on numerous committees.

Eller of Bryan, Texas, is considered an innovative and active leader in the Brangus breed. He is co-owner and senior vice president of Granada Corp., one of the world's largest agricultural service organizations which operates in several locations in the United States and throughout the world.

The organization specializes in improvement of food and protein production through the use of genetic engineering and biotechnology.



DEES