

Jean Rotta - 2004

The San Luis Obispo County CattleWomen is pleased to announce longtime rancher and devoted beef industry advocate Jean Rotta as the 2003 CattleWoman of the Year. Without question, Jean has served as an instrumental member to the CattleWomen organization for over 30 years and is more than deserving of this award.

Together with her sister, Darlene, the two work as managing partners of the Rotta Ranch, a family owned and operated cattle operation in the Huasna Valley, 15 miles southeast of Arroyo Grande. Here at the 2,000-acre ranch, Jean and Darlene specialize in the sale of Angus range bulls for various customers throughout the Central Coast. Jean has now lived at the ranch for a total of 51 years.

Born in Santa Barbara, Jean was raised on her parent's dairy farm in Santa Maria, raising calves and participating in the 4-H Club at a young age. In her mid-teens, the family sold the dairy farm and relocated to the Huasna ranch, where they first became involved in crossbred Herefords and later Black Angus beef cattle. The family has now operated in the sale of Angus bulls for over 50 years.

In many ways, Jean has served a pioneer for women in agriculture. In 1956, she attended Cal Poly San Luis Obispo as part of the first co-ed class ever admitted to the college – later receiving her bachelor's degree in animal husbandry. In 1976, she was also among the first class of women to participate in the renowned two-year California Agricultural Leadership Program.

A former president of the SLO County CattleWomen (1975-1976), Jean has been an active member for over 30 years, serving as a director numerous times and assisting in countless committees. Currently, she is president to the San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau's Range Improvement Association.

Jean jokingly says that her family hasn't yet been able to "get rid" of her because of her unwavering love for the ranching lifestyle. The San Luis Obispo County CattleWomen thank you, Jean, for your many years of dedication and service for the organization as well as the beef industry.