

MARLIN R. BERG



Marlin first became interested in livestock at a young age at his home farm in Willmar. During his high school years he became involved in 4-H and FFA with formal agricultural education at Willmar High School. He was active in livestock, meats and Parli Pro and speaking contests earning a State Farmer Degree. He continued his livestock education at the University of Minnesota and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education in 1959. While pursuing his career as Vocation Agriculture Instructor he received his Master of Science degree in Agriculture Education at South Dakota State University in 1968.

In 1959 Marlin was hired to teach high school agriculture education at Jasper and he taught there for six years. During his time there, the chapter grew to include a membership of 62 and had many judging teams dealing with livestock and meats at the district and state level, including two state winning teams. He also initiated a boar sale for the FFA members and was instrumental in starting a FFA livestock competition for Pipestone County FFA members.

In 1965 Marlin started teaching in a one man agricultural department in Pipestone, which eventually grew to a four person department. The Pipestone FFA was very active during this time with some years having a total over 100 members. His goal was to develop and promote agriculture, and to develop leadership skills that would help students lead productive careers. 85% of his high school students are involved in agriculture; 50% in farming and 35% in agri-business. Some of the special awards that occurred during Marlin's tenure include: 17 American Degrees, State Star Agri Business and Star Farmer, 140 State Degree winners, National Crop Proficiency winner, 22 State Proficiency winners, four state officers (including 2 presidents), three Regional presidents, six District presidents, National Chapter Awards, State Safety Winner, BOAC and Triple Crown and State Fair Chapter Premier Beef and Sheep Awards.

Marlin has been involved in many community activities including the Pipestone Area Chamber of Commerce, Jasper Civic Club, Pipestone County Fair Board and since retirement volunteer work for the Pipestone FFA and Pipestone County Extension Service. State and national activities include MVAIA member and director, FFA Foundation, FFA board of directors, Minnesota State Fair beef superintendent, state Vo-Ag Curriculum Committee and National FFA Meats Judging Committee. Agriculture related organizations include MN Suffolk Sheep Association, Assistant manager National Jr. Suffolk show, National Lamb Show Co. manager and North Central Wool Growers Board member.

He has received numerous awards from the Pipestone and Jasper FFA chapters including Award of Excellence, Honorary Farmer Degree and Certificates of Appreciation. State and national awards include Honorary American FFA degree, State FFA degree, MVAIA teacher of the Year, MVA Teacher of the Year, Block and Bridle Honorary Award, and WCCO Good Neighbor Award.

Marlin credits his family for much of his success sharing time on evenings and weekends and giving encouragement and support. All of his children; Barbara, Philip, Daniel and Daryl were active in 4-H and FFA, competing on several judging teams, members of state winning Meats judging teams and officers in the local FFA. The Berg family has developed a purebred Suffolk sheep flock, been a part of the North Star Bred Ewe sale for the past 35 years and has sold animals to many states. He and his son, Philip, also breed Red Angus cattle and have been premier exhibitor and breeder the past two years at the Minnesota State Fair.

Because of his many years of service to agriculture and FFA the greatest reward that Marlin has received is to watch the many FFA students grow to adulthood to pursue careers in agriculture, many involving livestock production. He states that it's not often that you're able to have a career that fulfills two of your life's goals; the development of leadership skills of youth and the involvement and promotion of quality livestock.