



## Robert Fred Christensen

Dec. 4, 1932 - Dec. 29, 2008

Robert Fred Christensen, the second of five children of John Fred and Gladys Veronica (Miller) Christensen, was born Dec. 4, 1932, in College Springs, IA. He graduated from Amity High School, College Springs, in 1950, where he participated in basketball, football, baseball, FFA, band and vocal music. A standout high school basketball player, Bob turned down the opportunity to play college basketball at Iowa State University to pursue a career in farming.

As a youth, he was also active in 4-H and served as the Iowa Boys' State 4-H Vice-President, was a state 4-H leadership award winner and attended National 4-H Camp. Following graduation, he farmed, served as a 4-H leader, and was a football and basketball referee.

Bob met Naomi Chamberlain at the Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H livestock show, Omaha, during high school. They married on June 28, 1953, and celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary in June, 2008. The Christensens moved to a farm near Strahan, in 1961. For 45 years, Bob was a self-employed farmer and livestock producer whose goal was to conserve and improve the land upon which he and his family made their living. His son, Doug, joined the farming operation in 1976.

Bob was named 1968 Farm Manager of the Year by the Iowa State University Ag-Business Club, 1980 Iowa Seedstock Producer of the Year by the Iowa Beef Breeds Council, and 1983 Iowa Master Farmer by Wallace Farmer Magazine. Bob and Naomi were the Omaha Kiwanis Club's Outstanding Farm Family in 1989. The Christensens had a farrow-to-finish hog operation, and Bob was a recipient of the Mills County Master Pork Producer Award.

He was a charter member of both the Iowa and American Simmental Associations. Bob's life-long passion was his herd of Simmental cattle. He helped organize the Iowa Simmental Association in 1970 and served as its executive secretary-treasurer for 34 years, managing the state Simmental sale for many years and, also, the national Simmental sale in 1978. The Iowa Simmental Association honored Bob and Naomi with the inaugural Christensen Elite Award in 1981, named in their honor, which has been awarded annually. Bob was also the recipient of the Switzerland-based World Simmental Federation Golden Book Award, the highest honor given by the American Simmental Association through its membership in the Federation.

Bob was a 4-H leader for 40 years and inducted into the Iowa 4-H Hall of Fame in 2003. He also served as a trustee on the Iowa 4-H Foundation and on the Iowa State University Extension Advisory Committee.

In Mills County, he served on the Extension Council and Youth Committee, as county fair beef superintendent, was a 32-year member of the Fair Board and a leader of the Mills County 4-H Teen Club. Bob also served on the Farmers Home Administration, ASCS Committee and the Nishna Valley School Board, including two years as president. He helped organize and was a charter member of the Southwest Iowa Farm Business Association and served as chairperson of the State Farm Business Council for two years.

Bob was a member of the United Methodist Church for 64 years, having

joined the College Springs Methodist Church at age 12, the Strahan Methodist Church in 1961, and became an associate member of the Salem United Methodist Church, Council Bluffs, in 2005. He served the church at Strahan as a choir member, lay leader, chairperson of administrative council, trustees chairperson, and leader of the United Methodist Youth Fellowship. In 1980, Bob secured cattle for the Heifer International Project for South Dakota Native Americans.

Bob and Naomi retired from farming in 2005 and moved to Risen Son Christian Village, Council Bluffs. Bob died there on Dec. 29, 2008, having reached the age of 76 years and 25 days. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Survivors include his wife, Naomi, Council Bluffs; son, Doug (Lynn) Christensen, Hastings; daughter, Donna Christensen-Mores (Alan Mores), Harlan; grandchildren Seth (Sally) Christensen, Council Bluffs; Bryce (Krista) Christensen, West Des Moines; Gregg Christensen, St. Louis, MO; Jackson Mores and Chandler Mores, Harlan; great-grandsons Tyler, Nate, Luke and Cole Christensen; sisters Corrine (Dave) Williams, Villisca; Shirley Herzberg, Clarinda; Janice (Berle) Decker, Omaha; Diane (Keith) Messinger, Waterloo; as well as many nieces, nephews, other family members and friends.

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