YT Cattle Company: Purpose, Perseverance, and Pride in the Land

When Aaron White talks about his farm, there's a quiet pride in his voice — not just for what he's built, but for *how* he's built it. "Everything we do has a purpose behind it," he says. At YT Cattle Company in Carlisle, Iowa, that purpose is simple but powerful: *doing things the right way, not just the easy way.*

Aaron runs a diversified operation raising corn, soybeans, hay, and a cow/calf herd that he and his family finish out themselves. The work keeps them busy year-round, but he enjoys the balance between crops and livestock. "It's a rhythm," he says, "and it keeps you grounded."



That sense of discipline and purpose took root long before farming. From 2001 to 2005, Aaron served in the U.S. Marine Corps as an infantry machine gunner, including a deployment to Afghanistan in 2004. "I joined because I wanted to serve my country and be part of something bigger than myself," he shares. "It was challenging, but it shaped who I am today."

For Aaron, being a veteran farmer means taking the discipline, grit, and sense of purpose he learned in the Marines and applying it to the land. "It's another way of serving — building a future for my family and being a good steward of what we've been given."

After leaving the military, Aaron earned a degree in elementary education from Simpson College and spent several years teaching before feeling the familiar pull back to agriculture. "Eventually, I went from teaching—to teaching and farming—to farming full time," he says. "It just felt right." In 2012, starting with just twelve cow/calf pairs, he built YT Cattle Company from the ground up with the support of mentors and his father-in-law.

"I'd love to say our farm has been in the family for generations," Aaron admits, "but ours is unique — we built it ourselves. Farming became my responsibility — to create our own family farm."

He's driven by the small, rewarding moments such as a healthy calf in the pasture, a strong harvest, green cover crops in November. Those moments remind him why the work matters. "My motivation comes from my family," he says. "And from knowing that every decision we make helps build something better for the next generation."



Sustainability and stewardship are at the heart of YT Cattle Company. Aaron is constantly looking for ways to make the farm more efficient while improving soil health and conserving resources. He's also passionate about connecting with customers through his home-raised beef. "It's the best way to see what we're about," he says. "The quality and flavor come from the care we put into raising our cattle the right way."

For Aaron, Iowa agriculture is as much about community as it is about production. "People here take pride in their work and are always willing to lend a hand," he says. He stays active with local ag and veteran farmer networks, sharing ideas and learning from others.

Looking ahead, Aaron hopes to continue expanding direct beef sales, integrating new technology, and passing on the values of hard work and stewardship to his children. "My goal is to leave the land better than I found it," he says. "That's what it's all about — building something that lasts."

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