

# Teen raises steer with plans to donate meat to food bank

By **DICK MASON**  
*The Observer*

SUMMERVILLE — The Northeast Oregon Regional Food Bank is set to receive a one-of-a-kind 1,200-pound bonus thanks to the generosity of an Imbler High School senior.

Tel McBride is raising a steer for his senior project and plans to donate all of the meat from it to the Northeast Oregon Regional Food Bank, which is operated by Community Connection of Northeast Oregon. McBride said he wants to make beef available to those in need because the price of meat has gotten so high during the past year.

Audrey Smith, manager of the Northeast Oregon Regional Food Bank, is delighted about the prospect of receiving meat from the steer.

“Beef is our No. 1 requested item,” she said.

Unfortunately, the Northeast Oregon Regional Food Bank rarely can provide beef because the cost makes it prohibitive. Smith said in the five years she has been manager of the Northeast Oregon Regional Food Bank, it has been able to offer beef only a couple of times.

Smith is McBride’s mentor for his senior project and said she is impressed by the steps he has taken to make sure the meat from the steer will be able to be distributed by the food bank. The Imbler senior is ensuring the meat processing company is properly certified so the meat meets government health standards for public distribution.

The steer is one of five McBride is now raising and among about 30 he has raised altogether.

McBride started raising cattle at his family’s home more than a decade ago. He stopped for a few years and then started raising cattle again in 2017. He said raising cattle is a process of perpetual discovery.

“It is fun. Every day I



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Tel McBride stands with his cattle at a Summerville ranch.

learn something new about them,” he said.

McBride, whose mother, Susy, works for Community Connection of Northeast Oregon, added cattle can be unpredictable.

McBride said when cattle make up their mind to do something they are hard to stop.

“If they want to go somewhere they will go there,” he said.

McBride’s interest in cattle dates back 15 years when he was visiting a ranch in North Powder run by Butch Mascall, who offered a free calf to him if he could lasso the animal.

“I lassoed it on my first try,” he said.

McBride’s family took the calf home and proceeded

to help raise it. McBride went on to raise more cattle, while receiving guidance from Mascall and former La Grande Police Chief John Courtney.

McBride plans to sell off his cattle after graduating from high school so he can have a chance to attend a school in Hermiston for railroad conducting. After graduating from there he plans to pursue a career in railroads.

He will be following the lead of his father, Kevin, who works for Union Pacific Railroad.

McBride said that he will likely return someday after high school to again raise cattle at some level because it is in his blood.

“It is something I really enjoy,” he said.



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