



**Y**ou can always tell within the first hour of meeting someone what they find more important in their lives. For some it is money, for others it is material items or fame. That was not the case when I went to visit the Texas MadBucks group. Within the first hour, I was not only greeted by ranch manager, John Oncken, waving at me from the front porch as I drove up, but was also greeted by 3 generations of the Madison family: Mark and Judy Madison (Jeff's parents), Jeff and Ashley Madison (owners of Texas MadBucks Ranch), their 2 daughters Montgomery and Merrill and 2 sons J Paul and Henry. You could feel their joy and happiness for life and all of the blessings around them. I knew this group wasn't one that took things for granted and it was easy to see that the most important thing in their lives was family. They welcomed me like I was one of their own with everything from hugs and laughs, to a homemade buttermilk pie. Where I come from, homemade buttermilk pie is a staple item to any gathering and is hard to beat. As the group was planning our route for the ranch tour, Judy, Jeff Madison's mother, began telling me a story about how the Texas MadBucks Ranch was started.

*"God works in mysterious ways and his timing might not always be what we want it to be... but it is always right if you have faith in Him."*







Mark Madison, Jeff's father, dreamed his whole life of having land and running his own herd of Black Angus. Though he tried in every way possible to make this happen, his job included too much travel and his dream had to be put on hold. With very few people knowing about this dream, Judy continued to pray for God to somehow make Mark's dream come true. When it was time for Mark to retire, he and Judy put their heads together to plan out their future. Little did Mark know, his son Jeff was about to make a phone call that would change his life. Jeff was looking into buying land to get started in the deer and exotic world but he wanted to keep it in the Madison family. While Jeff was mostly just looking for some help from his father, he had no idea that he had just made his father's dreams come true. Through that phone call, Jeff asked Mark if he would be willing to live on the ranch, help watch over the upcoming deer and exotic herd, and even run his own Black Angus herd if he wanted. I bet you can guess the answer to that offer. To this day, Jeff's parents, Mark and Judy still live on the ranch and help oversee the operation's daily tasks. The moral of this story and the point that Judy wanted to get across to me was that, "God works in mysterious ways and his timing might not always be what we want it to be but it is always right if you have faith in Him." You could tell by looking around the room, that everyone believed that and trusted it 100%.



## Featured Breeder - Texas MadBucks



Speaking of the people in the room, have you ever met 2 men that worked together, joked together and laughed together like they could be brothers? That's the best way to describe Jeff Madison and John Oncken. When a ranch gets started, one of the most important parts to a successful future is the partnership between the ranch owner and the ranch manager. Jeff and John's families have 1 major activity in common, sports. Coaching their kids' baseball, softball and football teams is how Jeff and John first met. From there, they continued to coach their kids as they progressed through school. John even made sure to tell me that he still goes out and runs wind sprints with his kids...this has yet to be proven. Through their bond of coaching, they realized that they both had a common goal, to become successful in anything they put their minds to. With hard work and long hours, these 2 have created an impressive ranch that they can be proud of. Plus, just by the look on their faces as we toured the ranch, you could tell they both love what they do.





## Featured Breeder - Texas MadBucks

Back in 2015, it was a big year for the Texas MadBucks crew as they embarked on their journey to enter into the deer industry. As they built a strong team, each of them had one common goal in mind; to get wide! Through a consistent nutrition program and taking an “eyes on/hands on” approach to illness prevention, they were on their way to growing big deer on a top-notch ranch that they could be proud of. When asked about mentors, Jeff was proud to say that Cleon Almond (High, Wide & Heavy) played a huge part in helping them get started on the right path. Originally, Jeff was looking for stocker bucks when he found Cleon. Soon he realized that Cleon was full of knowledge and had the genetics that Jeff was searching for. Ask any deer breeder and they will tell you that having the right tools in the beginning will help prevent issues later on.

4 years later and the Texas MadBucks crew is going strong. They are currently producing anywhere from 125 to 150 fawns per year with the help of Paco, their helper in the pens, and they still stick with their “eyes on/hands on” approach. As their goals continue and their knowledge for pedigrees grows, they have now taken on a new goal. They want to grow the biggest, widest deer out there so that “their stockers become your breeders”. With that goal in mind and a top-notch facility, lodge and experience, the Texas MadBucks ranch is rising to the top!

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