



International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF): January Spotlight

Developed by the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB) in recognition of the International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF)

Written by Karley Williams

Meredith Ellis | *Carrying Legacy Forward*

As the world recognizes 2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF), USRSB continues its monthly spotlight series celebrating the women shaping agriculture across the United States.

This month, USRSB is proud to highlight Meredith Ellis, co-operator of G Bar C Ranch in Rosston, Texas. With a guiding motto centered on raising high-quality cattle while putting the environment first, Meredith represents a growing generation of ranchers working at the intersection of production and conservation.

Legacy Across the Land

G Bar C Ranch began in 1982 after Meredith's father, GC Ellis, set out to start a ranch grounded in stewardship and long-term vision. After extensively searching for the right land, a journey that wore out two pickup trucks, the family began what started as a 450-acre operation.

Today, that original vision has grown into more than 3,000 acres. As GC's daughter, Meredith embodies the continuation of that dream while bringing her own perspective and leadership to the operation. For her, ranching has always been less about ownership and more about responsibility to the land, livestock, and generations that follow her.

Perspective and Purpose

Meredith's journey included time away from the ranch as she studied landscape architecture and sustainability at the University of New Mexico. Immersed in systems thinking and ecological design, she began to view landscapes through a broader lens of function and resilience.

During her time there, Meredith quickly realized the principles she was studying in classrooms closely mirrored the practices unfolding at home on the ranch. That moment of alignment reshaped her trajectory, prompting a return to G Bar C Ranch with renewed purpose and a desire to expand upon her family's legacy through science-informed stewardship.

“The most important thing I could possibly do to help this planet was to return home, learn from my dad, continue his legacy and care for the land. So, I became a rancher,” Meredith shares.

Learning and Collaboration

Meredith’s leadership extends beyond daily ranch responsibilities into broader industry engagement and partnership.

Her work includes active involvement with organizations such as the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Noble Research Institute, Texas A&M University, the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, and Integrity Beef Alliance.

Through research trials, ranch tours, internships and collaborative projects, including sustainability pilot efforts with McDonald’s, these partnerships continue to advance both ranch-level outcomes and industry-wide learning.

Meredith credits collaboration as a defining strength of agriculture.

“I have yet to meet someone who has not offered some kernel of profound insight into something in my operation,” she reflects, underscoring the value of shared knowledge across the industry.

Women in Agriculture: Then and Now

Throughout her career, Meredith has witnessed a continued shift in how women participate and lead within agriculture. She believes modern ranching creates space for diverse leadership styles, experiences and approaches.

Rather than conforming to expectations, Meredith encourages young women to trust themselves and embrace authenticity in their agricultural journeys.

“I truly don’t fit into any rancher stereotypical role,” she says. “Ranching is not about adopting a specific role but being empowered to be yourself and trust yourself.”

Her advice reflects a mindset shaped by experimentation and growth.

“Don’t be afraid of making mistakes,” Meredith shares. “Think of ranching as painting a picture with broad brush strokes, up close it may look imperfect, but when you zoom out the view is spectacular.”

What the Ranch Teaches

Life on G Bar C Ranch reflects the dynamic nature of agriculture.

“There are no typical days for a rancher,” she says. “Some days I’m waist-deep in the creek fixing water gaps. Other days I’m behind the computer doing paperwork.”

At its core, she believes ranching is about adaptability.

“We’re not experts at anything except problem solving and teamwork,” Meredith says.

Meredith’s story reflects the evolving identity of agriculture, where production, stewardship, research and community engagement are increasingly interconnected.

Her stewardship at G Bar C Ranch demonstrates how curiosity and respect for natural systems can shape resilient operations and meaningful impact beyond the ranch gate. Above all, the opportunity to build a foundation for her son, much like her father did for her, provides enduring purpose and inspiration.

Continuing the Story

As USRSB continues its International Year of the Woman Farmer spotlight series, stories like Meredith’s remind us that women in agriculture are not only sustaining operations but also advancing innovation, strengthening communities and redefining leadership across the industry.

Farming and ranching remain more than occupations. They are legacies carried forward through people, purpose and the land itself.