

INTERNATIONAL

Angus Opportunities Take Off

Third-party funding provides runway for genetics exports.

BY BARB BAYLOR ANDERSON



PHOTOS COURTESY OF U.S. LIVESTOCK GENETICS EXPORT INC.

U.S. Livestock Genetics Export Inc. president Mike Phillips (right) greets the governor of the state of Coahuila (left) with Benjamin Segovia (center), New Mexico Department of Agriculture, at the USLGE exhibit in Zacatecas, Mexico.

Sending Angus genetics south of the border doesn't have to be a tough process for interested breeders. Several Angus producers have found foreign homes for their cattle genetics with assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Market Access Program (MAP).

Working through U.S. Livestock Genetics Export Inc. (USLGE) and various state departments of agriculture, MAP offers tenacious breeders opportunities to learn more about potential overseas markets, to connect with interested buyers and to develop new sales channels.

"Angus cattle are our signature product.

Since 1996, we have brought buyers from Mexico and South America to tour Missouri Angus operations and vice versa," says Kurt Olsen, international livestock specialist, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Jefferson City, Mo. "Our efforts paid off dramatically last year when \$100,000 of Angus breeding cattle were purchased by a Mexican group."

The Missouri Department of Agriculture is a member of USLGE, a national, not-for-profit association representing international

market development interests in the U.S. dairy, beef, swine, sheep and horse breeding industries, including embryo, semen and livestock exports. USLGE was created in 1993 to provide assistance and coordination to foreign market development programs that promote U.S. livestock genetics abroad. Twenty state departments of agriculture and several breed organizations are members.

"International business, including volume sales, have become a normal business function for some Missouri Angus breeders," Olsen says, adding that Missouri participants in the program have included breeders like Brookdale Farms, Butch's Angus, Circle A Ranch, Clearwater Farm, Sydenstricker Angus Farms and Weiker Angus Ranch. "MAP funding facilitates and supplements industry sales by offering us opportunities to make new contacts."

Nebraska Angus breeders have found similar success. "There is a growing demand internationally for Angus semen, both red and black," says Chris Buechle, agricultural promotion coordinator for livestock, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Lincoln, Neb. "Angus exports can bring economic activity to individual producers, the states and the breed."

Mike Phillips, USLGE president, Saint Louis, Mo., says Mexico and several South American countries have become increasingly interested in buying U.S. Angus genetics for crossbreeding. "Many foreign breeders raise Brangus," he says. "They know the dominance Angus cattle enjoy in the U.S. and are aware of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 226



U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc.



Certified Angus Beef Program and availability of high-quality U.S. Angus genetics. We help bridge the gap between buyers and sellers.”

USLGE’s presence at foreign trade shows and other activities also tie to direct promotions sponsored by the American Angus Association and others, Phillips adds.

Buechle agrees. “The program opens up

avenues for international exposure for producers,” he says. “I go into countries and represent the industry, the breeds and individual producers and, in return, producers get trade service for limited personal out-of-pocket expense as MAP broadens the spectrum of opportunity for them abroad.”

Buechle also notes that while some Angus producers have established their own strong direct marketing ties in foreign countries and others have no interest in exports, the group in the middle can benefit most from the program.

“The vast majority of producers are curious about the export market and are willing to dabble in it,” he says.

In addition to MAP funds used by USLGE member groups, USLGE facilitates a market access branded program, which helps individual breeders promote their own genetics. The program requires a 50% match in funds from the breeder and does not include funding for travel. The program helps pay for international advertising; development, translation and distribution of promotional materials; and participation in foreign trade shows and exhibitions.

“MAP funding is used to supplement but not supplant private funds used for promotion,” Phillips explains. “The advantage to having us help is that you do

not have to be an international expert. We provide that service.”

Individual breeders are charged an administrative fee to participate in the program. Breeders do not have to be USLGE members to apply, but they are invited to join to receive expanded international livestock intelligence reports and trade leads and to receive information on other USDA programs.

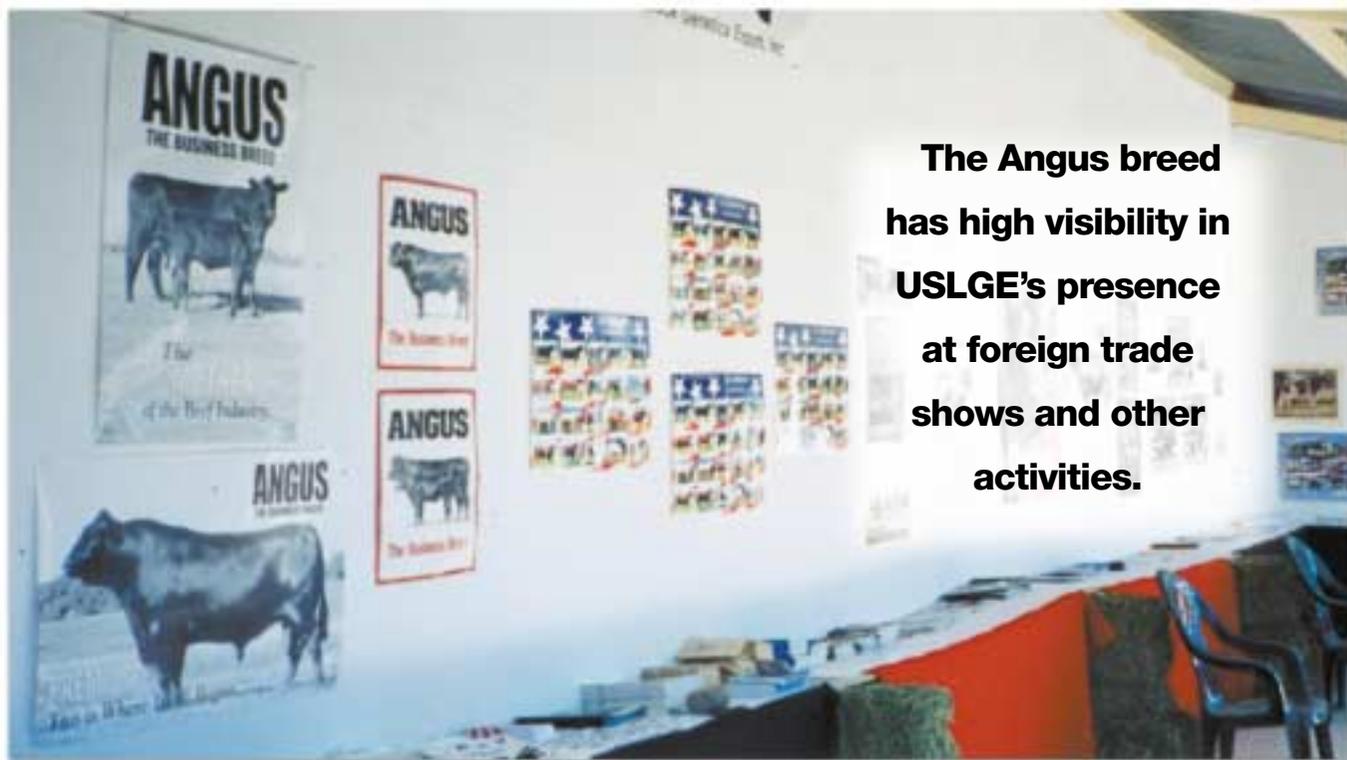
“Livestock genetics exports are not a big, green monster,” Olsen summarizes. “It is a solid, attainable business for those producers willing to make a commitment and spend the time it takes to build a rapport with potential foreign buyers. We’ve proven in Missouri that effort can pay off.”



Editor’s note: Funds are currently available to breeders interested in promoting livestock, semen or embryo sales in foreign markets. Applicants must submit a marketing plan and budget to USLGE. Allocations are based on available funding, anticipated economic effect and completeness of the application. To request the MAP application and program guidelines, contact USLGE at 1000 Executive Parkway, Suite 120, Saint Louis, MO 63141; e-mail uslge@aol.com; or call (314) 469-2278.



Gordon, Neb., Angus producer Tim Marlatt (left) discusses Angus genetics at the USLGE exhibit in Pôrto Alegre, Brazil.



The Angus breed has high visibility in USLGE’s presence at foreign trade shows and other activities.