

LEAD IN

by Richard L. Spader, Executive Vice President
American Angus Association



Building a Bridge of Opportunity

Since 1969 when the First World Angus Secretariat meeting was held in Sydney, Australia, the goal of the Secretariat has indeed been to promote the international exchange of ideas and concerns about the Angus breed, its associations and societies.

By bringing together Angus producers and professionals, a basis for communication has been established over the past 24 years. This, in turn, allows colleagues from different countries to discuss common problems, compare recent findings, and evaluate areas for further study and collaborative effort. More importantly, direct contact at these meetings enables representatives to bridge differences in a way that is constructive for the Angus and beef cattle industry, worldwide.

The World Angus Secretariat currently includes 14 member countries. For the meeting in St. Joseph, Mo., held in conjunction with the 1993 World Angus Forum, a total of seven countries participated. They were United Kingdom, South Africa, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States.

The quest for genetic evaluation of Angus seedstock on an international basis was at the forefront of this year's agenda. A proposal to "work toward a possible World Genetic Evaluation for Angus Cattle" was the No. 1 topic of the meeting. From the report came a few recommendations.

First, each member country should develop their own within-country procedures to further breed impact at the commercial level.

Second, at least 25 artificial insemination (AI) sires should be used to tie the databases of each participating country.

Third, that before any international analysis be made, research be conducted to examine possible sire-environment interaction.

Fourth, that any international

analysis and statistical model be supervised by the University of Georgia and the Animal Genetics Unit at Armidale, Australia.

After extensive discussion, the Secretariat members recommended continued work in evaluating the potential for worldwide Sire Evaluation. They felt the advantages of evaluation across continents would further enhance the Angus breed worldwide.

The importance of end product marketing was a second subject of discussion, and Certified Angus Beef Program and Angus marketing programs on an international basis were reviewed. Currently four countries have Certified Angus Beef or similar programs. They include the United States, Scotland, Canada and New Zealand. An effort to create demand for Angus seedstock has been a strong motivation behind end product marketing programs of societies and associations.

Additional issues involved an international exchange scheme for young Angus breeders, health regulations for international movement of frozen embryos, blood typing and DNA, and documentation of pedigree information between Angus associations and societies.

The World Secretariat meets every four years with two delegates and one observer from each participating country.

Angus members agreed to work toward strengthened communication between national associations and a continuing effort to improve the breed.

The American Angus Association was honored to host the delegation and observers to the World Secretariat meeting in St. Joseph. More reports from the Secretariat meeting and World Angus Forum will be forthcoming in future issues of the *Angus Journal*.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard L. Spader".