

# Lead In

by Richard Spader, executive vice president



## New Association members need your help

Last year more than 4,700 people became regular or junior members of the American Angus Association. For the most part, these people are just beginning their registered Angus businesses. In addition, thousands of people each year write, e-mail or telephone the Association requesting information about Angus cattle. Many want to know how to get started with registered Angus cattle or how to process registrations, transfers, performance records and so on.

Critical to whether or not new members succeed with their registered herds are how they start and the early goals they set for themselves. People who get the right advice and information and who set realistic expectations about the growth and profitability of their registered herds have laid a firm foundation for success.

Those who begin with false expectations, inadequate information, poor advice and insufficient help from established Angus breeders are likely to be among those who exit the registered Angus business a few years after they join the Association.

Purchases of breeding stock by new members account for a significant part of the Angus business. Cultivating these breeders and encouraging their development is the responsibility of the Association and every active member.

The Association can advertise and provide interested people with information; but, in the end, the manner in which established Angus breeders handle prospective and new members determines, to a greater extent, the success of the new businesses. Members who follow up on a sale, who are willing to answer questions and who provide follow-up service are invaluable in getting new breeders started right.

### A matter of oversight

All too often we are contacted by a member, oftentimes a new member, who has not received the registration paper on a transferred animal or who arrives at a dead end in an Angus transaction. In a last-ditch effort to find help, the member will call the Association.

It's a rare occasion when we can't resolve the matter, and in nearly all cases, the difficulty results from the seller's oversight or failure to follow up on a sale. When this happens, it's a reflection on the seller, the Angus breed and the Association.

Things that seem simple and routine to established Angus breeders are sometimes difficult and confusing to those new to the business. Every new Association

member receives the *Breeder's Reference Guide* that covers many things in detail, including how to register and how to transfer a calf.

The *Breeder's Reference Guide* also will be published as a pullout booklet in the March 2001 issue of the *Angus Journal*. We plan to repeat that publication every year. The same information is available on the Association's Web site ([www.angus.org](http://www.angus.org)).

New members also receive the tattooing instructional booklet and an order form that can be used, among other things, to obtain a tattoo kit and ink. But it is one thing to read about the procedures and quite another to do them right for the first time. Nothing can replace on-the-spot assistance and instruction.

### Follow through

The growing Angus business means that more people every year are likely to visit your place with the idea of getting started with registered Angus. When they visit, whether they buy or not, provide them with appropriate booklets from the Association, which you can obtain in small quantities at no cost.

Also provide them with your own herd brochure or other printed information that will remind them of your operation. Be sure to invite them to the next meeting of your local, regional or state Angus association and show them firsthand how these organizations are vital to their business.

But most important, if they purchase animals from you, be sure to transfer the animal's registration, and follow up on the sale. I can guarantee you buyers will appreciate the call and will feel better about you for your interest. It's at this time that you can help answer questions, especially if the buyers are new to the business.

It's at this time that you, the buyer and the Association benefit.



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