



From cow-calf producers and embryologists to Certified Angus Beef® chefs and the next generation of steak enthusiasts, the 2017 Angus Convention connected lives across the industry and the country.



CREATING *Connections*

*Angus Convention fosters relationships
between every facet of the industry.*

by Shelby Mettlen, assistant editor



*Look for additional coverage of the
2017 Angus Convention beginning on page 150.*

“Everything’s bigger in Texas.” That theory certainly held true for the 2017 Angus Convention in Fort Worth, Texas, Nov. 4-6. Home of the Fort Worth Stockyards and a pinnacle for cowboy culture, the city drew the American Angus Association’s largest crowd in the event’s four-year history. Nearly 2,500 Angus cattlemen and enthusiasts attended the Convention. Former Creative Media Director Becky Weishaar describes the event’s growth — compared to last year’s 1,900 attendees — as “explosive.”

Trade show tools

“It’s good for the Association,” Weishaar says. “[The Angus Convention] has provided a venue for members to connect with each other most importantly, but to also have the opportunity to learn more about the products and services the American Angus Association offers that can help move their businesses forward. It’s a lot to ask people to step away from their ranch, and it’s nice that we do have people who are willing to do that.”

Not only are cattlemen and women across the country willing to step away from their farms and ranches to attend the convention, they’re excited to do it.

Adair, Okla., sale manager Rance Long has been attending the Angus Convention’s trade show since its inaugural year four years ago. The lifelong cattleman says the Angus Convention provides a valuable opportunity for folks across the business to connect and move their operations forward.

“It’s just a great place to interact



“I’m a big advocate for Angus cattle,” says Aaron Kiser, seedstock manager for Wilks Ranches in Eastland, Texas. “I think Angus is the breed that takes the issues out of the other breeds.” Angus enthusiasts stopped at Wilks Ranch’s Eastland location during the National Angus Tour Nov. 3, 2017.

with a lot of breeders, customers I do sales for, [and] see breeders throughout the country that are attending, both purebred and commercial producers.”

Long calls the 2017 event “exceptional.”

“I think it was a combination of people from all over the country, they’re

just so happy with the connections they’re able to make,” Weishaar says. “The networking moves his business forward,” she says of Long.

Long says he’s able to interact with his customers, as well as new and potential customers.

“It’s just a great opportunity to see a wide variety of people from coast to coast,” he says. “I’m really excited to see this event growing from year to year, and I’m sure looking forward to being in Columbus [Ohio] next year for 2018.”

More than 500 eager attendees lined up in the first 30 minutes of the trade show’s grand opening Saturday, Nov. 5.

“We have amazing sponsors,” Weishaar says.

Caterpillar’s custom skid-steer and Priefert and Tru Test’s high-quality, functional and relevant grand prizes drew appeal.

“They’re just so versatile,” she continues. “I think the prices really spoke to the participants. When you think about it, your odds are at least 1 in 2,500, and when you get to double it, I think they were motivated by that.”

Of course, Texas is home to the Association’s largest membership, so having the home-field advantage, if you will, combined with Fort Worth’s cowtown culture, certainly didn’t hurt.

“We’ll make 25,000 embryos a year, just in the IVF lab,” says Todd Stroud, owner of Hoofstock Genetics in Ranger, Texas. About 70% of the company’s bovine client base is Angus.



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Business partners

Two young, progressive Texas cattle operations hosted the 2017 National Angus Tour Nov. 3, prior to the convention.

Wilks Ranches Seedstock Manager Aaron Kiser of Eastland, Texas, says he and his team agreed to host the tour because “it’s good for Texas Angus.”

“I’m glad the [Angus] Convention was brought here to Texas. I think it’s good for Angus breeders,” he continues. “We’re really excited we had the opportunity to host the tour.”

Wilks Ranches manages 10,000 commercial cows on six operations between Texas, Oregon, Idaho and Montana.

In 2013, Wilks Ranches developed its seedstock program to keep its herds uniform. The herds are bred primarily using artificial insemination (AI) and calve in both the spring and fall. The operations develop 450-500 bulls at a time.

Kiser says he likes the word “balance.”

“Our emphasis is on phenotype with performance,” he says. “We want our cattle to be sound and look good, and still have the performance they need.”

The ranches raise between 400 and 450 embryo transfer (ET) calves per year, assisted by the tour’s first stop — Hoofstock Genetics.

Todd Stroud, owner of Hoofstock Genetics in Ranger, Texas, and his team, complete all ET and *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) work for Wilks Ranches’ Eastland location.

“It’s neat that the tour was able to go to Hoofstock Genetics before they came over to our place,” Kiser says. “I’ve been involved with them since Todd started. His business has grown tremendously over the last three years.”

Hoofstock Genetics offered what Kiser describes as “a little different side of the Angus business.”

Stroud’s family has been in the cattle and ET businesses for nearly 40 years, Stroud says.

After earning bachelor’s and master’s degrees from



Todd Stroud’s company, Hoofstock Genetics, makes the most out of its customer’s best females. With embryo transfer and IVF, “We can make as many babies as you want,” he says.

Texas A&M University, Stroud worked with his father for four years before founding his own business, Hoofstock Genetics, in 2012.

Business took off after the development of the ET and IVF facilities in 2015, Stroud says, spreading to several states and hiring several employees.

“It’s been a neat operation to get to watch it grow,” he says.

Stroud didn’t start in cattle, though. Hoofstock began conducting ET and IVF in white tail and mule deer before developing the bovine division. Stroud recently finished a project with Big Horn sheep in Utah. Still, cattle drive the profit.

“The primary meat and taters is the cattle,” he says. “It drives the business.” He adds that 70% of Hoofstock’s beef cattle production is Angus.

With an increased emphasis on performance, ET and IVF will be of increasing interest to producers, Stroud says.

“In five years I’d say that the animal-breeding industry is going to be relying more on predictable genomic markers and heritable traits, anticipating production based on genetics,” he says. “I see our operation working more on the younger generation of animals because they don’t have to be proven. They’re testing those animals to have those traits, so I think our company will be focusing on those younger generations in the beef and dairy industry.”

The next generation

“She’s a chef-a-holic,” Charles Rosson says of his daughter, Ellen.

The 12-year-old culinary enthusiast and avid *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) fan attended the 2016 Angus Convention in Indianapolis, Ind., the 2017 Convention in Fort Worth, and has declared she’ll be back again in 2018.

The seventh grader from Louisa, Va., was a permanent fixture at the CAB booth at the Convention’s trade show — when she wasn’t trailing dad, Charles, owner of Quaker Hill Farm, and mom,

Sherry, to speakers and workshops throughout the Convention.

Though she has a few years to go, Ellen hopes to attend culinary school when it's time for college.

"Last year she was hanging out at the booth and got to talk to all the chefs; they were really sweet to her," Sherry says. "She kind of became their little groupie."

Chef Peter Rosenburg, executive chef for CAB, says he couldn't have missed Ellen at last year's convention trade show demonstrations.

"We had all these people sitting in front, and every time I asked if anyone had any questions, she came back with the best questions in the whole entire house," he laughs. "She was asking better questions than the adults."


Ellen connected with Rosenburg through Instagram, sending him a direct message: "Chef, are

you going to be back this year? Because I'm planning on coming."

"That's how it starts," Rosenburg says. "That younger generation looking to learn and wanting to learn — it's fun."

Rosenburg asked Ellen to help hand out steak samples at this year's demonstration, and encouraged her to visit Wooster for a more in-depth look at CAB's culinary artistry.

Ellen hopes to open her own steak house someday near her home in Virginia.

"I like to cook steak," Ellen says. "When I use *Certified Angus Beef*, all I gotta use is salt and pepper!" 

Editor's Note: The Angus Journal will carry coverage of the 2017 Angus Convention in this and upcoming issues. See online coverage of the convention at www.angus.org/Media/News/AngusConvention.aspx.



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