

Setting the PACE

by Susan Waters, director of communications and public relations



It's time for some REAL New Year's resolutions

Happy New Year! If you haven't heard enough hype about the new year, new century or new millennium, you've obviously been hiding under a rock somewhere sheltered from the awful Y2K destruction.

Yes, I have to admit the media has worn me out with the whole millennium thing, but I've also tried to look past all the hype to the truly remarkable event I've lived to see.

The coming of 2000 is not only a milestone in our lives; it's a milestone for mankind. Our generations are fortunate to have been able to experience this history-making event.

I think we would all agree that an event of this proportion deserves some REAL New Year's resolutions. Not those resolutions that no one keeps, like the promise to lose weight, to quit smoking or to get along better with the in-laws. I'm talking about real resolutions that will make a difference in our personal lives, as well as the entire beef industry.

This year I'm challenging everyone to set a New Year's resolution to become better promoters of beef and active members of the Public Awareness/Consumer Education (PACE) team. Not only will this resolution be easy to keep, but it will benefit our industry, and your livelihood, in so many ways. Now is the time to commit ourselves to helping other beef producers in "setting the PACE" as we work toward increasing public awareness about the beef industry and educating consumers on the delicious and wholesome product we produce.

Following are a dozen ideas you can use to begin your efforts in fulfilling this New Year's resolution.

1. Send a steak to school with your children for show-and-tell. Let them tell their classmates how their family produces delicious, wholesome beef.
2. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper about the ways beef producers contribute to your local community and economy.
3. Help strangers at your grocer's meat case select a cut to take home to their family and tell them how to prepare it. They will appreciate not only your kindness but also your culinary tips.
4. Invite a fourth-grade class to your farm for a field trip. Show them your beautiful Angus cattle and all the other amazing things we take for granted on the farm. Before they leave, serve them big, juicy hamburgers for lunch. They'll be beef eaters for life.
5. Introduce yourself to your local farm broadcasters and offer to serve as a resource and a link to the beef industry. They will call you — guaranteed.
6. Join your local, state and national cattlemen's organizations. Your membership dollars will support political efforts and educational and promotional programs throughout the country.
7. Offer to provide a program for a local civic organization or business group about beef and all the easy and delicious ways to prepare it. You and your audience will both learn a few things.
8. Support the national beef checkoff program. Your \$1/head works hard to create demand for beef and is the single most powerful way beef producers market their product.
9. Keep informed on political issues that affect agriculture and specifically beef producers. And more importantly, keep in touch with your state and national senators and representatives about those issues.
10. Read, read, read. This includes daily newspapers and your state, regional and national agricultural and livestock publications. Make it a habit to absorb current news and information every day.
11. Make a regular visit to the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Web site at www.beef.org. There you will find a wealth of information about consumer issues, political issues, health and nutrition. It's a great resource.
12. Encourage other Angus breeders and commercial producers to join you in "setting the PACE." With everyone's help, we can start making a difference for the beef industry.



The Last WORD...

"When people are free to do as they please, they usually imitate each other." —Eric Hoffer