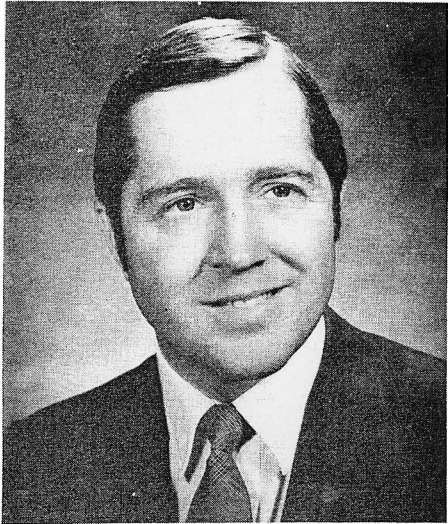


from the office

LEAD IN

By Richard Spader, Executive Vice President, American Angus Association



It's a long way from counting votes in New Hampshire to selling Angus cattle in your home county. Or is it?

Chris Brown, a public relations practitioner who has organized the last three winning democratic campaigns in the New Hampshire presidential primaries says this about influencing people on a local level:

"It really makes a difference to reach people individually," he said. "Voters are prepared for an onslaught of media campaigning; they want to see support in terms of people they know."

Interesting, isn't it, that local organizations are so important, whether winning votes or winning converts to the Angus breed. Too often we, in the Angus business, overlook this. But it is no coincidence that the Angus business most often flourishes in areas where there are strong, active, self-motivated associations.

But as Chris Brown has demonstrated, people are influenced most by people they know. They may gather infor-

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mation and ideas from all sources, including national and local advertising. But their final decision is frequently influenced by someone they know and trust.

The surveys that the American Angus Assn. takes of all new members show this very thing. When we ask new members who influenced them most to get registered Angus cattle, the overwhelming single factor was "friends," followed by "parents," with "neighbors" in third place.

Manufacturers who attempt to introduce new and unusual farm products have known for years that they don't have to sell the whole farm population on the new product in order for it to be successful. They only have to convince the leaders in a community, and if they are successful, much of the rest of the population will also adopt the idea. If you think using Angus cattle isn't a "new" idea to a great many people, just sit down and talk with the "young tigers" in agriculture today who were brought up the last 15 years on cross-bred steer shows and taught by instructors who preached long and loud the values of 25 or more new breeds of cattle on the American scene.

The point of all this is simple. If your association is the most active, most dynamic, most enjoyable cattle organiza-

tion in your area to belong to, you are going to attract more members and sell more Angus cattle.

If you set as your goal this coming year to get three leading commercial cattle producers in your area to start using Angus bulls, and accomplish it, you can be assured that others will soon follow their lead.

If your organization establishes a junior Angus steer and heifer show and make it fun, exciting and educational, you will attract many future customers. If you bring the children of the community into the Angus business, you can be assured of further growth and support.

And finally, if you can develop approaches to association merchandising of cattle, you can expect a surge in membership growth. This may involve starting a registered Angus steer and heifer sale, sponsoring an Angus feeder cattle sale, or a high quality approach to merchandising registered bulls and females—or a combination of these and other ideas.

As you plan the future of your local association, keep in mind the lessons learned by the politicians and the merchandisers of new ideas and products—that people are most influenced in the end by the support of people they know and trust.

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