

LEAD IN

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The Angus breed is undergoing welcome expansion. It is not really a renewal, because during the long period of change in the cattle business from the late 1960s to today, Angus remained the number one beef breed.

The vitality of individual Angus breeders and the American Angus Assn. helped bring about today's modern Angus cattle. The product we offer to the commercial cattle industry today is radically different from that of the 1950s and 1960s, based upon modern Angus type and sound performance records and geared to the needs of the commercial beef cattle producer.

Today the U.S. beef industry recognizes the significant changes that Angus breeders have wrought. The increased demand for Angus breeding stock and for Angus feeders and finished cattle reflect their belief in the importance that Angus cattle and Certified Angus Beef play in satisfying consumer demand. The Angus expansion is evident in the increased American Angus Assn. registrations of Angus cattle and the number of new people joining the Association.

New members and increased business mean new potential members for state and local Angus associations. In fact, leaders of many of these organizations recognize this and are beginning to act. Recently the Kansas Angus Assn. asked the American Angus Assn. to send a Kansas Association membership application blank to every new national association member from Kansas in our new-member packet. We are doing this and invite other state associations to let us help in this way.

The local Angus association that my family and I belong to will start a new policy this year. The association will print a simple membership application blank and possibly a self-addressed, return envelope that people can use to apply for membership and send back their check. The association already uses the American Angus Assn. new member lists to solicit members, but they also feel the need to make it easier for potential members to act when they get the letter.

Even more important to new growth is that every member of a local Angus association be an active sales person for the organization. That means keeping membership applications on hand to provide to customers who are not members and then inviting them to join. You might even offer to pay their first year's dues if they are interested, and take them to the first meeting. Often all that is required to obtain a new member is just to invite them to join and make them feel welcome.

A past member of the American Angus Assn. Board of Directors reminded me one time, "outside of the quality of our Angus cattle, the most important thing we have is each other." And that is true. As one of the people who merchandise Angus cattle, you see potential members of your local, state, and national associations before anyone else does. The best person to persuade them to become members is you.

Remember it is not just charity that you will be performing. Your new customers who get involved quickly in the mainstream of the Angus business are more likely to be happy, satisfied customers. They are more likely to come back to purchase cattle from you more often and to recommend you to their friends.

A commercial cattle producer from Montana who in the past few years has switched his operation from Hereford to Angus recently wrote: "Our Angus calves have been sold to repeat buyers and the demand exceeds the supply. It makes the cattle business fun again."

It is this kind of enthusiasm and satisfaction that is revving up the Angus breed today. It can do the same for your state and local associations. **AJ**