

*Gary Dameron, 1989 American Angus Association president, is back to work on his Illinois farm.*

JEROME HOGAN/PHOTOS

# A Year of Positives

*Past president Gary Dameron has the satisfaction of serving in the American Angus Association's most successful year of the '80s decade.*

*By Jerilyn Johnson*

**G**ary Dameron is a man of quiet determination. This Angus producer from the plains of central Illinois gets his point across by expressing simple, honest opinions and by hard work.

It's these qualities that led him to the American Angus Association's Board of Directors, where he served for eight years, and eventually to the office of vice president and president. And it's these qualities that helped him develop a sound and successful beef operation.

Dameron has a solid, diversified background in the beef industry. After graduating from the University of Illinois and working one year in Illinois' Extension Service, he decided to expand his family farming operation near Lexington. In 1969 he added a registered Angus cow herd. His first Angus bull came right off the range of a Nebraska ranch.

Today, Dameron runs an 80-cow registered Angus herd, a 40-cow commercial herd, and has a feedlot operation that handles 100 head per year. In addition, he farms approximately 1,500 acres, with corn and soybeans as the major cash crops.

Angus cattle on the Dameron farm have been carefully selected and bred over the past 20 years and have been recognized in both show ring and performance circles.

Dameron is a true believer in performance testing. He has consigned bulls to several Midwest test stations, including the Treasure Test Center and Midland Bull Test Station.

The highlight of the Dameron Angus breeding program so far is a bull named Dameron Linedrive. This bull became well-known in the industry after earning grand champion honors at the 1987 North American International Livestock Exposition and the 1988 National Western Stock Show. Dameron sold 3/4 inter-

est in the bull and he now stands at Premier Angus.

**A review of 1989.** Dameron agrees that 1989 will be remembered as one of the most positive years in the past decade. Virtually all areas of Association business showed increases over the previous year. This reflects a growing Angus business during a time of very stable or somewhat declining beef cattle numbers in the United States.

Angus breeders led all other U.S. breeds by recording 156,697 head of bulls, females and steers. It was the third year for registration increases.

The progress of the Certified Angus Beef program was even more remarkable.

open to get it off the ground."

The Association did get its foot in the door thanks to the efforts of Mick Colvin, CAB's executive director and marketing researcher/consultant Leonard Berkowitz of Florida.

"It took persistency," Dameron says, "but we had a product that had a niche in the marketplace all along."

Our biggest challenge now, Dameron says, is to produce a consistent quality beef product. "In the next few years we will be putting more emphasis on EPDs and using more objective, technologically advanced tools to measure cattle and carcass traits," he says.

## **Back to work on the farm. Now**

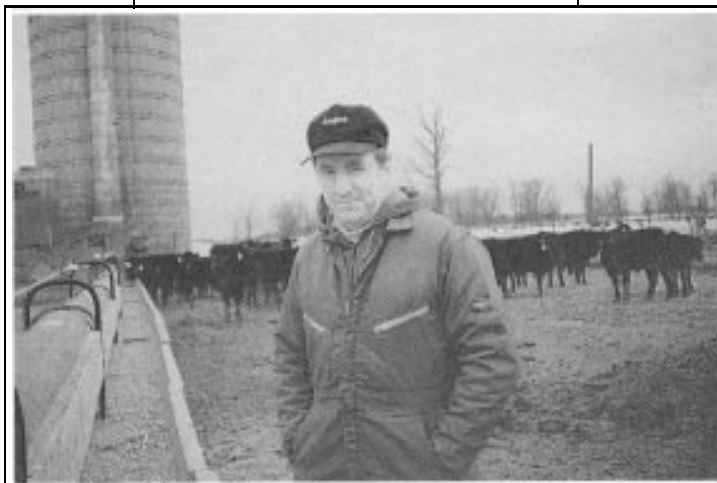
that Dameron has completed his term as president and retired from the Board, he says he will concentrate more on running an efficient beef operation.

All four of the Dameron children Christy, Jay, Jeff and Julie—have been involved in the beef operation and have participated as 4-H and FFA members in many shows and activities. Gary's wife, Sharon, is also an active partner in the operation and attended many Angus events with him, including the World Angus Forum in Argentina, during his term as president.

"My family's goal this year is for me to stick

around enough to get some work done," Dameron jokes. He hopes to keep active on the judging circuit, attend some shows and be active in the Illinois and Central Illinois Angus Associations. An avid fan you can bet he will also be watching more University of Illinois football games.

Serving as president of the American Angus Association was a great experience for me," Dameron says. The Board, Association staff and members are the best people to work with."



*Feeding out 100 cattle from, his own commercial and purebred Angus herds each year gives Gary Dameron insight into what kind of cattle fit today's beef market.*

During the 1989 fiscal year, 71 million pounds of CAB, with a wholesale value of \$210 million, was sold. This is an 11.8 percent increase over 1988. It is estimated that more than 6,000 restaurants and 600 retail stores now sell CAB.

"CAB's success means even more to somebody like me who was involved during its infancy," Dameron says. "A lot of Board meetings were spent trying to decide whether to fund it (CAB) to the next board meeting. We always believed in the program, the problem was getting doors