

from the office

LEAD IN

By Richard Spader, Executive Vice President, American Angus Association



Regardless of what we are hesitating to do in our business . . . more than likely, once we get started, we will find it is simpler than we first imagined.

A lady stopped by the Angus booth at the NCA convention in January to tell us a story, which she said really happened.

A grandmother was babysitting her granddaughter and a neighbor boy when the girl came running in to tell Grandma that little Johnny had showed her how to tell the difference between bull calves and heifer calves.

Grandma gulped, not sure that this was a conversation for parent and child. But unable to figure an instant way to divert the conversation she bravely asked, "Well, Susie, how do you tell the difference?"

"Oh, it's easy, Grandma," Susie said, "the heifers have white tags and the bulls have red ones."

Which proves again that things aren't

always as difficult as they seem at first.

That's true of a lot of things connected with the Angus business.

Take AHIR for example. A great many people convince themselves that keeping AHIR records is extremely complicated. Just the words "performance records" have a frighteningly technical ring. And some of us build up a mental block that holds us back from doing what we know we should do.

But, after taking the first step, many find that AHIR isn't so difficult at all and is downright rewarding as well as profitable. After they complete the calving and weaning report, they discover that the weaning summary they receive back from the Association really makes good sense. Thus, by the time they have worked their way through the program, step by step, they acquire the knowledge to read, understand and use the performance registration certificate or the Sire Evaluation Report.

Advertising and merchandising present some of the same mental barriers. Some people feel they have to be advertising experts to start an advertising program. Usually all that's needed is

the determination to take that first tentative step. Once they do a successful series of classified ads, it seems a natural thing to expand and perfect their merchandising program.

The same with showing cattle. Many parents are apprehensive about getting their children a heifer calf or a steer to exhibit in the county or regional shows. They convince themselves they must be a professional feeder and fitter, or employ one, to raise and show a calf. If you run into these kind of people, try to convince them that after they have read a pamphlet or two and worked with their child doing some necessary practice washing and grooming, they will acquire the knowledge, confidence and even the desire they need to do a very adequate job.

So, regardless of what we are hesitating to do in our business, it may be a good idea to remember the brave grandmother. More than likely, once we get started, we will find it is simpler than we first imagined. Something like the case of telling bulls from heifers by the color of their ear tags.

AJ