



ANGIE STUMP DENTON PHOTOS

Planning a Fault-Free Sale

Tips to help you plan a successful production sale.

BY ANGIE STUMP DENTON

and regional managers, would tell you a successful production sale takes months of planning and preparation. They're right.

First, before you start planning, you need to be sure your operation is ready to host a production sale. You have to have a product that is in demand and a clientele willing to buy it.

Bernie Scheer of Cotton/Scheer & Associates, Lexington, Ky., says that, before deciding to have a sale, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- A. Do we have sufficient numbers in order to justify the expense of having a sale? He says a producer needs to have 60-70 lots to sell before hosting a production sale.
- B. Do I already have, or can I get, the cattle in the proper condition and breeding status to meet the criteria of prospective buyers?
- C. Am I willing to put the labor and expense required into preparing a sale site, or is there a suitable turnkey facility readily available?
- D. Do I need outside help with making plans, advertising, producing a sale book and the mechanics of conducting the sale on sale day?

You've decided to have a production sale. You're excited about the opportunity to showcase your operation; but, you have no idea how to host one. Most Angus producers who've hosted a sale, as well as sale managers, auctioneers

Bull vs. female sale

You must also decide what *type* of sale you're going to host. Will it be a female sale, a bull sale or a general production sale offering bulls, cows and heifers?

Your decision will affect how you plan and advertise the event.

"The basic marketing concepts are the same," says Jim Birdwell, an auctioneer from Fletcher, Okla. "The advertising is somewhat different, and the publications used to reach your customer base are different."

When advertising a female sale, you will likely target regional or national publications, hoping to reach more registered seedstock producers who would be interested in your genetics. With a bull sale, you'll target more local commercial bull buyers and the publications they read.

Another difference will be in how you present and handle the cattle before the sale. When you are selling bulls to commercial producers, the bulls don't need to be as extensively fit or groomed as females need to be when you are targeting registered seedstock producers or junior members purchasing show prospects.

What is a good sale?

Many people just look at a sale average to determine if it was a good sale. Birdwell says that isn't necessarily a good barometer.

"We must remember that we are selling a product. All that we can do to make this product more desirable increases demand, and as a result price increases," he says. "The people who come to your sale are customers who create demand. They need to be comfortable, feel welcome, have confidence in your program and sale crew, feel they are getting value for money spent, and see longevity in what you're doing."

"Early planning; taking care of details; breeding good cattle; guaranteeing your product; people coming, buying and leaving satisfied describes a fault-free sale," he says.



Have the cattle on display three to four hours before sale time. This allows time for buyers to evaluate them before they enter the sale ring.

After you've determined you are ready to host a production sale, consider these tips to help you plan a fault-free event.

1

Successful breeding program

"The cattle being offered always will be the most important ingredient to any successful sale," Scheer says.

"Producers need to plan the product they're going to sell before planning the sale," says Don Laughlin, American Angus Association regional manager in Missouri and Iowa. "Most people mistakenly plan a sale before they have a breeding program."

It's important to define your customer base and offer a product that will meet their needs. Some of these breeding decisions will be made years before the actual sale.

"The age of cattle to be sold will determine how far in advance you need to start planning in reference to the breeding program," Birdwell

says. If you're going to market 2-year-old bulls, that means a breeding decision is made three years in advance.

In today's beef industry, high-quality genetics and performance information are key ingredients to hosting a successful sale. If you have a reputation as a visionary breeder who works hard to meet the needs of customers, you will have no problem getting customers to your sale, Laughlin says.

"Be conscientious about pedigrees," says Dean Janssen, manager of Weaver Angus Farm, Peoria, Ill. "You don't want to give a buyer a reason not to buy a good one."

2

Careful planning

Birdwell says the most important ingredient to a fault-free sale is planning — the earlier the better. Initial planning should include:

- Setting the date;
- Time;
- Place;
- Auctioneer(s);

- Advertising budget;
- Sale manager or not;
- What to sell — yearling bulls, 2-year-old bulls, bred or open heifers, cow-calf pairs, bred cows or three-in-ones;
- The number of lots to be sold;
- Bulls to which you are going to breed the females; and
- Lining up sale personnel.

"Take care of the details early, and there won't be major problems surfacing that require last-minute hasty decisions," Birdwell adds.

Each year regional managers and other Association and *Angus Journal* staff attend more than 500 sales. Sale dates and times are becoming a premium in the Angus business. Be sure to consult with your regional manager before setting a date so you don't plan your sale on the same day as the sale of another breeder in your area.

"Timing of the sale is important," Janssen says. Be sure to target the sale date to the type of market you are serving. For example, in his market, a fall sale — when juniors are buying their next year's projects — works best, he explains.

Early in the planning stages

you need to set a sale budget. Work with your sale manager or auctioneers and try to set a realistic budget that meets your needs.

No matter how big or small your operation or sale budget,

you can have a successful production sale if you have the type of cattle producers are demanding, if you pay attention to detail, and if you treat your customers right.



During most production sales the owner and/or sale manager sits with the auctioneer to make comments about special lots.



It's important to have livestock publication personnel at your sale to act as ringmen. They can bring buyers to the sale and increase visibility. The amount of advertising dollars spent with a publication to get a representative varies.

3

Marketing program

Creating top-of-mind awareness for your breeding program and operation is important. Implementing a well-planned, year-round advertising and promotion program can help get your name in front of potential customers (refer to February "Merchandising" column). You don't want the first time they see your name to be in an advertisement for a sale to be held in a couple of weeks.

A promotion program that features your herd and ranch should be part of your yearly operating budget. "It is an ongoing ingredient to success when sale time comes around," Birdwell says.

Matt Perrier, American Angus Association regional manager in Texas and New Mexico, says a good advertising program is the primary way to get customers to your sale. "Direct contact — newsletters, calls, personal visits — will set you apart from other breeders with customer bases already developed," he adds.

As you plan a sale and your advertising budget, remember that, if you want an Association representative to work your sale, you have to place advertising in the *Angus Journal* or the *Angus Beef Bulletin* totaling a dollar amount equal to two pages in the *Angus Journal*. This excludes advertising in the herd reference edition, unless it particularly promotes the sale. For local, regional and state association-sponsored sales only one page of advertising is required.

"Advertising is key to the success of any sale," says Matt Maurer, Circle A Ranch marketing and customer service manager. Circle A, Iberia, Mo.,

places advertising in several different media targeting different audiences to promote their two sales — a female sale in September and a bull sale in March.

When developing ads Maurer says he uses a lot of pictures in combination with data — birth weights, weaning weights and expected progeny differences (EPDs) — to promote the upcoming sale.

Circle A also has several brochures and promotional pieces it uses to target potential customers. For example, they send a brochure promoting their junior incentive program to potential junior members prior to their fall sale. Each brochure has a request-for-information card, which potential customers can fill out to request information or sale books.

Always looking for new customers, Maurer sends a letter to every new member listed in the *Angus Journal* from the states of Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Texas. In the letter, he welcomes them to the Association and tells them about Circle A Ranch.

Circle A has a toll-free number that also helps attract new customers. Another way both Circle A Ranch and Weaver Angus Farm are merchandising their herds is by exhibiting their cattle in state, regional and national Angus shows.

Maurer and Janssen also make a point to personally invite previous buyers to their sales. Janssen sends past customers a sale book marked with the lots he thinks they would be interested in buying. In the past Maurer has sent Circle A's top 25 bull buyers two 24-ounce USDA Prime porterhouse steaks with a sale book and an invitation to attend the bull sale.

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AUCTION CHECKLIST

One year prior to sale

- Hire an auctioneer.
- Decide if you are going to use a sale manager or consultant.
- Consult with your American Angus Association regional manager, sale manager and auctioneer in setting a date.
- Send your sale date to livestock publications for their sale calendars.
- Reserve a sale facility if you're not holding the sale on your own farm or ranch.
- Develop a sale budget.
- Consider who is going to do your sale book.
- If you are doing your own sale book, start developing your customer mailing list.
- Attend Association-sponsored and local Extension-sponsored beef meetings to meet potential customers.
- Set up an advertising schedule and confirm deadlines with publications.

Five months

- Make sale offering selection. Register and send in all performance data.
- Take photos for sale book and pre-sale advertising.
- Schedule preparation of your sale book.
- Reserve rooms at a local hotel to serve as headquarters.

Three months

- Start pre-sale advertising.
- Start assembling sale-book material. Be sure to have accurate and clear instructions to the sale location listed in the piece.
- Arrange for sale help to prepare the cattle, clerk the sale, serve refreshments, park cars, answer phones, etc.
- Consider nutrition of sale cattle. Provide a ration that will have them in good flesh by sale day.
- Confirm with sale facility, rental items, regional manager, sale manager and auctioneer.

Two months

- Send sale book to printer.
- Check all sale-day social arrangements — food and drink.

Six weeks

- Invite — personally or by letter — previous customers and special breeders you want to attend.
- Invite sale staff — auctioneer, regional manager, sale manager, publication representatives — to your ranch to view the sale offering.
- Finalize sale book mailing list.
- If you are hosting the sale at your ranch, start preparing it for visitors — painting and cleaning.
- Have the sale offering available for potential buyers to evaluate.

One month

- Mail sale book a month to three weeks before the sale.
- Tag all cattle according to sale lot number.
- Schedule radio advertising on your area farm station.
- Place newspaper advertising.
- Contact your veterinarian to do necessary tests for interstate health papers. All bred females should be pregnancy-checked, and all bulls should pass a breeding soundness exam (BSE).

- Make arrangements for insurance.
- Investigate trucking options.

Two weeks

- Check sale facility, including microphones, lights, telephone lines and electrical outlets.
- If hosting at your ranch, make arrangements to have bathroom facilities and trash bins available.
- Clip the necks and heads of cows and bulls in the sale. Torch or singe the hair off their sides (if experienced with the process).
- If you're going to have select fancy lots in a female sale, be sure to have those females clipped or blocked out.

One week

- Set up cattle pens for sale day.
- Depending on the number of sale lots, start washing.
- Prepare supplement sheets with additional breeding information, any additions or corrections to the sale book, and weights or other performance information collected since it went to press.

Two days before

- Start to organize sale order.
- Check on refreshments — drinks, food, snacks.
- Set up sale ring and bleachers.

Sale day

- Get the cattle on display at least four hours before the sale starts.
- Before putting in pens, blow the cattle out and spray on show sheen or oil to make them shine.
- While in the pens, give the calves a little bit of hay to calm them.
- Confirm sale order.
- Have sale books and supplement sheets available near the cattle pens.
- Have visible pen signs identifying lot numbers.
- Water down sale ring to reduce dust.
- Test the loud speaker.
- Make sure food and drinks are readily available.
- Answer any questions from sale personnel — auctioneer, clerks, load-out crew, publication representatives and ringmen.
- Meet and greet your guests. Now is the time to market your product. If possible, have several key people roaming through the lots to be available if anyone has questions.
- If possible, have a cellular or cordless phone with you at all times so you don't have to waste time running to answer the phone.

After the sale

- Transfer the registration papers to the new owners in a timely manner.
- Evaluate the sale with regional manager, auctioneer and other sale staff, and make notes for next year.
- Thank everyone involved in the sale.
- Deliver cattle as soon as possible.
- Write follow-up letters to buyers. Make an effort to visit their places sometime during the year.
- Update your mailing list.
- Start planning for your next sale.

4

Customer service

“Customer service is what it’s all about,” Janssen says. “A happy customer will come back.”

One way to entice potential buyers is to offer benefits or perks. These could include free delivery, keeping the bulls till breeding season, breeding season guarantees, junior incentive programs or other services, such as calf sales for customers or marketing opportunities.

“The best thing you can do to get a customer to come back to your sale is to pull into their driveway and visit their turf,” says Laughlin.

5

Nutrition and condition

Janssen says it’s important to have the sale cattle in good condition — not too fat and not too thin.

Janssen and Lucas Young, show- and sale-cattle herdsman, wean the calves in August. The calves are then put on a 30%-protein pellet until the sale in October.

If you have had the sale cattle on a special ration, be sure to share that information with the buyers during your opening comments at the sale.

Perrier encourages producers to take the sale cattle off a “hot” ration and feed them good, dry hay 24-48 hours before sale time. This “hardens” the cattle’s manure and keeps them from being sloppy. “It also keeps the ringmen’s coats and hats much cleaner,” he says.

6

Presentation

If you don’t have the cattle presented well, you’re not going to get the results you want.

Because Weaver Angus Farm’s customer base is mainly junior members, Young halter-breaks each of the show-heifer prospects. The heifers are also washed and clipped at least twice before the sale.

Another grooming option used by producers is to “torch” or singe the hair off the cattle. This process should only be used by experienced fitters. Instead of using clippers, a propane torch is used to singe off the hair.

Fitter Jeff Rhode, Kingston, Ill., says the process is quicker

than using clippers, and there is less of a chance to gouge the animal if it jumps. In many cases the animal is less scared of the torch than a set of clippers buzzing around its body.

The animal must be dry and clean — do not apply any oils to the hair. Explaining the process, Rhode says it’s done using a controlled flame. He combs the hair up to separate the pieces of hair, then applies the flame in a waving motion (back and forth). He then combs the hair to put out any flame and to rake off the singed hair. This is repeated as necessary until he gets the desired appearance.

Some fitters will first clip the heads and necks of the calf and any long hairs before using the torch.

Josh Shriner, herdsman at Whitestone Krebs near Gordon, Neb., says they use both methods when preparing cattle

for the ranch’s two sales each year. They torch the cows and most of the bulls. They clip a select group of heifers and the carload and pen bulls the ranch exhibits at the National Western in Denver.

Young advises that the cattle be clean, or as clean as they possibly can be, when they’re on display sale morning and when they walk through the ring.

Many producers will wash the sale cattle two days prior to the sale. The morning of the sale, they blow out the cattle and spray on and brush in show sheen or oil.

Be sure to get the cattle in the pens three to four hours prior to the sale, Perrier says. Put the cattle in pens large enough to evaluate cattle “on the move,” yet small enough that they don’t have to be chased all over the place.

Shriner says they try to sort

Should I hire a sale manager?

After deciding you’re going to have a production sale, you need to decide if you want to hire a sale manager.

A sale manager can help you select the sale cattle, set a budget, develop an advertising and promotion strategy, and put together the sale book. A sale manager also can provide mailing lists and probably will have contacts with potential buyers.

Bernie Scheer of Cotton/Scheer & Associates, Lexington, Ky., says the role of a sale manager is to be able to analyze each individual breeding program and honestly help the breeder accomplish the following:

- A. Determine if the breeder is ready to have a sale and what objectives the breeder hopes to achieve.
- B. Decide how the breeder can best represent the cattle and pedigrees available to sell and evaluate how they stack up in the marketplace.
- C. Properly evaluate the herd from all aspects, and determine what strengths to build on in the sale book and advertising.
- D. Help the breeder determine what clientele would be interested in the program and who to target as potential customers.
- E. Provide year-round consultation to the

breeder, if desired, as to what is presently happening in the marketplace and what additions or changes might be considered to ensure continued progress.

Matt Maurer, marketing and customer service manager for Circle A Ranch near Iberia, Mo., says they hire a sale manager for their female sale but not for their bull sale.

He says they rely on their own staff’s ability to cultivate relationships regarding the bull sale. “With more than 65% of the bulls staying in the state of Missouri, it makes more sense if our own staff can do it and help reduce costs,” Maurer says.

With the fall sale, they sell more total head and target more buyers nationwide. “Their [the sale management firm] main responsibility is to help find buyers,” he explains. “Sale managers are more registered-orientated.”

As a producer, you need to evaluate the cost vs. what you are going to get from hiring a sale manager. You have to ask yourself if you can dedicate the time and effort to plan a sale by yourself or if you’re going to need help.

A sale manager can offer you time and experience.

the cattle into smaller groups so people can evaluate them more easily. They also try to group types of cattle. For example, they pen their calving-ease bulls in one area and their mature-cow bulls in another area.

7

Sale facility

The location and appearance of the sale facility are important to making a buyer feel comfortable. You want an inviting setting that is well-kept, well-lit and well-marked.

Today many producers are choosing to host their sales at their ranches, while others continue to rent their local sale barns or county fairgrounds.

Perrier encourages producers who are considering having a production sale to attend several auctions in their area to determine the options available.

The sale site does not have to be fancy. It needs to be clean, easily accessible and affordable.

Tim Ohlde, owner of Ohlde Cattle Co., is in the process of building a multipurpose facility on his farm near Palmer, Kan., that will also serve as a sale arena in the future. Previously, most of Ohlde's fall female sales and spring bull sales have been held at the sale barn in Clay Center, Kan.

He says economics was the original reason they decided to have the sales at the sale barn. Another reason was the time of year the sales were being held. In March, prior to their bull sale, most of the lots at the farm are full of calving heifers. That makes it hard to get the area clean and make space for sale bulls, Ohlde explains.

The number of sale lots is another factor when considering if you can facilitate hosting the sale at your place. "If

a guy has 50 to 75 head, it is a lot easier to host a sale at home compared to a sale with 200 to 400 head," Ohlde says.

Weather is another factor to consider. If there is a horrendous snowstorm or 5 inches of rain and you have hundreds of people attending your sale, your place could get pretty torn up.

A sale barn typically has a covered facility where the cattle can be stalled if it's nasty out, which might not be an option at home.

Ohlde says the disadvantages of hosting the sale at a sale barn are that you have to transport the sale cattle to the facility and the psychology surrounding a sale barn and diseases.

"I'd much rather have the sale at home," he says. "The cattle will be more comfortable and stay fuller and fresher."

When you haul the cattle, in many cases they'll go off feed and water for several days. Ohlde says they try to get the sale cattle to the facility at least two or three days before the sale. They wash them there and get them back on feed in time to have them full on sale day.

If you choose to host the sale at your ranch or farm, it gives buyers the opportunity to see not only the genetics you're producing, but also your management skills.

If building a facility or adding a temporary sale ring to a building already on your place, don't forget to plan for plenty of parking space and a load-out area.

You'll also need to allocate space for the cattle to be on display before the sale. One inexpensive option is to put up temporary hot-wire pens.

Consider these tips as you look for a sale facility to rent or to build on your ranch.

1. Have fewer seats than the number of buyers. A full set of bleachers with a few people standing gives a positive sale atmosphere.

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Several days before the sale wash the sale cattle. If available, you may want to use a power washer to speed up the process.



Before the sale be sure to have the sale cattle looking the best they can. Blow them out to remove dirt and manure and spray on show sheen to make them shine.

2. The sale ring should be at eye level, with the sides of the ring being high enough to contain the cattle.
3. Pipes need to be spaced wide enough so people in the stands can view the cattle easily.
4. Bedding inside the ring should be damp to prevent stirring up dust.

If building your own sale ring, consider using pliable Plexiglas® sheets (2 feet high) around the bottom to decrease the amount of bedding being kicked out of the ring.

“Cattle should flow smoothly into and out of the ring,” Perrier says. If possible, do a test run and take note of anything the animal shies away from — bright posters by the out gate, squeaky hinges, etc.

If possible, have the temperature of the facility slightly cool. “You don’t want bidders feeling slow or lazy in a warm, comfortable environment,” Perrier explains.



Hospitality

Hospitality provided before, during and after a sale is each breeder’s personal preference — from doughnuts and coffee to steak dinners. No matter what you provide, buyers will appreciate it.

Maurer says Circle A hosts a steak dinner and social the night before their female sale. The event attracts people to the ranch where the cattle are on display. Most people will come early, spend a couple hours looking at the cattle, then stay and socialize. The morning of the sale they also serve breakfast and lunch for their out-of-town guests.

If you’re going to serve lunch,

be sure to serve it early enough so everyone can get through the line without holding up the sale.

Another option would be to ask your local 4-H club or FFA chapter to set up a concession stand as a fund-raiser. Producers are willing to pay for their own meals.

If you are hosting the sale at your farm or ranch, be sure you have adequate bathroom facilities and trash receptacles.



After the sale

In many cases the steps you take after the last bid is made and the auctioneer cries, “Sold,” are the most important.

Have reliable “public-relations” people clerking the sale and shaking the buyers’ hands before they leave, Perrier says. It’s important to have several clerks and load-out people available to help after the sale. Some people may want to leave before the sale is over, so be prepared with workers at both locations. Buyers will want to pay for the cattle, load them out and get home quickly; they won’t want to waste a lot of time waiting in line, he adds.

Remember to have options available for insurance and trucking. Be sure to have ample space for the load-out area so a constant flow of trailers can be backed up to the chutes.

Although hosting a sale may seem like a big task, after you’ve done it once, it’ll be old hat.

As a last piece of advice for hosting a flaw-free sale, Birdwell says, “Some things will never change — credibility, fairness, truthfulness, enthusiasm, service and a just down-right appreciation for your customers.”



Tips for taking livestock photos

A picture is worth a thousand words. Those can be positive words or negative words, depending on the photo. In today’s fast-paced society, many producers rely on the data and pictures in a sale book or advertisement to decide if they are going to buy an animal. In many cases they might not have the time to travel to your place to evaluate your cattle, so they rely on the pictures and on your word.

“Pictures are important,” says Dean Janssen, manager of Weaver Angus Farm, Peoria, Ill., “but a bad one will hurt you. Only run the good ones.”

A good set of pictures will attract attention to your advertisement or sale book and will draw a lot of interested phone calls.

Livestock photographer Fred Stivers has been taking pictures for more than 20 years. He says patience, organization and plenty of help are important for photo day.

If you want a good picture, the cattle need to be properly clipped and clean.

Stivers says when taking Angus photos you need to avoid dark backgrounds and trees. He doesn’t like taking photos in the pasture, explaining it’s easier and more efficient to have the photo shoot in a small 50-by-100-foot lot.

Sunlight is important when taking photos. With Angus you have to be cautious of shadows. Early to mid-morning and mid- to late-afternoon, when the sun is low in the sky, are usually the best times to take photos.

Be realistic when you’re taking photos — don’t expect miracles. “The quality of the picture is not going to be better than the quality of the calf,” Stivers says.

“Many people just shoot and continue to shoot thinking they’ll eventually get a good shot. If you don’t have the animal posed correctly, you’re not going to have a good shot.”

If you decide to take the photos at home, you don’t have to spend a lot of money on a “fancy” camera. Stivers says most 35mm cameras will work. He suggests using 200-speed film. Be patient and remember that practice makes perfect.

Here are some tips to help you get that *perfect* shot.

1. Animals should be clean and trimmed.
2. Seek good lighting — no interfering shadows.
3. Keep the animal’s head up — so the animal looks alert.
4. Set up the animal on profile with opposite-side rear leg forward. This makes the animal look more natural.
5. The ears should be forward.
6. The animal’s head should be angled slightly toward the photographer.
7. Elevate the animal’s front end, if possible. Never take a photo of an animal going downhill.
8. Seek a clean, unobtrusive background. Be sure it doesn’t look like something is sticking out of the animal, such as a post.
9. When taking profile

shots, stand in front of the animal's hooks.

10. Don't be afraid to try different angles. In some cases a shot from the front of the animal or one with the animal's head more toward you will be just as effective as a "typical" shot.

According to Debbie Alexander, *Angus Journal* artist, there are several reasons why a photo won't reproduce in a publication. "You need to start with a sharp photo that has good contrast if you want it to print well in a magazine," she explains. "Pay attention to highlights, shadows, and be cautious of the foreground and background. Don't try to crop it too tight."

With the use of computers today, you can do almost anything with a photo. You have to determine what is ethical vs. unethical when you enhance a photo.

If you advertise in the *Angus Journal* or the *Angus Beef Bulletin*, there are several rules regarding enhancement. "For a fee, we will clean up a background; take out a nose bug; remove a halter; remove dirt, manure or grass around an animal's legs; convert a show photo to a pasture shot; and convert a black-and-white photo to four-color," says Cheryl Oxley, *Angus Journal* production/advertising manager. "We will not change the contour of the animal or any part of its body in any way."

First impressions are important. It's better to go without a photo than to use a bad photo in your advertising or sale book.



CLOSE TO PERFECT. Notice how the female is clean, her head is up, she is standing in a natural pose with her opposite-side rear leg forward and the background is not distracting. She looks long, clean-fronted, deep-bodied and good on her legs, and she has a nice udder — all the things you want to promote in a good picture.

A DIFFERENT ANGLE. Don't be afraid to try a different angle such as this. It's more artistic than the typical shot, yet it's a good portrayal of the bull. The bull looks long, clean-fronted and thick-quartered.



WHAT NOT TO DO. This photo doesn't portray the heifer to her best advantage. Her head's down, she's dirty in the rump area, the background is distracting, and her feet are not set to make her look her best.

Putting together a sale book

The sale book is the tool you use to invite past, current and potential customers to your production sale. You want to provide all the information producers need to entice them to your sale and to bring their checkbooks.

You don't have to spend a lot of money putting together a "fancy" sale book, says Don Laughlin, American Angus Association regional manager in Missouri and Iowa. It should be visually appealing so it's something people will want to pick up and read.

Where should I have it printed?

As you set your sale budget, you need to keep in mind the cost of printing and mailing the sale book, says Terry Cotton, *Angus Journal* general manager. Contact local printers in your area. Talk to other producers who have production sales and ask where they get their sale books printed.

Before you request bids from printers, sit down and think about how many copies you will need, explains Cotton. You'll need enough to mail to your mailing list, extras for requests and enough for sale day. Don't forget to mail a sale book to the sale personnel, your local banker, veterinarian, Extension livestock agent and other community representatives who might be interested in attending your sale.

You also need to have a good idea of how many pages it will be and if you want to use any color, says Sharon Mayes, special services coordinator for Angus Productions Inc. (API), which also publishes the *Angus Journal*



ANGIE STUMP DENTON PHOTO

Provide potential customers with as much information as you can so they'll come to your sale ready to bid.

and the *Angus Beef Bulletin*.

As you estimate the number of pages, a good rule of thumb is eight spots or lots per page, she adds. For example, you could put six lots and two photos on a page. You might also have a few pages with one feature lot dominating the page.

As you get bids for printing your sale book, also discuss deadlines. Be sure to have your sale book printed and mailed early enough so producers have a chance to look it over at home prior to the sale, says Cotton. A good rule of thumb is, if the sale book is mailing first class, mail it at least three weeks prior to the sale.

You can send the sale book third-class or bulk mail. This option is cheaper, but it will take longer to reach the mailboxes of your customers. Mayes says they estimate three to four weeks from mail date to delivery, compared to a week for first-class mailings.

Mayes says it's important to have the information to whomever is laying out your sale book a month and a half before the sale if mailing first class or two months if mailing bulk. Give them a week to get the pictures scanned and the layout designed and another week at the printer's before mailing.

Putting it together

Accuracy and completeness are the two most important ingredients as you start to put together your sale book, says Bill Bowman, director of commercial relations for the Association and a former regional manager. Producers today are thirsty for information. "Provide all the information you can," he says, "including both positive and negative performance and data records."

"Sale books have come a long way since I put together my first one for a semen auction benefiting the Montana Junior Angus Association 12 years ago," says Kelli Toledo of TC

Publishing, Visalia, Calif. "The days of cut and paste are over, and technology enables us to put together a catalog in short order. Since that first catalog, which I painstakingly stapled together by hand at Kinko's the night before the sale, I have put together a number of catalogs for all types of sales."

Toledo says organization and simplicity are the keys to an expedient and easy-to-read sale book. Here are a few simple rules she suggests for putting together a hassle-free sale book.

1. Be organized

"Provide your sale book preparers with all of the information, performance pedigrees and photos at one time," she says. "Avoid leaving holes for lots, photos, or pedigree information. That can lead to confusion during the development of the catalog."

2. Select a layout or format that suits your marketing needs.

"The ways to present your sale information are endless," she says. "Work with your sale book preparer to set up sale information in a simple, easy-to-read format."

If you are going to use footnotes, Toledo suggests, "Keep them brief. Avoid repetitive information found in other areas of the layout. Only new information should be presented in footnote form."

3. Don't wait until the sale book is in production to prepare your mailing list.

"Mailing lists available on disk are the best and fastest way to prepare catalogs with labels for mailing," she says.

In most cases ranchers ask the preparers to purchase lists and then add friends, family and past customers. Toledo says it's important to provide those "extra names" to the preparer early so they have plenty of time to enter the information and merge it with the purchased or existing mailing list. Then when the sale book comes

off the press, the mailing labels are ready to go.

4. Information overload.

Proofing pages and page numbers, pedigrees and names can get tedious. It is always a good idea to have someone who is not familiar with the information in the sale book to proof the information or data. Some sale book preparers have proofreaders on staff or temporary help they can call in. Be sure to check and see what your preparer has available.

There are many different types of sale books, just as there are many different types of sales. You can choose from black-and-white, four-color and spot color with pictures, expected progeny difference (EPD) boxes and footnotes.

Circle A Ranch, Iberia, Mo., hosts two sales a year — a bull sale in March and a female sale in September. Matt Maurer, marketing and customer service manager, says they use two different types of sale books to fit the needs of their customers.

For the bull sale, they don't print footnotes, and it's designed in a 4¼- by 11-inch format so it better fits in the producer's back pocket. "Commercial producers are more interested in pedigrees, EPDs and performance data," Maurer says.

Circle A's fall sale book is a little more "jazzy," with footnotes and more pictures targeting registered seedstock producers.

Weaver Angus Farm, Peoria, Ill., has their sale book put together by API Special Services, taking advantage of API's ability to download pedigrees and current EPDs from the Association's mainframe. That system provides less chance for error and reduces preparation time.

Weaver also mails their sale book with the October *Angus Journal*, giving them access to second-class mailing rates and the Association's membership list.

TIPS TO REMEMBER

TIP A: "As you estimate the number of pages, a good rule of thumb is eight spots or lots per page."

— Sharon Mayes

TIP B: "Organization and simplicity are the keys to an expedient and easy-to-read sale book."

— Kelli Toledo

TIP C: "To make sure your sale book is in the mail on time, have it to your designer and printer by deadline."

— Terry Cotton

"Sending it with the *Journal*, it reaches a lot more people," says Dean Janssen, manager of Weaver Angus Farm. "It's hard to get a good mailing list."

Sale books done by API do not have to mail with the *Journal*. They may be sent on their own to the entire membership or to a defined geographic area, says Mayes. API also can mail it to a producer's mailing list.

To make sure your sale book is in the mail on time, have it to your designer and printer by deadline. Don't procrastinate. If API is going to do your sale book, get the sale cattle registered and get the performance data to the Association as soon as possible.

Editor's Note: For more information to help you put together a sale book, see the tips and examples on pages 54 and 55.

Information to include in your sale book

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Sale date
- Sale time
- Sale location and a detailed map with directions
- Farm or ranch address and phone number
- Sale day phone number
- Names and phone numbers of auctioneer, sale manager and publication personnel who will be working the sale
- Motel locations and information
- A map showing major arteries to the sale location and local airports
- Time and location of cattle viewing and social functions
- Herd health information
- Livestock insurance information
- Any special services or incentives — trucking, volume discount, junior incentive program
- Welcome letters from the owner, manager and sale manager

HERD/REFERENCE SIRE(S)

- Pictures, pedigrees and EPD listings of sires of cattle offered

Bon View Farms

Complete and Total Dispersion

Monday and Tuesday, October 5 and 6, 1998

9 A.M. C.D.T


At the Farm near
Canova, South Dakota

Sale Day Phones:
(605) 523-2657 or
(605) 523-2526

Auctioneers:



Craig Cenover
(712) 882-1303




Joe Giggins
(406) 245-6447

Association Representatives:
 Jim Shirley, Regional Manager, American Angus Assn., (605) 692-1613
 Scott Bush, President, South Dakota Angus Assn., (605) 448-2709
 Kent Geppert, Vice President, South Dakota Angus Assn., (605) 778-6227
 Kevin Albrecht, Secretary / Treasurer, South Dakota Angus Assn., (605) 925-4659

Livestock Press Representatives:
 Jim Shirley, *Angus Journal*
 Terry Cotton, *Angus Journal*
 Chuck Grove, *Angus Journal*
 Kirby Goettsch, *Dakota Farmer*
 Dick Carmichael, *Wesley's Farmer*
 Gene Fitzgerald, *Nebraska Farmer*
 Jeff Kapperman, *Tri-State Neighbor*
 Jim Gies, *Western Livestock Journal*
 Jay George, *Tri-State Livestock News*

Buyers unable to attend the sale may call or send their bids to the above Representatives, Sale Managers, or Auctioneers.

Sale Managed by:



Cotton & Scheer
 1217 S. 12th St.
 P.O. Box 1217
 Rapid City, SD 57702
 Phone: (605) 342-8888
 Fax: (605) 342-8844

Sale Location:
 The sale will be held at Bon View Farms, Canova, South Dakota, located 11 miles north of Salem, South Dakota on Hwy. 81 or 15 miles north of Interstate 90 on U.S. Hwy. 81.

Sale Headquarters:
 Farmkota Best Western, Junction 38E and I-29, Sioux Falls, 50 miles, (605) 336-0650.

Other Accommodations:
 Ramada Inn, 1301 W. Russell St., Sioux Falls, 50 miles, (605) 336-1020.
 Super 8, 1508 W. Russell St., Sioux Falls, 50 miles, (605) 339-9330.
 Sleep Inn, N. Kiwanis, Sioux Falls, 50 miles, (605) 339-3992.
 Holiday Inn (City Center), 100 W 8th St., Sioux Falls, 50 miles, (605) 339-2000.
 Holiday Inn, 1525 W. Hover St., Mitchell, 45 miles, (605) 996-6501.
 Super 8, Hwy. 37 and I-90, Mitchell, 45 miles, (605) 996-8678.
 Super 8, Hwy. 34 and 81, Madison, 20 miles, (605) 256-6931.
 U-Bar Motel, Best Western, I-90 Ext 368, Canistota, 20 miles, (605) 296-3486.
 Ask for the Bon View block of rooms when making reservations.

Transportation:
 Sioux Falls, South Dakota located approximately 50 miles from farm is serviced by United, Northwest, and TWA Airlines. Madison, South Dakota has excellent facilities for private planes.

Terms and Conditions:
 All cattle are to be sold for sale day unless prior arrangements have been made. No cattle will be loaded or transferred until payment is received in full. The cattle sell under the standard terms and conditions for dispersions as suggested by the American Angus Association.

Cattle Inspection:
 The cattle may be inspected at the farm any time prior to sale day, please call in advance of your visit.

Herd Health:
 All cattle will be accompanied by proper health certificates. All heifer calves will sell calfhood vaccinated.

Update Sheet:
 A supplemental sheet will be available sale day with updated breeding and calving information. This sheet and any announcements from the block will take precedence over this printed material.

Pregnancy Examination Info:
 All cattle have been pregnancy checked by a competent veterinarian, and are called safe to the A.I. or pasture dates as best can be determined by advanced palpation. In respect to A.I. dates, they are not unconditionally guaranteed, other than the fact they are pregnant.

Insurance:
 Your cattle can be insured at the clerk's desk.

Trucking:
 Bon View Farms will be happy to assist in trucking.

Food and Refreshments:
 Will be available throughout the duration of the sale.

Our Sale Book and Online Bidding are Available at the CyberStockyard Web Site.
www.cyberstockyard.com
 Call (888) 324-6010 to register for on-line bidding.
 Please register at least 5 days prior to sale date!
 On-line book location for Bon View
www.livestockplus.com/BONVIEW.htm

Bon-View Farms
 80 Years in the Angus Business
 30 Years of Performance Records

4406 241st St. • Canova, SD 57121
 Howard and JoAnne Hillman • (605) 523-2657
 Beal and Carmen Hillman • (605) 523-2452
 Rich Rice, Herbmann
 Fax (605) 523-2526
 E-mail: hillmar@att.net
 15 miles north of I-90 on U.S. Hwy. 81



Bon View Eisa 544 / Lot 1

Bon View Eisa 1898 / Lot 1A

1 Bon View Eisa 544		Calfed: 2-15-94		Cow 12126319		Tattoo: 544		
#Futura Bando 155	#B&B 234 of Mead 3183	CAR WT						
Bon View Bando 598	Totally Black 5373	1=1.4	.28					
11104267	#Bon View Don 416	1=1.4	.28					
	#Bon View HK 115	1= .03	.20					
	#Bon View Don 416	1= .17	.26					
	#Scherer Frank Sleashome	FAT						
#PS Saucarch 904	#PS Newcom Princess 285	1= .02	.26					
Bon View Eisa 1158	#Black Mt. Henry 13 Y	% RP						
12126399	Bon View Eisa 474	1=0.2	.26					
BIRTH WT	WEANING WT	MILK	COMB	YEARLING WT				
+3.2	.72	+26	.99	+17	.61	+30	+51	.67

*WR 28/102, YR 28/104. Two daughters retained. HC 2/27/98 by B/R New Design 323. Bred 5/21 to Comely Dairline; exposed 6/6 to 7/28 to Bon View Bando 1394. Sale A.I.

2 Bon View Eisa 1898		Calfed: 2-27-95		Cow 13058479		Tattoo: 1898		
B/R New Design 323	#IDAR New Trend 315	CAR WT						
11202774	B/R Backcap Empress 75	1=1.4	.21					
	YDAR Pine Grove 251	1= .46	.23					
	Tiffany BR	1= .27	.20					
	Bon View Bando 598	FAT						
Bon View Bando 598	#Futura Bando 155	1= .03	.20					
Bon View Eisa 544	#Bon View Don 30	% RP						
12126373	#PS Saucarch 904	1=0.5	.20					
Bon View Eisa 1158	Bon View Eisa 886							
BIRTH WT	WEANING WT	MILK	COMB	YEARLING WT				
1=2.4	.09	1=24	.08	1=16	.09	+27	1=54	.07

3 Bon View Eisa 1467		Calfed: 2-04-97		Cow 12790946		Tattoo: 1467		
#DAS Tracker 23-4	#B&B 234 of Mead 3183	CAR WT						
GAR Tracker 1483	QAS Blackbird Eye 681 1	1=1.4	.28					
11366096	#Futura Bando 155	1= .14	.29					
	Oscar GAR 425	1= .06	.28					
	Bon View Bando 598	FAT						
Bon View Bando 598	#Futura Bando 155	1=0	.20					
Bon View Eisa 544	#Bon View Don 30	% RP						
12126319	#PS Saucarch 904	1=0.3	.27					
Bon View Eisa 1158	Bon View Eisa 886							
BIRTH WT	WEANING WT	MILK	COMB	YEARLING W				
+1.6	.38	+33	.38	+15	.30	+31	+64	.32

*WR 186, YR 110. Bred 5/18 to Bon View Bando 598; exposed 6/6 to 7/28 to Bon View Prospector 1795. Sale A.I.



SF Bando 7101 / A full brother to "598" bred in the Sherrod herd in Alabama.

SALE LOTS

- Lot number
- Animal name
- Registration number
- Birth date
- Tattoo
- Pedigree
- EPDs
- Photo

FOOTNOTES

- If calf at side, information about calf
- If bred, service date and sire
- Show winnings or other interesting facts
- If retaining semen interest or revenue interest, be sure to explain

MISCELLANEOUS

- Terms of sale — a copy of the American Angus Association's "Suggested Sale Terms and Conditions"
- Explain performance and carcass information provided — EPDs, ratios and individual performance data collected
- If bulls are performance-tested, include the ration and days on feed
- Definitions of various selling terms — embryos, guaranteed pregnancies, sexed embryos, semen interest, revenue interest

