

Registration Papers—



Glen Klippenstein
Maysville, Mo.

Crossbreeding plays a vital role in our cattle industry, yet commercial and purebred worlds often seem segregated in goals and purposes. Superior genetics supplied by seed stock producers provide the only true means of progress, and the key to identifying those genetics lies with accurate, recorded information. Ancestral documentation through registration papers is the core of such information and, in essence, the reason for your breed association's existence.

Without such information—without the ability to trace problems or build upon identified genetic strengths—we quickly lose our way. Without reference points and a road map of sorts we cannot identify the paths traveled or, more importantly, the paths we choose to take.

Today, a wealth of performance information allows pedigrees to describe much more than an individual's breeder and parentage. The registration certificate remains the one thing, however, which distinguishes purebred cattle from nondescript cattle.

We offer the thoughts of two men closely involved with the registered Angus business. And we encourage each of you to record your part of the road map so vital to our progress. Make sure a pedigree accompanies every purebred you sell or purchase.

Klippenstein, partner-manager of Glenkirk Farms, is a well known breeder, speaker, judge and promoter in Hereford, Polled Hereford, and more recently, Angus circles. Although the operation's history traces to 1966, the Angus division was added 10 years later. Since then, Glenkirk has drawn on top genetics from leading Angus herds in expanding the herd to its present 150 head. The partnership runs over 1,000 females in all, including commercial cows for use in their transplant program. Klippenstein has been successful with several breeds and feels strongly about the value of registration papers.

AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION
Certifies That

REGISTRY NUMBER: _____ TAG NO.: _____
 SEX: _____ DATE CALVED: _____
 TATTOO LEFT EAR: _____ RIGHT EAR: _____ MEMBER CODE: _____
 MEMBER CODE: _____

NAME OF ANIMAL: _____ BREEDER: _____
 FIRST OWNER: _____ DATE CALVED: _____
 SIRE: _____ MEMBER CODE: _____
 DASH: _____ MEMBER CODE: _____

NAME AND ADDRESS OF RECORDED OWNER: _____
 SERVICE BULL NAME: _____
 SERVICE DATE: _____ DATE OF SALE: _____

DATE OF SALE: _____
 CHECK IF REQUESTING PERFORMANCE REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE
 (Only valid if above service performed prior to Date of Sale. Date of Sale of Sire must be at least 1 year prior to Date of Sale of Dam.)

AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION
 1201 FREEDOME BOULEVARD
 ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI 64501

Richard S. Spader
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT



Lynn Ballagh
Burwell, Neb.

Lynn, his brother and father operate the Ballagh Ranch, a partnership which includes some 600 black cows in the sandhills of central Nebraska. As an official test herd for the Association's structured Sire Evaluation Program, they have used some of the breed's top genetics over the past six years. Cleanup bulls which follow the successful A.I. program are almost all registered Angus and some 15 to 20 young sires are turned over every few years. The purebred segment of this operation includes 120 cows now and continues to grow. Because Ballagh knits the commercial and purebred worlds together on a practical basis, his comments are highly respected.

Registration Papers— What's Their Value?

Klippenstein

cows that stay thin, etc.—all managed together. That's not very efficient or effective production.

To stabilize such situations we must turn to purebreds—to the known ancestry and performance information in pedigrees. Calving ease, weights, gains and milkability—we can measure these things accurately now and they are of economic importance. The more economically important informa-

tion papers. It's one of the greatest investments we can make (and have made) in the purebred beef cattle business.

Small price for value and service

The American Angus Assn. helps us keep those vital records because few of us will on our own. Registration fees and AHIR fees are small prices to pay to keep us on target, on track.

And we're not just paying for a pedigree. We're paying for research and development, promotion, enjoyment, education and stimulation in addition to the road map provided.

tion we can put together, the better. That shouldn't be a threat to good cattlemen—we all need to assimilate numbers as well as utilize lessons learned through experience.

We select for many traits. We have to. But how will we know what an individual is unless we know something about their background? That brings us right back to regis-

And we're not just paying for a pedigree. We're paying for research and development, promotion, enjoyment, education and stimulation in addition to the road map provided. And now we are reaping the greatest bonus of all in performance backgrounds.

Registration papers and accurate records are our responsibility. We must provide the reference points, the road map. **AJ**

Ballagh

port. Growth is important to me, of course, but my main concern is with maternal traits. That is what the Angus breed is important for, so I look for maternal strength in ancestors listed all the way through a registration paper. We raise all our replacement heifers and it's just too big a gamble to put all the expense into those females and use

tered stock. If I should choose to sell females or produce bulls to sell, pedigrees give proof of their ancestry and makes them more valuable.

Registration papers also provide another way for me to keep more accurate records. After the investment in time and genetics, pedigrees represent a small additional cost.

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I register eligible heifer calves with average or above average performance. We are using some of the best genetics available through the sire evaluation testing program and I have the opportunity to have regis-

In summary, I have used bulls that I only knew the top side on. That left me in the dark on the bottom side, so I was only 50 percent sure of what I was using. Registration papers eliminate much of that guess work and many unknown factors—they make a bull much more valuable to me. **AJ**

What's Their Value?

Little more than a decade ago the primary population of our national cow herd was straightbred. That was before the influx of exotic breeds and before "genetic geniuses" decided crossbreeding was the means toward solvency in the beef business. Unfortunately not much was said about disciplined, orderly crossbreeding. Many cattlemen crossbred indiscriminately, eventually "graduating" to crossbred bulls, and the predictability of offspring and production became forever lost. There was no longer a road map.

With orderly, disciplined, organized crossbreeding programs, commercial cattlemen can certainly make headway. But they must have straight strains to stay on a carefully designed path. Otherwise, reference points are lost. Pedigrees provide those reference points—they allow cattlemen to truly map breeding programs and thus make progress.

Let me illustrate. We have a great deal of plumbing on our place and for a while we didn't think it was necessary to have anything to tell us where that underground plumbing was. When a break in the line

came, we didn't know where to look because we didn't have a map. We couldn't find the place to repair it. Needless to say, we've since mapped out everything and now it's easier to repair and know where to start to continue the lines.

We need a road map

For anything you cannot see, you need a map or you soon get lost. The same applies to animal breeding. Genetics is a field we cannot see, but it is one we can manipulate. In order to manipulate, though, you have to know where you are and where you are headed.

The future is going to demand people who remain in the business have a predictable product—a credible product sifted through trial and stresses. That is the role of seed stock producers.

With the advent of real information based on economic traits we have Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs) and Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs), figures which describe the true breeding or genetic value of an individual. Through performance figures (in large enough numbers to make the in-

formation meaningful) we can know much more about our cattle and even about breeders.

We had better be sophisticated enough to recognize variations in genetics and utilize the information to stabilize our product. We must get more predictability in a very mixed up national cow herd. And that predictability must reach beyond our cow herds and feedlots to the beef consumer.

In order to sell a product to consumers and tell them they will have the same kind of beef six months from now as they have today, we must have some control of the genetic input. Management is important, but we cannot assure the consumer of a consistent product without knowing the genetics. The only way we will earn more for our product is with that assurance.

Stabilizing the commercial herd

It all boils down to stabilizing the commercial industry. For instance, we see herds with frame 7 cows running beside frame 3 cows, cows that milk too much with cows that milk too little, cows that stay fat with

The quality of cattle entering the marketplace and cow herd replacement each year is largely due to their genetic makeup. Whether commercial breeders or purebred breeders, all of us have control of this makeup.

In order to improve a herd genetically, you must have an effective system for identifying the superior seed stock in your herd. Selection must be on the basis of some objective measurements taken for specific, important traits which are heritable. For me, the commercial cowman, these are economic traits which are highly heritable and can be evaluated easily through registrations—specifically through performance registration certificates (PRCs) on the bulls I buy to use in my cow herd.

Added cost justified

To me, a genetically superior bull's cost can be made up easily by his calves' extra weight plus the added value of superior fe-

males put back into the herd. And where I really see the value of registration papers and performance certificates on bulls is with the cost and time factor involved in producing superior replacement females. It's just too great a risk not to know the specific bloodlines on a bull or to have proof of what that bull is able to do.

Registration papers help improve my selection estimates, making them more accurate and eliminating much of the trial and error process in striving for genetically superior sires. I can know for certain whether the individual I'm buying is linebred or inbred or whatever. A look at a registration paper can show you generations of cattle involved in producing one select individual.

A PRC provides even more complete and detailed information that I can use. Performance information indicates whether the family background includes consistent performers or if the individual bull is simply a standout from a bunch of medium cattle.

I may not know all the bloodlines, but I can see just how predictable an individual is going to be.

Another thing I really appreciate about the registration paper is that it gives me a permanent record of information on animals I purchase. After several years it's easy to forget the age, bloodlines or performance of an individual. With that registration paper, you always have a record for reference. And when I'm watching a bull's daughters come into production, it's nice to be able to refer to his pedigree and see if he held true to form.

Not worth a gamble

I like to look at a registration paper and see the bloodlines and program represent goals similar to my own.

Primarily, I look at the sire in a pedigree, but I also study the dam's side and look for names which are familiar or ones I can check out in the Angus Sire Evaluation Re-