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## Angus Dominant Breed, Survey Shows

Angus is the dominant breed in the U.S. beef cattle industry and its popularity among commercial cattlemen continues to grow, a recent survey commissioned by the American Angus Association shows.

During the past year some 30 percent of all commercial cow-calf producers purchased Angus bulls, the survey done by *Farm Journal*-owned Rockwood Research showed. This compares with 27 percent of producers last year who reported that they had purchased Angus bulls for use in their commercial herds.

Our main competition in the bull selling business last year was Simmental and Hereford. Some 25 percent of the commercial producers said they purchased Simmental bulls during the previous year and 22 percent purchased Hereford and Polled Hereford. The percentage of Simmentals used was up by two percent, while the percentage of Hereford was down slightly. The next largest breed used, according to the survey, was Charolais at 17 percent, down from 19 percent a year earlier. Limousin bulls purchased for use by commercial cattle producers stood at 16 percent of the total. This was up from 14 percent. Two percent of the bulls purchased were Brahman, down from three percent.

Another revealing question ask in the survey was, "What major breed or combination of breeds is your beef cow herd primarily composed of?" Because most herds are crossbred the cattle producers usually mentioned more than one breed, which means the total is more than 100 percent.

In this category Angus lead with 52 percent, followed by Hereford (both breeds) at 45 percent; Simmental, and Charolais at 17 percent each, Brahman 12 percent and Limousin seven percent.

This continued improvement in demand for Angus cattle in the face of declining and steady beef cow numbers in the U.S. helps account for the continued improvement in prices paid for registered Angus cattle. In the first four months of the 1990 fiscal year the average price of all Angus bulls sold at auction was \$2,334 compared with \$2,069 for all of last year. Angus females sold at 138 auctions the first four months of this fiscal year have averaged \$1,774 per head compared with \$1,713 for all of 1989.

Angus gains come slow while the cattle business is in a declining or no-growth situation, because any gains the breed makes must come at the expense of other breeds.

Obviously beef cattle producers are paying closer attention to business and less to fads and the popular new breed of the year. This is good for Angus breeders, because we have more economic advantages to offer the business than any other breed. It also puts continuing pressure upon the Association and all Angus breeders to know our customers and do our best to satisfy their beef cattle genetic needs.

