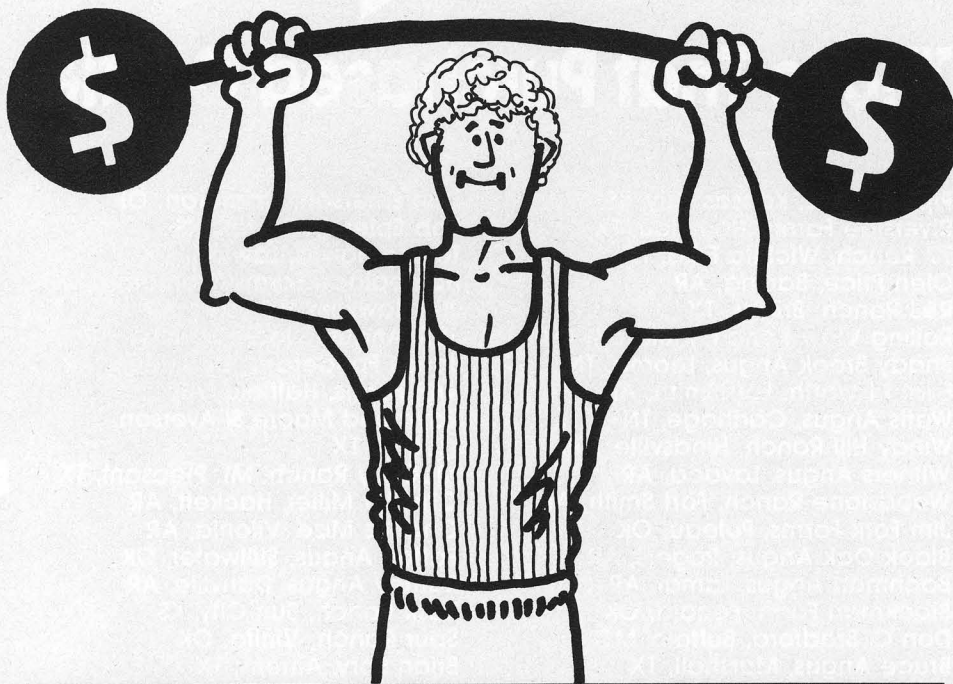
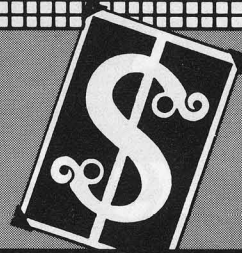


MERCHANDISING



Add muscle to your cattle sales program

If you seek a merchandising tool to add punch to your advertisements and power to your sales pitch, then look no further than your Angus Herd Improvement Records and the relatively new Expected Progeny Difference (EPD) figures.

For years, some have been critical of performance programs because with ratios half the animals in every herd rank below 100. They argued, with some validity, that it's difficult to promote a good bull with a ratio of 96 for yearling weight even though this score is the result, not of inferiority, but because his individual weight was slightly below the average of his contemporary group.

But with EPD information, things are different. If you have been on the AHIR program for a few years and used a rigid selection and culling program, you may

find that every cow in your herd is positive in nearly every EPD trait. This is a revelation to some who have worked only with ratios—but it's a fact.

One small Angus breeder I know requested EPD information on his entire herd the other day. He found almost every one of his cows is positive for weaning weight, yearling weight, and milk. And birth weight EPD are all within very acceptable limits. What's more, there were significant differences between the performance of his older cows and their daughters in production.

The figures show he's made progress in his breeding program the past few years. They also point up he needs to use different bulls on the older cows than the younger ones. But the best news may have been that he has few if any negative

EPD records to sidestep or sell around in his merchandising program. The calf from even his lowest producing cow has positive EPD figures to help sell it.

With the EPD system you do not compete against yourself, but rather against all Angus breeders—at least those who keep AHIR records. This means if you do a good job you have predominately positive EPD records to promote. On the other side of the coin, if you do a poor job, you can have a herd with mostly negative EPD records, even on animals that ratio 120.

Before too long, all Angus Herd Improvement Records information will be expressed as EPD. As Dick Spader, executive vice president of the American Angus Assn. said recently, "The commercial industry is rapidly moving to the EPD Concept, and the breeders and breeders that have the information, and promote its importance, will profit the most."

You don't have to wait for the planned change in the way all AHIR records are processed. If you have been on the AHIR program for a few years, you can obtain EPD information now on all your animals to use in merchandising as well as in your breeding program. Just contact the Association's performance department and request it.

If you don't understand what an EPD is, then also request the new booklet "Consistent Performers." It explains in simple question and answer form What Expected Progeny Differences are and how to use them. Or if you prefer, write me for a free copy.

Nearly every beef publication you read these days has printed information on Expected Progeny Differences and how they can simplify bull selection. So, you can expect more and more of your customers to demand EPD information from you. The better prepared you are to furnish it, and explain its importance, the more likely you are to increase your share of the local bull business.

Director of Communications
and Public Relations