

LEAD IN

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Follow-up Service Helps Build Membership

In June the American Angus Association will publish a new booklet titled "How to Develop a Successful Angus Herd." It is attractive, easy to read, and contains information that every prospective or new member of the American Angus Association should have. It also might be of interest to many members who have been in the Angus business for a while.

Last year more than 3,700 people became regular or junior members of the American Angus Association. For the most part, these people are just beginning their registered Angus businesses. In addition, thousands of people each year write or telephone the American Angus Association requesting information about Angus cattle. Many want to know how to get started with registered Angus cattle. The new booklet is designed especially for these novices.

One of the critical factors that helps determine whether a person or family succeeds or fails with their new registered Angus herd is how they get started and what kind of early goals they set for themselves. People who get the right advice and information, and who set realistic expectations about the growth and profitability of their registered herds have laid a firm foundation for success. Those who begin with false expectations, inadequate information poor advice and insufficient help from established Angus breeders are likely to be among the high percentage of people who drop out of the registered Angus business during the first three years after they join the Association.

Purchases by new members account for a significant part of the Angus business. Cultivating them and encouraging their development is the job of both the American Angus Association and every active member. The Association can advertise and provide interested people with information. Still, in the end, how prospective and new members are handled by Angus breeders they deal with determines to a great extent the success of their fledgling businesses. Members who follow up on a sale, who are willing to answer questions and provide follow-up service are invaluable in getting new breeders off on the right foot.

Just this week we received a call from a

man in Texas. He wanted to know how his daughter could register the offspring of her registered Angus heifer project, and about tattooing the calf. We provided him with the information, but it would have been much better if the father had felt welcome to call the Angus breeder who sold his daughter the heifer for answers to his questions. What a great help to these new Angus people it would have been if the breeder had stopped by to show the father and daughter how to properly tattoo the calf and fill in the registration application. It would teach the youngster and father how to do the job in the future. And best, from the breeder's point of view, it would virtually guarantee that if the child or father bought additional registered Angus cattle in the future, they would return to the breeder who sold them the original animal.

Things that seem simple and routine to established Angus breeders are sometimes difficult and confusing to those new to the business. Every new American Angus Association member receives the "Breeder's Reference Guide" which covers many things in detail, including how to register a calf. They receive the tattooing instructional booklet plus an order blank that can be used, among other things, to obtain a tattoo kit and ink. But it is one thing to read about these procedures and yet another to do them right the first time. Nothing can replace on-the-spot assistance and instruction.

The growing Angus business means that more people every year are likely to visit your place with an eye to getting started with registered Angus. When they visit, whether they buy that day or not, provide them with the appropriate booklets from the Association, which you can obtain in small quantities at no cost. Also provide them with your own herd brochure or some piece of information to take with them to remind them of you.

But even more important, make them feel welcome to call you any time they have questions or need help. Both you and the new Angus breeder will benefit.

