

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

## These Professionals Can Sharpen Your Angus Advertising Skills

by Keith Evans  
Director of Public Relations

Even in his prime the great golfer Arnold Palmer would work with a teaching professional from time to time to improve his swing and make him an even more awesome threat on the professional golf circuit. To work with an expert is one of the best possible ways to learn a new skill or sharpen an existing one.

Advertising and promotion is a skill that many registered cattle breeders don't discuss much. Most breeders have no hesitation about discussing performance testing or artificial insemination techniques with other cattlemen, but never sit down with another Angus breeder to swap information on

effective ways to sell cattle or get new people into the Angus business.

In this section of the 1984 Herd Reference edition you can pick the brains of some very successful Angus merchandisers. The ideas range all the way from selling herd bulls to selling Angus freezer beef, and if you have wondered why some states have so many more boys and girls interested in the Angus business than others, one highly successful state junior leader tells you how it's done.

You will want to dip into this refreshing pool of information many times in the next year for money-making ideas. It can help you be an even more awesome threat to your competitors in the professional cattle circuit.

## Production Goals, Professional Help Key Russ Denowh's Program



by Russ Denowh  
Glendive, Mont.

Advertising on a large scale is relatively new to Gartner-Denowh. To bring the matter into perspective, we must go back about 30 years to when this herd was built and put into production.

From past experience with other breeds, we knew the female was vitally important to any purebred operation. So, after the decision was made to go into the registered Angus business, the best females available were purchased and the program was launched.

What does this have to do with advertising, you say? Everything, because for years our product was sold at private treaty while we experimented, tested and developed our own program based on the efficient female.

When finally our cattle became recognized for their maternal and performance attributes, Gartner-Denowh went to production sales and promoted the progeny locally and nationally.

In the beginning, we used basically local print media with area livestock publications and, of course, the Angus Journal. As time progressed, radio and limited local TV were utilized.

It wasn't until about five years ago that we took a long hard look at our advertising program, analyzing it from every aspect to determine some definite directions.

Increased popularity of Angus cattle brought with it an even greater number of Angus breeders, creating more competition. Therefore, more of our advertising dollar was directed into target markets. We feel that the best form of advertising is the "word of mouth" so we depended a lot on our customers.

We maintain contact with customers in the form of direct mail. Recently we contracted Purebred Promotions of Billings, Mont., to do a brochure for us. It's not overly expensive or too "high brow" but basic and simple. This has been very effective.

Wherever we go—tours, field days, fairs or anyplace where cattlemen are gathered—we have these brochures available. You must be careful that you do not offend other people with your handout, so discretion and common sense must be used.



**Gartner-Denowh**  
ANGUS RANCH

### Why We Place So Much Emphasis on the Female

Early in our breeding program, we learned that the selection process for replacement females could not be made on growth and rate of gain as in bulls.

Femininity became the by-word. Females with too much muscling never became good producers with their nursing ratios falling below the herd average. Likewise, those females with little or no beef cow appearance produced calves with too much of the dairy cow look.

So, Gartner-Denowh, through the years, has maintained a balance in the female herd as to producing and eye appeal. Some of our very best producing cows have personal ratios less than 100 yet their EBV on 5 or 6 calves is 105 or above.

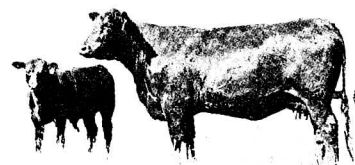
Our theory has been to select and breed for the very best female possible and all the other ingredients will automatically follow. That is why we have chosen the picture of this cow and her calf to highlight this brochure. Although she may not be perfect, she epitomizes those things we desire in a feminine top producing Angus beef cow.

And the result stands beside her—a well muscled, masculine February bull calf that will probably wean off at around 700 pounds. His strong maternal traits will pass on to his progeny, the life line in the cattle business—fertility, milking and growth ability.

Therefore, the cows in our herd are asked to do only one thing. PERFORM. Perform by recycling and breeding back on schedule without supplemental feed. Perform by consistently weaning a calf that will perpetuate the maternal values of this cow herd, be it bull or heifer.

Culling our cowherd sometimes is ruthless, but we cannot afford to make excuses for cows that do not perform in all areas.

That is why at Gartner-Denowh Angus, the emphasis is placed on the female. It always has and always will.



She is the kind that keeps us in business.

The first page of Gartner-Denowh's brochure illustrates the straightforward nature of their breeding and advertising programs.

---

---

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

---

---

Likewise, any phone or letter inquiry receives a brochure. A picture with a simple message sometimes tells a lot more than many words on the phone.

In all our advertising we continually stress our most important trait—maternal influence. Observing national companies, we have learned that consistent repetition is most effective.

The basic premise on which Gartner-Denowh operates its advertising program is that of "having the goods first." Literally tens

of thousands of dollars can be expended on promotion of "a sale" or "a herd" or "one animal," but if the prospective customer comes, looks and finds that the product does not equal the promotion, he will not buy. Not only will he not buy, his "word of mouth" goes to work against you.

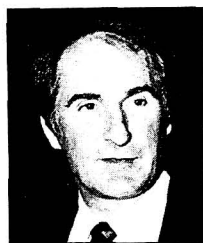
In summation, we do not feel that any one media is better than another, but a balance can be most effective. We found it most beneficial to study our market, determine where our buyers come from and what

they were buying or not buying. Flexibility. We live in a changing society, volatile in fact. What worked for us yesterday may not work today. We had to be honest with ourselves. Was our product worthy of the words or adjectives we used to describe them?

For Gartner-Denowh Angus, advertising is becoming more and more important with the passing of each day and with that passing we have learned to broaden our horizons and rely more on professional assistance. ■

---

## In the Future—Merchandising will be More Important Than Genetics



by Steve Radakovich  
Earlham, Iowa

**T**he merchandising of beef seed stock to the commercial producer is a field long overlooked by the seed stock breeder. There are several very natural reasons for our shortcomings.

First, we as breeders are not trained, and have had little interest as merchandisers. We spend our time, due to our interest, in learning how to genetically produce a more popular product. Ninety percent of the topics covered in breed seminars and field days

have something to do with breeding or production. An animal breeder is always looking for faults to correct while a successful salesperson looks for attributes to merchandise. It is difficult to wear both hats in the same business.

Second, we allow ourselves to be pulled into the glamour and excitement of the big-buck-bull bull. We can be so obsessed that our entire efforts, advertising budget and activities center around this dream, while we ignore our commercial neighbors. One needs to remember that without solid commercial acceptance, a seed stock enterprise can find itself on thin ice.

Third, a common mistake is to get trapped in day-to-day production—both from a time and financial standpoint. We have to buy the new tractor or fix fence, when our cash flow might be enhanced if we would travel and show interest in past

and potential customers. Unfortunately that job, more times than not, is put off until we have time. After all we can't drive around the country when there is work to get done.

Still another unfortunate reason for sub-par merchandising is the fact that the average life of a seed stock herd is around seven years. One cannot expect to build buyer

---

**An animal breeder is always looking for faults to correct while a successful salesperson looks for attributes to merchandise.**

---

confidence in seven years. Confidence incidentally, is the main reason buyers purchase seed stock from a particular breeder. Matter of fact it takes 10 years, at least, to develop your own program and identity. Of course the seven-year longevity problem is hard to solve. I wonder if part of it is due to our failure to obtain the big buck dream.

My thoughts here are limited to merchandising to the commercial man. I truly feel registered trade pretty much takes care of itself. The registered breeder will find you if you have something to offer. That's part of his responsibility to improve his product. Besides, he is easy to reach. Your breed magazine, seminars, shows and field days all cater to the registered breeder. However, the important commercial man is a horse of a different color. He does not attend your shows, field days and seminars. Yes, let's face it, like it or not, he is not standing along the show ring making his selection decisions on bulls. He's not even there. If he's at the fair, you'll find him in the machinery display looking at the latest baler.

Why is this commercial man so hard to reach? There are several reasons. However, one big reason is that the cow-calf enterprise, to a vast majority of these men, is low

---

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

---

priority. Two-thirds of the feeder cattle produced in the United States come from herds of less than 100 cows. These cowmen are made up of part-time farmers with full-time jobs in town and larger farmers whose cow herd is a small part of their total operations. His main interest could easily lay for example in corn, soybeans or hog production. The other one-third of feeder cattle are produced by herds with over 100 cows. In this group, the cow herd is a higher priority business. The owners of these herds, however, are very dollar-and-cents, input-output oriented. They have to make the cow-calf enterprise return a profit so are less prone to tradition, fads or fancy. They want net profit in black and white figures.

Now before we throw ourselves into the commercial market, there are two things we need to appraise. Number one is our credibility. You cannot sell successfully without buyer confidence. This is achieved over time. Every operation has credibility to some extent. Some herds are of course more credible than others and some are more widely known. Seed stock producers need to analyze their credibility. Is your program respected locally, throughout the state, regionally, or on a national level? This analysis will help in planning your advertising budget and point out new frontiers that need attention. For example, if your pro-

gram is well accepted locally but few people know you outside your neighborhood, maybe you should become acquainted outside your area through state cattlemen's associations, farm management groups, etc. On the other side, some find their cattle are accepted on a national basis, but have little following around their own neighborhood. A little extra time at the coffee shop or local sale barn will do wonders.

We started a pre-sale program several years ago for the purpose of educating our buyers on the performance records that we keep. This has been well accepted and in turn has enabled our customers to become more familiar with our records and our philosophy. This in turn has developed buyer confidence and credibility. If customers understand and feel a part of the team, they develop confidence. A credible breeder is looked to for leadership and advice. The occasional excuse some give that, "my customers demand traditional bulls," is a perfect example of the "tail wagging the dog" in that breeder's failure to educate and lead.

Secondly, we really need to know our product. We need to know its advantages and benefits in dollars and cents. Not one breed or program can supply all the needs for the industry. And yet most all programs can supply specific needs for specific commercial operations. We need to analyze the

attributes of our seed stock and, more importantly, where and by whom they are needed.

You may ask, how can I improve merchandising? You are lucky, there are examples around you every day. For instance: Machinery and feed dealers. Why are some more effective than others? How important is product service to you? Most of us appreciate service. Why is a salesman paid and furnished a car to stop by your place for a visit? Why do feed companies have customer dinners? Why do machinery dealers have product displays at state fairs? The next time you buy a product from a salesman ask yourself why you decided on that product and not some other brand? Every day is full of examples. All we have to do is observe.

I truly feel that in the future merchandising will be more highly correlated to the financial success of seed stock producers than genetic selection. One reason being that breeding values and field data reports will tend to equalize breeders' odds in proper selection. A higher percent of desirable cattle will be produced, but the breeders that benefit will be the ones capable of merchandising them effectively. ■

---

## Pocket-Sized Booklet Extends Tour Stop Into Sales Call

by Richard Hillman,  
Manager  
Hay Creek Farms  
Sidney, Mont.

Last summer, Eastern Montana Breeders hosted the Montana Angus Tour. Hay Creek Farms participated as one of 16 breeder locations on the tour.

Since each location on the tour included only about a 20-minute visit, we knew it would be impossible to tell the tour participants as much about the Hay Creek Farms program as we wanted to. Something people could take with them was in order . . . something small and neat like a small booklet.

First, we wanted the booklet to stay with everyone until they returned home. That meant it had to be pocket-sized. It worked! The evening of the tour banquet Hay Creek booklets were in shirt pockets everywhere.

Second, we wanted to promote Hay Creek Farms' herd bulls as they represent a major investment in our program. To cover each bull, we printed their pedigree and included all available AHIR Sire Evalua-

tion data for the bull, his sire, and his grand-sire. Also included was each bull's birth weight, weaning weight, gain test data, yearling weight, height, and all appropriate ratios, including fertility. *I forgot to include their registration number and birth date. (I will add it next year but don't you forget it.)* We also covered their show winnings and included a picture of each animal. All on a page about three by six inches . . . and it's readable.

Third, we wanted to explain the selection process for Hay Creek's cow herd. With such a small booklet (only twelve pages) we were able to provide just an overview of this portion of our breeding program. The main points were:

**Fertility**—Every heifer must breed as a yearling in 45 days and a cow must rebreed in 45 days.

**Calving Ease**—Every heifer and cow must calve unassisted. Any animal failing this requirement is sold at the local auction ring with their calf.

**Weaning**—Every cow must wean a calf (without creep feed) at a high percentage of the dam's weight. (This year the average for

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS



*This pocket-sized book (3 in. x 6 in.) summarizes Hay Creek's program in handy form.*

bull calves was 49 percent.)

**Longevity**—Cows should produce calves for a minimum of ten years. We cull on performance, not on age.

Finally, Hay Creek wished to explain our selection criteria for herd bulls. For fertility, herd bulls must have large testicle size (a minimum of 37cm. at one year). Other important factors include a family record of no calving assistance, a light to moderate birth weight, a nursing ratio of 107 or better (without creep feeding), a yearling ratio of 112 or higher (to assure efficient growth, the yearling ratio must always be higher than the weaning ratio), a clean sheath, and

adequate frame size.

While Hay Creek's selection criteria and the economic reasons for each would fill a large volume, we were able to provide the basics in three neat pages.

To make the booklet visually attractive and to show off Hay Creek cattle, we used a collage of photos of our herd and operation on the front and back covers.

Be sure, if you produce one, to include the telephone number, address, and location of your operation.

This small neat booklet will become an important and low-cost tool in our future marketing programs. ■

## Promote Junior Activities With Involvement and Participation



**by Bob Herriott**  
Illinois Junior Angus Assn.

**I**nvolvement and participation are the keys to the promotion of junior Angus association members and junior field days here in Illinois. Juniors have built a strong organization of their own by offering programs that attract new people because they want to join in on the fun.

We get as many people involved in active participation as possible. By doing this the juniors have a lot of pride about their group, seem to enjoy working even on the programs that bomb out, and therefore attract new people. We have operated on the theory: "Don't just sit there-do something." We laugh about the programs that don't work and keep the ones that do.

I will confine my comments to two of our programs that are very important to us. And they are unique in that we are the only ones who do it this way.

Lets start with our Ebonette program. While it's not our most important program, it bears looking into because several states have had trouble with it. The problem, I think, is mostly one of jealousy and when

handled by the auxiliary the ladies don't have much of a way to deal with it. With an auxiliary program, the girls don't feel they are a part of the whole state junior program. It can develop into a beauty contest that has nothing to do with being a part of a state junior Angus association. I'll admit it was a big step when we (the juniors) took over the Ebonette program from the auxiliary, but it turned out to be a big plus for our organization. Our queen is in complete charge of our Ebonette weekend with all of the officers and directors of our junior association. She is also in charge of the Ebonettes, and she must be an Ebonette for at least one year before she can run for queen. She is responsible for what they wear, where they go, and the recruiting of new girls for next year.

The queen is automatically on the state board and has the same power as a director. After a weekend of interviews and activities, new people are swept up by the enthusiasm of the officers and directors. They feel they really belong to the group and we are then ready to charge into the summer.

As important as our Ebonette program is to us, it doesn't hold a candle to our involvement in the herdsman award at the National Junior Show. This activity has done more to bring the state together, build participation, and add new members than anything else. It's not all that important that we win the herdsman award, but it is important that we try to win it. Our first group effort in attending a national Junior Angus Heifer Show was at Omaha in 1975. We were really disappointed. It seemed as if it was every man for himself, or "You come look at my kid's \$5,000 heifer and I'll come look at yours." Our people come away with the impression it was an adults' playground and if that's all there was to a National Junior Angus Show, it wasn't worth the effort.

It started our people thinking. If we were going to build an organization that would



# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

benefit everyone, some changes needed to be made. So we developed the theory that if juniors go to a show and sit on their own show box by themselves, then don't place in the top half of their class, there is a good chance that we will lose them. However, if

---

**We have operated on the theory: "Don't just sit there — do something." We laugh about the programs that don't work and keep the ones that do.**

---

they are part of a group that works together and plays together, then they will want to belong to that group. The bottom-end heifer is soon forgotten and by the time the show is over they are already planning to go again next year. Our show box theory seems to work.

Our participation at National Junior Angus Shows has increased from the 20 to 40 head area to 75 to 95 area. Our own junior field day has increased from 75 head to 150. And most significantly, we have led all states in new members six out of the last seven years.

I feel it is very important to not include any adults in the execution of these activities unless they are asked. Advisors and parents should be kept in the background like an old pair of boots. The new boots are in the spotlight most of the time, but it takes some time to break them in. The old boots are there, older, more comfortable, and reliable. Sometimes they don't look so good, but they are there ready to help out when the new boots start to hurt your feet. ■

---

***Editors Note:** Bob Herriott, Champaign, Ill., recently retired as Illinois Junior Angus Assn. advisor after 15 years of service to the youngsters of that state.*

---

## Save The "Bull" When Writing Footnotes



by **Bill Rishel**  
**Rishel Livestock Services**

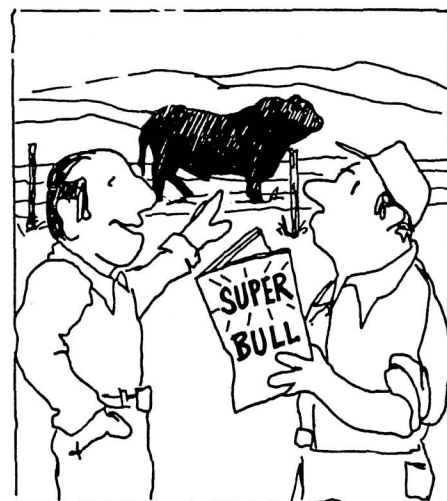
**F**ootnotes in a sale catalog can be a helpful tool to promote and sell your product. Far too often, however, footnotes are written with numerous adjectives and repetition of ancestral details that may stimulate the ego of the breeder selling the cattle but do little to stimulate the valid or potential customer.

It is our opinion that a good footnote presents "facts" which enhance the value of the individual selling. The term "facts" would include such things as the selling price of sons or daughters of the individual being merchandised. It would also include the performance of the individual, as well as close relatives, and the show ring accomplishments of the individual or close relatives. Generally speaking, using footnotes which include a combination of these "facts" is a sound approach in a production sale where primarily females are being sold and there may be new breeders with little knowledge of pedigrees or bloodlines.

The footnotes in a bull sale catalog where the majority of the bulls are being sold to commercial cattlemen is a different matter. The password here is performance. Most commercial cattlemen could care less about

the national champion that was a paternal brother to the grandsire, or the sister to the dam that sold for \$10,000. The "facts" they want relate to profitability in the beef cattle business.

A good footnote for commercial cattlemen should include information about fertility, calving ease, maternal traits and growth traits. In addition, this information should be presented in a clean, concise, easy-to-read format. Footnotes that are factual, to the point and not repetitious are at their best when tied to a program that demonstrates longevity and a breeder that has credibility in the industry. ■



*"Facts?!! I told you already—three great grand cousins sold for more than \$5,000 each, a one-tenth brother was grand champion at the fair, and did I mention . . ."*

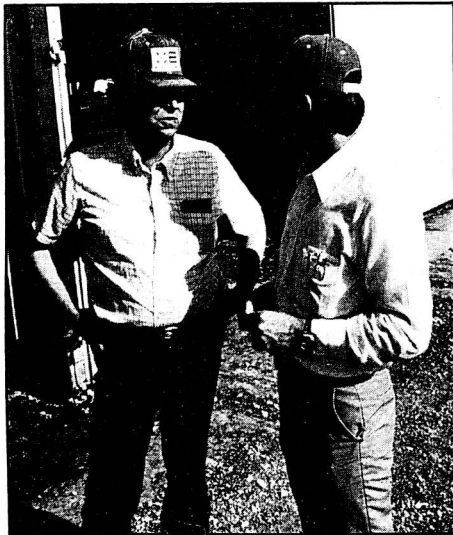
# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

## Say Thanks to Customers, Develop New Ones At Appreciation Day

by J. David Nichols  
Nichols Farms

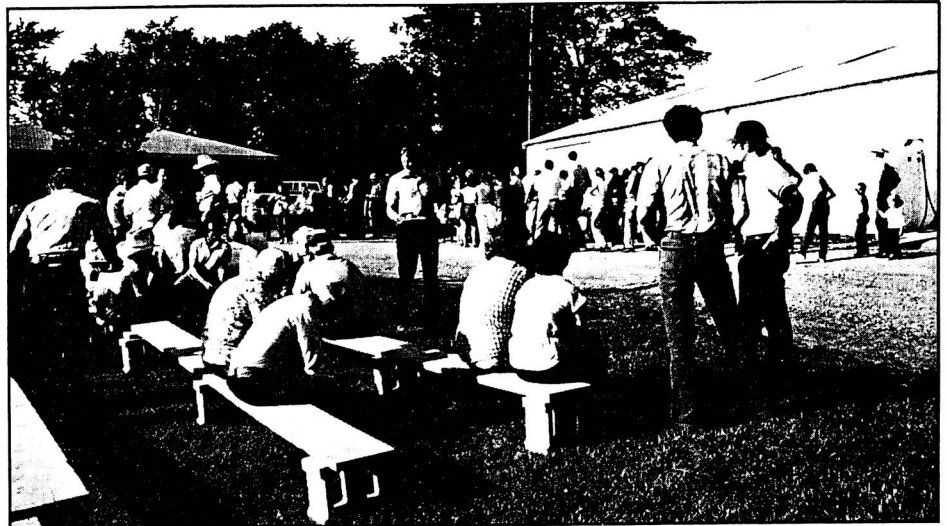
**W**e consider our bull buyers not only customers, but friends. Since we sell entirely by private treaty, we don't have the opportunity to have a sale-day social function where our customers and friends can visit and get to know each other and the entire Nichols crew better.

While it's become common practice among seed and chemical companies to have dinner meetings and open houses followed with sales presentations concerning their products, many guests (including myself) feel like a captive audience listening to commercials. Many farms have pre-sale parties with a few having after-sale parties. Most of these haven't any formal program, except for a welcome-introduction. Many of these can be classified as pre-sale hype. The Nichols field-day party is our alternative. We hold it after the normal bull season, generally the first week in June. The emphasis is on customer appreciation with no hard sell. The remarks of the Nichols family are held



to "welcome" and "thanks" and an introduction of all Nichols employees and their families. A beef barbecue dinner is served to the guests starting about 5:30.

At 7 p.m., the formal program starts. There is a weight-guessing contest with classes for kids, women, etc. Nice prizes are awarded to the winners of each category. We have two speakers. One of these addresses something of current interest about cattle, such as nutrition, health or economics. The other is usually someone well known, but is not usually a cattleman. He is a motivator and relates his experiences to the crowd. For instance, this year's speak-



er is Johnny Orr, head basketball coach at Iowa State University.

---

**While we don't know or care if this field day is cost-effective, we feel the \$5,000 to \$7,000 spent is worth it to express our appreciation to our customers.**

---

When the formal program is over, we have a small band perform in the farm shop

where those so inclined can dance. During this phase, beer is served.

While we don't know or care if this field day is cost-effective, we feel the \$5,000 to \$7,000 spent is worth it to express our appreciation to our customers. It also gives potential customers the chance to look at our facilities and cattle, and meet the Nichols family and the people involved in Nichols Farms.

Everyone is invited to attend, including neighbors. We make no attempt to limit attendance to our customers or even cattlemen. We have in the past served 400 to 600 people. We hope it gets even larger.

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

## Capitalize On Premium Product—Sell Freezer Beef



by L.R. Sayre  
Churchville, Md.

**S**elling Angus, as beef, does not take any "unique promotion" as long as you pay attention to quality control during production and deliver it in an acceptable form. In the freezer beef trade, a satisfied customer will do more effective advertising for you than ads in the local paper.

We started our Angus herd in 1960 with 20 commercial cows and four registered heifers. We fed out the steers from this first calf crop and sold a few sides of beef to friends—this launched us into the freezer beef business. Since then we have expanded to a herd of 80 cows, gradually changing to all registered and using performance records as our guide. During this time we have con-

tinued to sell many of the male calves, steered, as freezer beef.

Selling Angus beef directly to the consumer permits us to receive some of what would have been the "middle man's profit" while giving the customer a premium product at a reasonable price. In order for us to have repeat customers who promote our beef to their friends—some have been buying our beef for 20 years—we have to provide specialized service and maintain quality. Naturally that requires Angus.

---

**A premium product, ANGUS BEEF, will sell itself with very little promotion IF you pay attention to quality and provide a service. Ask any Cadillac dealer.**

---

The carcass we strive to produce (and we have had quite a few) weighs 650 lb., grades Prime, and is a yield grade 1. (Incidentally,

a 650-lb. carcass with one-half inch cover and a 15 square inch ribeye can make yield grade 1. It does not have to be bare!) That kind of quality control will sell your product without any other advertising—the recipient of this kind of beef will proudly serve it to a friend and then you have a new customer.

To produce such a product, we use performance testing all the way, including information gathered in the cooler. Thus we can correlate the live animal to the finished product and breed for it.

My wife Jane handles the "service" end of the promotion by discussing the many different ways of cutting a side of beef with each customer, explaining that "a steer is not all steaks." She then gives cutting instructions to the butcher, and it is essential to have a good one. Nothing will lose repeat business quicker than a poor cutting job when customers are paying for a premium product.

I think any Angus breeder, commercial or registered, can and should sell some freezer beef. First of all the breeder potentially has a premium product and should get a premium price for it, if produced properly. Second, and most importantly, it makes the breeder aware of the reason we raise Angus—for BEEF. We learn the optimum size and degree of finish required on the live animal to produce the most desirable carcass. We also learn how long it takes to finish cattle properly, how much feed is needed and whether we are breeding the correct type for the commercial beef industry.

All of us with registered herds have some calves that should be steered or heifers that should be fed out. Freezer beef is a profitable way to sell them and the education is invaluable.

A premium product, ANGUS BEEF, will sell itself with very little promotion IF you pay attention to quality and provide a service. Ask any Cadillac dealer. ■

---

## Bull Buyer Information Concise, Simple, Complete

by Tom Drake  
Drake Farms  
Davis, Okla.

**W**e have printed our own forms for handouts to prospective bull buyers. These forms have been very successful for us and I would be glad to share them with anyone interested.

The top of the form is entitled "Drake

---

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

---

Farms Bull Test Performance (140 days)." Also at the top is the initial weigh-in date and the off-test weigh date. (Test groups are comprised of bulls born within one-or two-month periods.) We can put 24 bulls on each form that includes: The individual ID (tattoo number), sire, dam, birth date, birth weight and ratio, 205-day ratio and grade, 205-day weaning weight, initial test weight, 140-day weight, pounds gained, test ADG,

140-day ADG ratio, WDA, age at end of test, actual yearling weight, and adjusted yearling weight.

Upon completion of each test, all the above information is readily attainable except AHIR 365-day adjusted weights, which are entered when available (through no fault of AHIR).

When all bulls have completed test, they are divided into three pens, priced by pen,

and offered for sale as Good, Better and Best. At that time, the bulls' information in each pen is put onto a sheet in tattoo order and given to the customer. Data on all bulls in each pen are on a single sheet and easily understood.

On the master sheet, we also include all available Breeding Value Ratios (BVRs) and scrotal measurements for those who might wish this information. When we reorder forms, the new ones will include BVRs or Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs)—whichever is available—plus scrotal measurements and anything else that might help a prospective buyer. ■

---

## Tips on Handling Your Herd Visitors



by Henry & Jeannette Chitty  
Stardust Ranch  
Micanopy, Fla.

- We try to show interest in anyone who comes by, and particular interest in children and young people who visit.

- We try to cooperate with the University teaching staff and extension people. We have quite a few 4-H and FFA judging teams plus the University judging teams to practice judging.

- We like to let the Audubon Society and the like have access to our ranch. They don't usually buy, but they may tell other people.

- We try to make friends of our buyers. We try to listen and advise if they ask for it.

- We try to make good impressions with the people who come on tours—out of state, in state, and foreign—and give a few pens, tear sheets and ranch calendars.

- We show our place for what it really is—a working ranch and not a "showplace." A few barbed-wire fences and a little mud make commercial cattlemen feel a little more at home sometimes.

- We like to ask our customers how they heard about our Angus. A year or so ago, one customer told us that he was looking at a friend's Angus Journal and saw our little one-inch monthly ad. He bought about 50 cows, heifers and bulls from us. ■



---

---

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

---

---

## What Kind of Breeder Are You? Test Yourself with Daniel's Quiz

by Dan Daniel  
Colbert, Ga.

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1. Did you have a 90 percent or better calf crop? Yes, add 10. Below 80, subtract 10.                                   | _____ |
| 2. Did you semen check your herd bulls before breeding season? Yes, add 10.   | _____ |
| 3. Did you pregnancy check after bulls were taken out of pasture? Yes, add 10.  | _____ |
| 4. Did you practice a vaccination program? Yes, add 10.   | _____ |
| 5. Did you limit your breeding season to 90 days? Yes, add 10. 45 days, add 10 more.                                    | _____ |
| 6. Did you record the actual birth date on every calf? Yes, add 10.   | _____ |
| 7. Did you process all of your calves on AHIR? Yes, add 10. No, subtract 10.  | _____ |
| 8. Did you cull on the basis of records? Yes, add 10.   | _____ |
| 9. Are you an active member of your state breed association? Yes, add 10. Not a member, subtract 10.                    | _____ |
| 10. Are you an active member of your state cattlemen's association? Yes, add 10. Not a member, subtract 10.             | _____ |
| 11. How many new members did you recruit for your breed association? Add 5 points for each.                             | _____ |
| 12. How many new members did you recruit for your state cattlemen's association? Add 5 points for each.                 | _____ |
| 13. How many field days did you attend the past 12 months? Add 5 points for each.                                       | _____ |
| 14. How many educational cattlemen meetings did you attend the past 12 months? Add 5 points for each.                   | _____ |
| 15. How many herds of customers or potential customers did you visit during the past year? Add 5 points for each visit. | _____ |
| 16. Did you follow through on every sale you made during the past 12 months? Yes, add 10.                               | _____ |
| 17. Did you soil test? Yes, add 10.   | _____ |
| 18. Did you forage test? Yes, add 10.   | _____ |
| 19. Did you balance a ration for each age group? Yes, add 10.   | _____ |
| 20. Did you separate your age groups for wintering? Yes, add 10.  | _____ |
| 21. Did you pick your A.I. sires by using the Angus Sire Evaluation Report? Yes, add 10.                                | _____ |
| 22. Did you practice a good parasite control program? Yes, add 10.  | _____ |
| 23. How many juniors did you help with their beef projects? 1-10, add 10. 10 or more, add 20.                           | _____ |
| 24. Did you collect "feed test data" on all the bulls you sold (either grain or forage)? Yes, add 10.                   | _____ |
| 25. Are your young cows (2-and 3-year-olds) better than your mature cows? Yes, add 20. No, subtract 20.                 | _____ |
| 26. Have you sold any cattle for other people during the past 12 months? Yes, add 10 for each sale.                     | _____ |
| <b>Total</b>  | _____ |
- What kind of breeder are you?**  
If you have a score of **260** or better, you are the type of breeder who makes things happen.  
If your score is **200** to **240**, you watch things happen.  
If your score is below **180**, you let things happen to you. ■

---

---

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

---

---

## Breeding and Merchandising It Takes Both Programs to Command a Premium

by John Crouch, Director of Performance Programs

If you've searched in vain for the secrets to success in the registered cattle business, search no more. In my opinion, here are the four ingredients for a successful program.

- You must breed industry-improving cattle.
- You must have a sound system for measuring the performance of your herd.
- You must have an effective advertising and promotion system.
- You must follow up after a sale is made.

To these four factors, add another: Your program must be based upon honesty and integrity. But that's something breeders can't do much about. The breeder who has a reputation for shady dealings in the registered business today doesn't have enough years left to reverse that image.

My good friend Ed Taylor once said, "The key to merchandising is finding out what your customer wants, desires, and needs." Once you know this you have a production goal and can produce the product in the most efficient manner possible.

Conditions vary from one area of the country to another. That's why you shouldn't try to emulate a west Texas breeder if you live in central Iowa, and vice versa. But what doesn't change from one part of the country to another is that customers of registered cattle breeders want to buy cattle that add

---

**As your first step to breed improvement, go out into your pasture and pick out a couple of those light-milking, fat, long-haired, wide-eyed cows, and take them to the sale barn. Use the money you receive to buy a good set of scales.**

---

value to the calves they produce, bulls and females that allow them to produce cattle more efficiently, and with less effort.

### Start with the basics

For your cattle to command a premium price they must be breed improvers or at least herd improvers. Remember, a premium is what cattle bring above their basic value, and the basic value of any beef ani-

mal, registered or commercial, is what they will sell for at the auction barn or stockyards the day you truck them in. Your profits basically will be determined by the premium your cattle command. That's why they must be as good as you can make them.

The best way, if not the only way you can demonstrate to prospective buyers just how valuable your cattle are, is to have a sound system of measuring the performance of your herd. What's more, you can't know if you are making progress in your breeding program without a good records system.

As your first step to breed improvement, go out into your pasture and pick out a couple of those light-milking, fat, long-haired, wide-eyed cows, and take them to the sale barn. Use the money you receive to buy a good set of scales. Then begin to gather all the data you can with respect to birth, weaning and yearling weights, and cow weights. While you have your cattle in the scales, measure hip heights and scrotal circumference.

At the same time, call the American Angus Assn. and enroll your herd in the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR) program. This way you can evaluate your herd on a comparative basis. Before long, you should have a pretty good herd of cattle.

You might be surprised at how many people tell me, "I've been in the cattle business for years, but no one ever comes to see me. I can't sell my cattle." Now there are only two reasons for this condition to exist. Either his cattle are no good, or no one knows about them. My experience tells me there are more poor cattle salesmen in this business than there are poor cattle breeders.

### Promote yourself, your cattle

Promoting your cattle effectively can take many forms. One of the oldest means we have is the show ring. It can generate tremendous excitement, enthusiasm and romance, and help you sell cattle. But always remember, the show ring is a promotional tool and not a breed improvement tool. Also the show ring isn't cheap, and it is not for everyone.

A powerful, economical, promotional tool is personal contact. You can, and should, promote your cattle at field days, the auction barn, at registered cattle sales, at the Rotary Club, at PTA, to your county agent, the local vo-ag instructor, or at about any other place that there are people gathered.

Remember, if you have a breed-improving product, if you believe in the value of your product, and are enthusiastic about your product, you can sell it. The next time you consign cattle to a sale, I challenge you to call not one but 10 prospective buyers. Then keep track of whether they show up and buy cattle. I'll bet you'll be surprised at the interest your cattle receive.

When you sell cattle by private treaty at your farm or ranch, be professional about

---

**My experience tells me there are more poor cattle salesmen in this business than there are poor cattle breeders.**

---

it. What would you think of a store that had no prices on their clothes and that threw all their unpriced Levis into a pile that contained all sizes, contained firsts and seconds, as well as torn clothes that needed to be thrown away. You would probably go somewhere else to buy clothes.

So separate your sale cattle from the cattle you do not wish to sell, and sort off cattle that have been sold. If you have enough cattle, sort them by quality and price. Then make up a price list on everything you have for sale, and make this available along with your performance data and pedigrees to all buyers.

Above all, have your cattle presentable. There's a lot of truth to the statement, "When it comes time to sell, fat is the prettiest color in the world." Mind you, they should not be waddling fat, but they do need to be pleasing to the eye. A pair of Levis that are wadded down in the corner of a bin may wear just as well as a pair that is pressed and folded on the rack, but which would you buy for the same price?

Now, when it comes to advertising, I am not an expert. And if you are not an expert you should become one, or work with someone else who is. Just as you wouldn't let an inexperienced mechanic overhaul your diesel tractor engine, you shouldn't entrust your advertising budget to a novice, even if that novice is you.

One thing I do know is that the Angus Journal has long been an effective way of

---

---

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

---

---

advertising your herd. If you live in Kansas, for example, it is the least expensive way possible to send a message to every registered Angus breeder in the state. In addition, you also send your message to every registered Angus breeder in all the surrounding states, as well as every breeder in the United States and many foreign countries. And there are similar efficient, effective ways to place your advertisement in

front of the good commercial cattle breeders you want to contact.

## **Aim to keep customers happy**

Getting people to buy cattle from you the first time is only half the battle. One of the most important parts of a successful merchandising program is after-sale follow up, to be sure that your customer is happy. It is called customer service, and here's a true

story that illustrates how it works.

A number of years ago a man went to work as a salesman at a large car dealership where there were lots of other sales people. The first year he made a living. The second year he led the dealership in sales, and soon he was the top car salesman in the country. At the annual company convention that year, the company president gave him an award, and later asked for his secret to success.

"I have no secrets," the man said. "I simply treat my customers as I would want to be treated, and I follow up after my sales." Come to find out, the super salesman had an index file on each person who purchased a car from him. On the card was the buyer's name, address and telephone number, along with the kind, make and model of the

---

**Remember, if you have a breed-improving product, if you believe in the value of your product, and are enthusiastic about your product, you can sell it.**

---


car as well as the date of purchase. Exactly one week from the date of purchase the salesman called the customer to make sure he was happy. One month later he called again to see if the car was running properly, and that the dealer was giving good service, and he did it again in six months. In a matter of time, he had customers who had been recommended to him by his earlier customers lining up to see him. And one would assume that the satisfied customers also returned to buy. If a program like this works to sell inanimate objects like cars, think what it could do for cattle.

You may have noticed that there aren't many automobile salesmen like this one in your neighborhood. Most car salesmen, rather than put forth the effort, would rather rely on less time consuming and less productive sales techniques. The successful person makes a habit of doing what the unsuccessful person deems unnecessary.

From my vantage point, the Angus breed appears to be on the brink of the most explosive revolution ever seen in the beef cattle industry. We have built a genetic base of cows that milk and reproduce, and of strong bulls that have growth and are sound and fertile. And both are efficient.

A poet once wrote: "There comes a tide in the lives of men, which if taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

I believe our tide has come. It is up to us to now take advantage of it. Let's do it now!



## Effective Use of Performance Records

by Bob Taylor  
Colorado State University

**P**erformance records are useful tools to increase the productivity and profitability of beef cattle. They are much more effective than visual appraisal, although visual appraisal can complement performance records.

Many commercial producers do not effectively use records, especially in the area of bull selection. There is reason to believe they do not understand these records and thus fear them. These producers select bulls totally by visual appraisal which allows them to remain in their "comfort zone" knowing their judgment will be respected by breeders and other producers.

The following concept attempts to present performance records at several different levels of communication and understanding for traits of major economic importance to the beef industry (Table 1).

Currently there is a tremendous amount of emphasis on selection for growth rate and frame size in cattle. Rapid growth is certainly important; producers sell pounds, and pounds of early growth (at weaning and yearling age) give greater returns than subsequent growth. Feeders tend to use frame size to predict growth rate because the two traits appear to be related. However, frame size should not be used to predict growth rate when scales are available, since predictor traits are not as useful as measuring the trait (pounds) directly. Seed stock producers and cow-calf producers should use scales, not frame size, as a predictor of rate of growth. Frame size is best used to predict the desirable slaughter weight of steers and heifers and also to project the mature size of cows.

Continued emphasis on selection for growth and frame size, without attention to maternal traits, may result in serious problems in commercial herds. It may take several years for problems to manifest themselves as an increase in open cows or cows calving later in the calving season. This likely has occurred from an increased cow size surpassing the available feed supply. Also, more calving problems may be encountered due to high birth weights. If the selection program emphasizes growth and ignores milk production, there could be a decrease in the milking ability of the herd.

Selection for "optimums" or "combination bulls" implies a balanced selection for maternal and growth traits which is consistent with environmental conditions—particularly feed supply.

The example on the following page shows

an approach Colorado State University has taken to arrive at an "Estimated Genetic Superiority" of bulls. Note the term "estimated" which groups bulls with similar performance estimates rather than exactly identifying individual bulls. Producers having limited experience with performance records may refer to the descriptive terms used (superior, excellent, etc.). The performance indicators are used to give supportive evidence to the descriptive terms.

An explanation of descriptive terms for each trait, as supported by performance indicators also follows.

**Calving Ease**—"Cow" or "heifer" is an estimate of how the bull is best used (based on birth weight of approximately 80 lb. or less for the heifer designation). Different herds can handle different levels of birth weight based on genetics, cow size and nutrition of the females.

**Fertility**—Bulls are subjected to a Breeding Soundness Exam (BSE) and designated as "OK" or by the actual BSE score. The BSE exam based on scrotal circumference measurements (associated with a satisfactory BSE score) includes the following descriptive terms: Superior (36 cm. and

Table 1. Identification of the Economically Important Traits to use in Selection

| Broad Classification of Traits | Goals for Most Operations   | Specific Traits to Consider   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Reproduction                   | Heifer to calve as a 2-year-old.<br>Each cow to wean a calf every 365 days (approximately).<br>Calving season of 90 days or less.   | Age, weight and condition of heifer at breeding.<br>Scrotal circumference of bull (early puberty in heifers and bulls).<br>Frame size (match cow size to feed supply).<br>Birth weight (calving ease).<br>Body condition (fatness) of cow at calving.<br>Birth weight, Expected Progeny Difference (EPD)—Sire summary data for calving ease.<br>Free of genetic abnormalities.  |
| Growth                         | Relatively heavy weaning weight (consistent with feed supply).<br>Rapid feedlot gain (highly correlated with feed efficiency if cattle are slaughtered at similar weights). Many feedlot producers state that 3 lb. per day is a minimum daily gain when cattle are on a high energy ration.<br>Integrated cattle producers desire a combination of heavy weaning weights and rapid post-weaning gain with steers slaughtered at 13 to 15 months of age weighing 1,100 to 1,250 lb. | Maternal Breeding Value (MBV)—milk.<br>Weaning Weight Ratio—milk and growth.<br>Weaning Breeding Value (WBV)—weaning growth.<br>Weaning Expected Progeny Difference (EPD)—Sire summary data for weaning weight.<br>Yearling Weight Ratio—weaning and feedlot growth.<br>Yearling Breeding Value (YBV)—weaning and yearling feedlot growth.<br>Yearling Expected Progeny Difference (EPD)—Sire summary data for weaning and yearling growth. |
| Carcass                        | Carcass weight—600 to 800 lb.<br>Quality Grade—Minimum Low Choice<br>Yield Grade—2  | Frame size—medium-sized bulls on medium sized cows, or<br>Frame size—large frame-sized bulls on small to medium-sized cows.<br>Backfat probes—0.15 to 0.30 inches on yearling bulls at 1,150 lb.  |
| Longevity and Adaptability     | High-producing cows stay in the herd to 12-years-of-age and older.  | Skeletal soundness—visual.<br>Udder soundness—visual.<br>Eye soundness—visual.<br>Frame size—mature weight of cow consistent with feed supply; measured by hip height.<br>Body condition (fatness)—no lower than average fleshing ability, especially at calving and under stress conditions; estimated visually.   |



# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

above), Excellent (33 to 35 cm.) and Good (30 to 32 cm.).

**Milk**—Descriptive terms (Superior, Excellent or Good) are based on Maternal Breeding Value (MBV) which gives an estimate of how daughters of a bull will milk. MBV ranges are: Superior (106 and higher), Excellent (103 to 105) and Good (100 to 102). Breed average would be considered approximately 100. An MBV of 103 would estimate a bull's daughters to milk 3 percent above breed average. The accuracy value indicates how much confidence to have in the MBV estimate. Confidence in MBV of young bulls is limited since the estimate is based on pedigree information with the accuracy being in the .50 to .70 range. The accuracy increases as a bull's daughters demonstrate their milking ability through the weaning weight ratio of their calves. Bulls used A.I. should have at least a .90 accuracy value.

For a young bull, the weaning weight ratio usually reflects, in part, the milk production of his dam. A ratio of above 100 would imply that his dam was above herd average in milk production.

**Weaning Growth**—Descriptive terms are Superior, Excellent and Good. The performance indicators for young bulls would be based on weaning weight ratios, with greater emphasis on Weaning Breeding Value (WBV). The WBV ranges for the descriptive terms are: Superior (106 and higher), Excellent (103 to 105) and Good (100 to 102).

A bull which has produced a designated number of calves in several herds will usually be listed in the breed's sire summary.

These records will appear as Expected Progeny Difference (EPD) for weaning weight. The EPD ranges for the descriptive terms are: Superior (above +40 lb.), Excellent (+25 to +39 lb.) and Good (+10 to +24 lb.).

WBV accuracies are usually .55 to .70 for young bulls. Accuracies for bulls to be used A.I. should be .90 and higher.

**Yearling Growth**—Descriptive terms are Superior, Excellent and Good. The performance indicator for young bulls would be based on yearling weight ratios, with greater emphasis on Yearling Breeding Value (YBV). The YBV ranges for the descriptive terms are: Superior (106 and higher), Excellent (103 to 105) and Good (100 to 102).

A bull which has produced a designated number of calves in several herds will usually be listed in the breed's sire summary. These records will appear as Expected Progeny Difference (EPD) for yearling weight. The EPD ranges for the descriptive terms are: Superior (+60 lb. and above), Excellent (+40 to +59 lb.) and Good (+20 to +39 lb.).

YBV accuracies are usually .55 to .70 for young bulls. Accuracies for bulls to be used A.I. should be .90 and higher.

**Frame**—As discussed earlier, frame size evaluations are most useful to predict desirable slaughter weight of steers and heifers and mature size of cows. The descriptive terms are Small, Medium and Large (Table 2). These descriptions are more valid than the frame scores reflected in tenths of inch-

es as there is too much emphasis on small differences in frame scores.

Table 2. Frame Size Projections for Desirable Slaughter Weight (.3 to .5 inch fat)

| Frame Size (Bulls) | Slaughter Weight (lb.) (Counterpart Steers) | Frame Score         |
|--------------------|---|---------------------|
| Small              | less than 1,000                             | 1 to 3.5            |
| Medium             | 1,000 to 1,200                              | 3.5 to 5.5          |
| Large              | over 1,200                                  | 5.6 to 8 and higher |

Another consideration for frame size is to use it to predict mature weight of cows. Frame size in young bulls and replacement heifers, relative to predicting mature cow size, has not been critically evaluated from a research standpoint. Table 3 gives some rough estimates which appear to be realistic based on observations.

Table 3. Frame Size Predictions of Mature Cow Weight

| Frame Size (as yearlings) | Mature cow weight (lb.) |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Small                     | Under 1,000             |
| Medium                    | 1,000 to 1,300          |
| Large                     | Over 1,300              |

**Carcass Composition**—The backfat (BF) probe is a good predictor of carcass fat (this assumes the technician can accurately probe the cattle). The amount of carcass fat is the most important factor determining the yield grade. Yield grade 2 carcasses, weighing 600 to 800 lb., will have approximately .3 to .5 inches of fat over the ribeye muscle. Frame size, BF probe and the weight at the time of the BF probe can be used to project the yield grade of the bull if slaughtered as a 1,100-lb. steer. This assumes the steer would be fed to be slaughtered at 13 to 15 months of age. Also, the steer would have approximately .2 inch more fat than if raised as a bull. If the bull (as a steer) would be grown out and slaughtered as a long yearling (20 to 24 months of age), there would be less carcass fat than if slaughtered at 13 to 15 months of age. In other words, the 20- to 24-month-old steer could be slaughtered at a heavier weight (approximately 100 to 150 lb.) but still have the same yield grade as the 13- to 15-month-old steer.

Body fatness (best appraised visually) is important in the cow herd as cows need an adequate amount of body fat at calving time to return to estrus regularly. Cows can better adapt to stressful climatic conditions if they have sufficient levels of body fat. Cows can therefore be too lean or too fat for both biological and economic reasons. An assessment of fat in selecting bulls can assist in avoiding the extremes in fatness of both slaughter cattle and the cow herd. ■

