



# Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

## Here's an issue of which you need to be aware

*When I assigned the story covering the multi-breed genetic evaluation being proposed by the National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium (NBCEC) to field editor Troy Smith, I charged him with writing the article as if it were being written for one of the nonbreed-aligned national beef magazines. As always, Troy came through in spades, with just what I requested.*

### Understand the reasons

We definitely shouldn't look at this issue through Angus-tinted glasses. Personally, I find it a little hard to argue against the value to the industry of a single genetic evaluation.

How confusing it must be to commercial producers to look through a bull test sale book and see expected progeny differences (EPDs) for bulls of different breeds. Can we assume that they realize that even though the EPDs appear in the same format, they are not on the same base? How do commercial buyers compare two sons of the same Angus bull when one son is out of an Angus cow and carries Angus EPDs and one is out of a Simmental cow and carries Simmental EPDs?

It's an interesting exercise to go to other breed association Web sites and look up Angus bulls in their genetic evaluations. While I couldn't get a couple of the association's searches to work, I did find EPDs of a popular Angus bull in three breeds — Angus, Simmental and Maine Anjou (see Table 1).

For commercial producers using multiple breeds in a crossbreeding program, it's not a customer-friendly system. And if you tried to apply the across-breed EPD adjustment factors (see page 104) to the figures in Table 1, it gets even more confusing.

### We can't go backward

On the other hand, I'm 100% certain that the Board made the right call in not participating in this prototype.

- There is simply no other entity than the American Angus Association and its Performance Programs Department to which I would entrust the core value of my herd — *and, make no mistake, the predictability of its performance is its value.*

- The Association and its members can't afford to go backward in the progress we've made with our database and our EPDs. We have the most accurate, most reliable, most predictive database in the world. Why would we ever compromise?
- There is a lot more risk associated with a program that seeks its funding periodically from government sources.
- Participating in the prototype analysis would necessitate allowing access to our herdbook, and that just isn't responsible to our membership.

As seedstock sources, you're bound to get questions about the consortium and the proposed multi-breed analysis. I hope you'll read through Troy's story. If you care to comment or share your insights with other readers of the *Angus Journal*, we certainly welcome you to submit a letter to the editor to:

Letter to the Editor  
c/o Shauna Hermel  
3201 Frederick Ave.  
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### Open and junior shows

You'll note the absence of the "Sale Ring," "Open Shows" and "Junior Shows" columns from this issue. On pages 182-183 API General Manager Terry Cotton provides the reasoning behind a new format for shows and sale reports that was adopted at the June Board meeting.

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**Table 1: A single purebred Angus bull has been given EPDs from three different breed associations**

Breed	BW	WW	YW	Milk	CW	Marb	BF	REA
AAA	1.9	43	81	20	19	0.07	0.036	0.20
ASA	-3.2	30.7	79.3	13.7	-7.8	0.09	0.11	-0.46
AMAA	-3.6	35.4	84.1	14.6	—	—	—	—

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