

LEAD IN

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The era of branded retail beef products seems to be upon us. And for good reason. For decades we've all taken pride in purchasing branded products, from the cars we drive to the boots we wear to our breakfast bacon. It is past time for beef producers to tap the consumer confidence generated by a top brand image.

For breeders of registered or commercial Angus cattle, it is comforting to know that a branded program for our breed—Certified Angus Beef—has been in existence for over eight years. Recently, CAB monthly sales again hit a record 3.2 million pounds. That's up over one million pounds from the same month in 1985. Total sales for the year to date are 21 million pounds, nearly double the 1985 figures.

The Certified Angus Beef Program is designed to build demand for registered Angus cattle. The goal of CAB is to sell more registered Angus bulls

that produce more cattle that qualify for the CAB Program.

The production and marketing of Certified Angus Beef will be greatly enhanced by the new Certified Angus Feeder (CAF) Program. The CAF program was approved by the Board at their recent summer meeting. It will be headed by John Crouch, Director of Performance Programs.

The CAF program will identify feedlot uniformity and superior carcass traits in the Angus breed. The long range goal of CAF will be to help commercial cattlemen get paid for the added value that top-performing Angus bulls add to their cattle. If we make Angus bulls more valuable to the cow-calf producer and feeder, we will automatically increase the demand for them.

Recently Rod Bowling of Monfort said, "Producers will have to become highly selective in their genetic programs and will have to control feeding in order to produce for the branded

beef market."

Certainly genetics will play a significant part in the development of CAF. While producers have not been paid for carcass merit in the past, the time is fast approaching when identified genetics for superior carcass traits will be a reality. Our goals for CAF will be to capture our share of the market.

Angus cattle maintain the unique ability to grow and marble at the same time. Thus when fed properly they can produce a quality carcass with minimum outside fat. The new CAF program will identify, more specifically, cattle within the breed that do this job best, then make the information available to registered Angus breeders and the commercial industry.

Certified Angus Feeders is an exciting concept. It could be as important to the future of the Angus breed as the Certified Angus Beef Program itself.

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