

# Lead In

by Richard Spader, executive vice president



## Don't miss the bus

Every cattleman in America surely knows by now that significant changes are taking place in the beef industry. It is becoming more competitive, with greater emphasis on traits of economic importance for all concerned.

Breeds in the future will be faced with even greater challenges as we address competition, not only from other breeds but also from other sources of protein.

The Angus breed isn't immune to these trends or to the challenges they present. Plainly speaking, it will be a challenge for all in the beef industry as we embark on the new millennium.

Today the industry also recognizes the role that Angus play in profitable beef operations. The increased demand for Angus breeding stock, feeders and finished cattle reflects cattlemen's belief in the importance of the breed. The Angus expansion is also evident in the Association's growth in registrations and the number of new members joining its ranks. In other words, it appears that Angus offer more solutions to our industry needs than do most other breeds.

It's for these reasons the American Angus Association sponsors national conferences and strives to bring the latest in research, technology, marketing ideas and plain old management to its members.

### ■ The conference

This year's National Angus Conference will be in Amarillo, Texas, Sept. 10-11. The theme for this year's conference — "Angus

in the New Millennium" — sets the stage for a lineup of speakers and moderators who will zero in on nearly all aspects of the commercial and registered cattle industries. It should be one of the most enlightening and instructive national Angus conferences that we have sponsored.

The purpose of the conference, held on an annual basis, is to expand the market for Angus cattle and to share the latest in ideas

to help registered and commercial producers prepare for the future.

Attendance at these events is excellent, and

we expect a big turnout in Texas.

We will review the industry, and

we will determine what our business tells us about the product we are producing and the improved products we need to be producing. We will look at the factors that affect carcass value and determine what performance records and expected progeny differences (EPD) we need to help our industry fill consumer demand in the early years of the 21st century.

We will hear from people who are breeding Angus cattle that satisfy discriminating cattle producers, as well as learn how these producers improve their cattle and market them at premium prices. We will hear producers tell about the delicate balancing act of selection for a number of economic traits, including carcass characteristics.

On the first day of the program we will listen to representatives of the commercial and feedlot industry discuss adding value to their product. The wrap-up for the first day will be an overview of Association programs designed especially for the commercial cattle industry.

On the final day of the conference we will learn about global trends in the beef market and about what licensed Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Program retailers, distributors

and others think of our product and how they use it to fill consumer demand. We will also receive an overview of where beef numbers will take us in the new millennium.

You will get to see and hear about Angus Information Management Software (AIMS) and the rollout of version 2.0. This system, used by some 1,700 producers, has fast become one of the important herd-management tools in the registered Angus industry. Staff will have a display booth and a hands-on demonstration throughout the conference.

### ■ The tour

The National Angus Conference will be enhanced by the Texas and Greater West Texas Angus associations' tour set for Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 8-9. Tour planners promise this to be a first-class event, and participants will get a firsthand look at the cattle business in West Texas.

Tour stops include commercial and registered operations along with feedlots, demonstrations and some of the better tourist attractions of the area. You'll get to see nationally known cutting horses, have dinner around the chuck wagon one night and hear from a bona fide storyteller, John Erickson (author of the "Hank the Cow Dog" series). You'll also get to visit the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, described as the "best museum in West Texas," featuring the history of beef, oil, cotton and other industries of West Texas and the Panhandle. It should be an ideal time to visit Texas.

Complete conference and tour registration information is included in this issue of the *Angus Journal*, along with a copy of the program and speakers. Mark your calendars now for Sept. 8-11. I look forward to seeing you there.

*Richard J. Spader*

