



# Lead In

by Richard Spader, executive vice president

## Backed with a performance registration certificate

As we reflect on the history of the American Angus Association and the original charter and bylaws established in 1883, it is clear where the breed organization's responsibility lies. That is to "collect, verify, preserve and publish the pedigrees of the breed known as Polled Aberdeen Angus so as to maintain unimpaired the purity of the breed."

The charter goes on to list additional responsibilities as a need to "perform such acts incidental and supplementary thereto as will, in the judgment of the Association, best promote the interest of said cattle in America."

It sounds simple. Yet, for more than 100 years, your Association's Board of Directors, the membership and staff have striven diligently to improve our system of maintaining the purity and integrity of registered Angus and to promote the programs and best interest of Angus seedstock. This devotion has led us to an enviable position — No. 1 in the industry.

Our future as a breed organization has laid and still lies in the concept of purebred cattle backed by pedigrees and, more importantly, dedicated breeders of registered Angus cattle. The registration certificate is an integral part of the system of breeding purebred cattle. Without the pedigree, the beef cattle business would not have advanced as it has today. The registration was and still is necessary in the development and maintenance of purebred breeds of livestock.

### Progression

As our industry has progressed, we also have seen changes in our system

of improving livestock through the use of pedigreed cattle. This concept incorporates the vast amount of data available to include performance information with pedigree. Today we combine performance with pedigree numbers to offer the most complete programs available to improve our Angus business and status in the industry. Offering reliable and predictable seedstock for traits of economic importance is a basis for the performance pedigrees from the Association.

In addition, we have documented the traits of economic importance and have established heritability estimates for these traits. This enables breeders to design breeding programs that can maximize genetic change and make breeding programs more valuable. Most importantly, this becomes extremely valuable as commercial producers use registered seedstock.

The beef industry is indebted to the purebred breeders who have accepted the challenge and have maintained our breed of cattle. The heterosis that exists today for the commercial livestock producer is a direct result of breed formations and breed associations that have promoted, encouraged, developed and maintained these breeds of livestock.

### New frontiers

The future holds even more opportunities as our performance evaluation evolves with ultrasound measurements for carcass traits and the rapidly expanding field of DNA technology. These areas of genetic improvement likely will revolutionize some of our traditional means of evaluating beef cattle.

The goal of breeding better beef cattle is a challenge for all Angus breeders and for your Association. In addition, our breed represents a genetic resource to be used commercially in improvement of the industry.

This means our status and responsibility has not changed. The Angus breed, you as breeders and your Association are more important today than ever in the history of commercial livestock production ... a thought to ponder as we embark on the new century.

*Richard J. Spader*

## Join us in Kentucky

I sincerely hope you plan to join us for the 2000 National Angus Conference and Tour Sept. 25-27 in Lexington, Ky.

The American Angus Association is committed to helping Angus producers supply better genetics to the beef industry, as well as serving the needs of commercial producers. We hope this conference and tour will help us all take a look at where we are as an industry and how we can do a better job of producing high-quality, consistent beef products for the consumer.

"Angus — Setting the Pace for the Beef Industry" is the theme we've chosen for this three-day event, which includes a day-and-a-half tour and a full-day conference program. Tour stops Sept. 25-

26 will include the Central Kentucky Angus Association Sales Pavilion, Danville; Anderson Circle Farm, Harrodsburg; Brookview Farm, Winchester; Labrot & Graham Distillery, Versailles; the University of Kentucky Animal Research Center, Versailles; the Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington; and Bittersweet Station, Lexington.

Colorado State University's Gary Smith headlines an excellent program of speakers, including John Stika, Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB); John Crouch, Association director of performance programs; Sally Dolezal, Dolezal Enterprises, Derby, Kan.; Mike Kasten, 3M Ranch, Millersville, Mo.; Minnie Lou Bradley, Bradley 3 Ranch Ltd., Memphis, Texas; Ray Ramsey, Michigan Livestock Exchange, Richmond, Va.; Steve Hunt, U.S. Premium Beef Ltd., Liberty, Mo.; and Mark Gardiner, Gardiner Angus Ranch, Ashland, Kan.

It will be a tremendous opportunity to learn and to socialize with Angus friends and neighbors.

See page 33 of the August 2000 *Angus Journal* for a detailed program. Although the preregistration deadline has passed, on-site registration will be available at a cost of \$65/person.