

# WINNERS NAMED in ESSAY CONTEST

Iowa Junior Angus Association sponsors essay contest for all junior Angus members

The Iowa Junior Angus Association conducted an essay contest for all junior Angus members ages 13-21 and a story contest for youth 12 years old and younger. Subjects had to pertain to Angus cattle or to the beef industry. Following are the winning essays for each category. They are also posted on the IJAA Web site at [www.breedingcattlepage.com/ijaa](http://www.breedingcattlepage.com/ijaa).

## SENIOR DIVISION

(ages 18-21)

### It's in Your Hands

by Nicole Elizabeth Long, Berryville, Va.

Education should be utilized by every cattleman. As a producer, the livelihood and future of the beef industry depends on its consumers. As an industry entering the new millennium, we need to build upon that trust and give consumers more reasons to buy beef. It is in our hands, the hands of cattlemen everywhere, to promote the beef industry by educating consumers on the improvements the beef industry has made to make a more consistent, high-quality and safe product.

Consumers need to learn about steps that cattlemen have taken to produce a consistent and high-quality product. Cattlemen have sought instruction through programs like the Beef Quality Assurance Program. This program informs producers on proper beef management, including vaccination methods and balanced feed rations.

Cattlemen have begun to enlighten other producers and are producing a consistent product by operating in an alliance. Alliances operate to promote uniformity by assigning premiums based on individual market quality with the additional benefit of purchasing feed and supplies in bulk.

Consumers need to be informed of the technology being applied to produce a safe product. Strict sanitation requirements and the use of irradiation are just a few examples of the application of technology cattlemen have chosen to ensure a better product. The American Angus Association has taken a great initiative by educating the public by using displays and brochures in supermarkets. The Angus Association has promoted *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>TM</sup> (CAB<sup>®</sup>) product, and consumers everywhere are beginning to recognize the symbol representing the finest beef on the market. This is the only beef association that has

specific guidelines that cattle must meet in order to get approved as a certified product.

However, these and other improvements the beef industry has made to become a trustworthy industry need to be presented to the consumers. Many consumers remain oblivious to the initiative the beef industry and the Angus Association have taken to yield a high-quality, wholesome product.

It is in our hands; it is our responsibility to present these developments to the public. The beef industry needs to build trust early to ensure an unfailing relationship between cattlemen and consumers.

Cattlemen and ranchers need to take initiative on their own and invite schools and youth groups to observe farm life. Public-school children need to be encouraged to find information about beef by creating poem, recipe and essay contests. Grants should be created to encourage teachers to incorporate agriculture in the classroom and to encourage agricultural youth organizations, such as 4-H and FFA, to teach the general public through Food for America and similar programs.

Now consider the future of the beef industry while glancing at future consumers. Youth today are less educated on proper cooking techniques than any prior generation. The beef industry needs to educate these future consumers on proper beef preparation while continuing to provide more prepared beef meals in the frozen-food section and utilizing fast-food chains.

With the goal of stabilizing demand and providing a sustaining livelihood for the beef industry, beef producers need to use more resources to properly educate current and future consumers.

It is our responsibility to begin educational programs about our product and to support expansions into the prepared-food market. It is the responsibility of beef producers to reach out to consumers and to ensure their satisfaction with the beef industry to continue a building relationship between the beef consumer and producer.

## INTERMEDIATE DIVISION

(ages 13-17)

### Taste, Tenderness, Consistency

by Cortney Hill-Dukehart, Sykesville, Md.

Why raise Angus beef? This is an easy question to answer if you are a producer, but a more important question is, why

purchase Angus beef? The end result of all of our work rests on our ability to convince the consumer that, whether purchasing Angus beef from a supermarket or restaurant, he can always be assured of a quality product.

All of the knowledge that goes into producing a high-quality product means nothing to the average consumer who is interested in just three things: taste, tenderness and consistency. Marketing is the biggest tool the American Angus Association has to offer to its members. The Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Program<sup>\*</sup> has made the *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>TM</sup> brand a recognizable product name.

Through advertising the public has come to associate Angus with taste and tenderness, but even more importantly, consistency. Consistency brings the consumer back because he is assured that the steak he purchases today will be of the same high quality as the steak he bought last week. Marketing is the key factor in the success of any product, and the CAB Program has done an excellent job in promoting its products.

When the CAB insignia is in the grocery-store window or printed on the restaurant menu, the consumer is assured that he is receiving a product that has been known in the past to supply him with quality. He isn't interested in what went on behind the scenes to produce this product.

He isn't interested in the genetic breeding that was used to produce a high-marbling carcass. He isn't interested in the inspections of the carcass that are required to be labeled CAB. He isn't interested that every pound of CAB product is followed through to ensure that inferior beef is not being labeled as a CAB product. He isn't interested in the fact that less than one out of five cattle can meet the rigid grading specifications.

He is only interested in one thing, and that is the end product that appears on his dinner plate.

So remember, when you look across the field at this year's calf crop, you know that you will receive the best possible marketing support that any breed association has to offer. Why? Because you raise Angus cattle.

*\*Editor's note: The CAB Program is owned and administered by Certified Angus Beef LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of the American Angus Association.*

## JUNIOR DIVISION

(ages 9-12)

### A Day at the Show

by Matt Wical, Grundy Center, Iowa

I don't want to, but Mom and Dad say I have to get up. It's dark outside and warm in my bed. I finally get up and change into my jeans and the Angus sweatshirt I laid out last night. I sit at the kitchen table, and Mom reminds me, "It's going to be a long day, and you better eat something." So I eat a banana and drink some cocoa. Dad comes to the door and tells me to get in the truck. He'll load my heifer, Millie, and then we'll be off.

I fall asleep on the road. Finally we get to the fairgrounds. I see my friend Austin and his heifer, Onyx. I jump out of the truck and lead Millie to the barn. Dad says to wash her so we can feed her and blow her out. I take the hose and my bucket with scrub brush and shampoo from the showbox. I untie Millie and lead her to the wash racks. There's no line, so I tie Millie up, wet her down, add some shampoo and start scrubbing. She hates having her head scrubbed, and I get wet when she shakes. I rinse her, and then we go back to the barn.

Millie eats her grain, and then I blow her dry. Dad goes with me to check in, and then I go find Austin. We go to the showing to check the show order. I'm in Class 3 and Austin is in Class 5. I go tell Dad what class I'm in. The show doesn't start for a while, so Austin and I run around to see who else is here.

After a while, I go to help Dad get Millie ready. The show has started, and Mom goes to see where they're at. I change into my show clothes and find my showstick. We put the show halter on Millie and head to the ring. Dad sprays some Final Bloom, and I walk her into the ring. We go around the ring, and the judge lines us up. He puts me in first. I'm so excited! I get a ribbon, and we go back to the barn to wait for championships.

We go in for champion. There are seven heifers lined up with the reserve heifers waiting outside. The judge looks us over, and we walk around the ring. Austin and Onyx are in the ring, too. The judge talks on the loud speaker, and then he slaps Millie as champion and Onyx for reserve! We go out for pictures, and Austin and I shake hands. We go back to the barn. I wash Millie and tie her in the stall so everyone can look at her.

I eat some lunch, and then we load the trailer. Dad loads Millie, and we head for home. Dad says it's been a good day, and we stop for ice cream. I say it's been a GREAT day!

## CHILDREN'S STORIES

(ages 9 and younger)

### Amy's Adventure

by Caitlin Kuehn, Durrant, Iowa

Amy the Angus calf was bored one day, and she asked her mom if she could go and see the farm animals. Well, OK, but be careful, and Amy went to see the farm animals. She could not wait.

Hi, Duck, said Amy. Look at your ducklings. You have eight of them. Yes, I do. I am going to take them to swimming lessons. Well, nice seeing you, Duck. Goodbye. And Amy went to see Dog.

Hi, Dog, said Amy. Look at your puppies. You have 10 of them. Well, hi, Amy. I am taking them to howling lessons. Do you want to come? No, thank you. I am going to see Pig.

Hi, Pig, said Amy. Look at your piglets. You have 19 of them. I do, don't I? Now go away — I am eating. OK, said Amy. I will go see Cat.

Hi, Cat, said Amy. Look at your kittens. You have nine of them. I do, don't I? Are they beautiful or not? Well, yes they are, said Amy. Good, said Cat. I am going to take them to play at Tom's house. And Amy went to see Horse.

Hi, Horse, said Amy. Look at your colts, you have twins. Hi, Amy. I do have twins. Chad and Brandy are their names, said Horse. I am taking them to go to the store. They want candy. I will get you some, too. Thank you, Horse. I would like that a lot, said Amy. I will go see Goat.

Hi, Goat, said Amy. Look at your kids. You have two of them. Amy looked at them and suddenly the goat kicked Amy. Amy ran away.

Amy went to see Chicken and Rooster. Hi, Chicken. Hi, Rooster. Look at your chicks, you have 11 of them. Hi, Amy, they said. We are going to eat. Goodbye.

Amy went home and got in bed and went to sleep and dreamed a big dream about the farm animals.

The next day Amy saw Horse and Chad and Brandy. Horse had a sack. Here, Amy, said Horse, and gave Amy the sack. This is your candy you wanted. Thank you, said Amy. Goodbye, said Amy, and thank you, too. Goodbye, said Horse, and you're welcome. Horse went home with Chad and Brandy.

Amy went inside to eat some of her candy, and she was very bored. Amy sat in the barn, very, very sad. Amy wanted to play a game with someone. Amy could play a game with Chad and Brandy, so she did.

Amy went to their house. Hi, Horse, said Amy. Can I play a game with Chad and Brandy? Yes, you can. The games are in Brandy's bedroom under her bed. We've got fun games.

Amy went in Brandy's bedroom and got a good game and set it up. Then Chad, Brandy and Amy played the game of The Livestock Show.

Then they were done. WOW, said Amy. Look, I won. Good job, said Brandy. Maybe we could play another day.

Amy went home very happy and told her mom about the game. Good job, said Amy's mom. You win a lot with our games. Now go to bed; you must be very tired. Tomorrow will be a big day at the National Junior Angus Show, and you will not be ready for it. Now go to sleep so you will be.

47



Caitlin Kuehn, Durrant, Iowa; Nicole Long, Berryville, Va.; Cortney Hill-Dukehart, Sykesville, Md.; and Matt Wical, Grundy Center, Iowa, claimed top honors in the essay contest conducted by the Iowa Junior Angus Association in conjunction with the 2000 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Des Moines, Iowa.