



A recent feature story in the *Kansas Farmer* magazine highlighted an important point from the Association's long-range plan and that is the role of straightbred Angus in commercial beef production.

In a nutshell, the article about Kansas cattleman Raymond Gugenhan pointed out that he had weighed the facts and found a straightbred Angus operation to be most practical and profitable for him.

It's been a long time since we've seen many articles about straightbred commercial operations, but just possibly its time has come again in the eyes of many cattlemen. The past two decades have been a time when crossbreeding has been promoted as the only way to profitability in the commercial industry.

The purpose of this article is not to promote straightbred Angus operations as a wave of the future. Instead, it's to point out that some advantages of straightbred Angus operations have been overlooked and straight Angus herds are a viable option for beef producers.

Another cattleman, (who will appear in a forthcoming national Angus ad) Keith Smith from Attica, Kan., has concluded that straightbred Angus in his 400-head cow herd has meant 1 percent more profit than crossbreeding programs he has seen. One reason for his success is the demand for good commercial Angus females. Smith has developed a market for these females. It's meant selling heifers for a premium, even to his quality steers that last year averaged 675 pounds at nine months of age. Demand for commercial Angus females is so strong, cattlemen from all over the country tell us, that it is virtually impossible to put together a large string of Angus females.

Another factor, often overlooked in an industry of various size cow herds, is the management headaches that are relieved with a straightbred herd. The Angus industry has a unique and broad genetic base to work with and I contend that any genetics needed for optimum or maximum traits of production are available in Angus cattle. It's simply a matter of studying important reports, such as National Sire Evaluation, to find the answers.

I also hear of the convenience traits in beef production and Angus, with their reproduction, milk, pigmented skin, polled characteristic, disposition and uniformity of calf crop, gives some natural advantages to the breed.

Most important, the demand for the black hided finished steer or heifer is very real in the feedlot and packing industry. A recent survey completed for the 1991 National Angus Conference pointed out that more than 50 percent of packers preferred Angus as their breed of choice.

This, coupled with the largest end product marketing program through Certified Angus Beef, has established a real demand for market ready Angus steers and heifers.

These facts and others point to more than one reason for cattle producers to consider the advantages of straightbred commercial Angus. Your national Board felt strongly enough about this fact that a general long-range objective was established "to expand promotion to the beef industry to establish the Angus breed as the breed that can be successfully used in a straightbred commercial operation."

You be the judge if this objective is a viable option in today's industry. There are indications from many commercial producers that it is.