

# Lead In

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American Angus Association



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## Competition Drives Our Breed to Enviable Position

Fall Angus activities are in full swing. From state fairs to sales, there is an Angus event every day from now to the new year. On some days there are as many as six or seven Angus sales in different parts of the United States. This comes home to all of us working at the Association when we encounter conflicts and try to have personnel attend the sales, shows or field days.

In checking our current listing of events in this issue of the *Angus Journal* I totaled 231 between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31. That's a lot of Angus business in the next few months. It's also an indication of what's happening in the Angus breed. Business is good and demand for Angus cattle has never been better. Through fall production sales, breeders are marketing the cream of the 1994 calf crop. Expectations run high for the next generation of breed improvers.

What impresses me most is the fact that most cattlemen don't have to travel far to buy good Angus genetics. I've always contended that you need to check some of the good Angus herds in your local area because there will be outstanding seedstock to purchase. That doesn't mean you shouldn't look beyond your state or region; it's just that we often overlook good genetics close to home or even in your own herd.

The level of Angus business nationwide is a true barometer of the breed. Like many large companies with sales offices and dealers throughout the country, the American Angus Association and its nearly 25,000 adult and junior members are much the same. You as breeders are the marketers on a local and state level serving new registered Angus breeders, established breeders and commercial bull customers. It's our job as

an Association to maintain strong and viable programs, and for you to implement those programs to improve your cattle and market your Angus in your trade area.

In the years ahead we'll likely see some pressure on all our business. The Cattle Fax report presented at the midyear National Cattlemen's Association (NCA) meeting in Denver in July confirmed what most of us have observed in recent years — a buildup of cow numbers. But this doesn't mean Angus demand won't be strong in the years ahead. If the NCA meeting is any indication, I heard more in that four-day session about Angus cattle filling consumer needs more than any other breed. The industry is aware of the contribution of Angus cattle and I don't see that changing very soon. We're in an enviable position

That doesn't mean we can coast for the next few years. Any of you breeding and selling cattle know how challenging it is to stay competitive. But it is this competition that has driven the Angus breed to its present position in the industry. Breeders' use of the tools of performance selection and marketing has made the Angus breed the most dependable and predictable and most used breed in the industry. Because of this, the Angus breed is in demand and successful Angus operations of all sizes can be found in every state, county and locale in the nation.

It's an exciting time in our business. We look forward to making it even more exciting in the years ahead.

*Richard L. Spader*