

# FOUNDATION IN FOCUS

by Thomas Marten  
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## Quality counts

*When you measure a gem's quality, objective standards guide the grading and valuation.*

These standards assess aspects like refractivity, luster and mineral hardness among others to establish intrinsic value even before a gem is masterfully cut and set. The reason these minerals have value comes from scarcity, beauty and intention.

In agriculture we might first think about scarcity in terms of water rights or land access. Arguably, the bigger scarcity for agriculture is the human element. Not only are fewer individuals living on farms or ranches, but fewer live in rural areas with any closeness to raising beef.

A chain reaction begins to take shape, all too familiar in many rural communities, where young people don't return. The number of hats worn by those remaining multiplies.

What if the chain reaction is halted? Having sharp, young people familiar with animal agriculture and equipped to lead makes rural America strong.

I would push back against the sentiment that beauty is subjective. We can all recognize that beauty is real. Beauty has a profound and powerful effect. Beauty reveals truth.

Think about what is beautiful in the Angus industry. The beauty of cattle in a lush meadow surrounded by snow-capped mountains reveals the truth that these cattle are the

product of virtues like dedication, sweat and perseverance. The cattle show us something about ourselves.

A gem can be valuable because of intention or, framed another way, the story or purpose for its gift.

Think about a wedding band. It surely has a price tag, but the value (hopefully) goes far beyond the commodity price of gold and diamonds or the cost of crafting it.

You have Angus for many purposes. Many raise Angus to provide for their families or even to create or sustain a livelihood for generations.

Without a doubt, quality counts. Through the Angus Foundation, donors, like you, have found ways to invest in youth to lead and work in rural communities.


## Beauty of the Business Breed

We are witness to the beauty of special moments from the show ring to a conference like Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) where a young person finds confidence to grow. We see the future as bright because donors yesterday, today and tomorrow have made their intentions come to light.

There are many opportunities to invest and build up the human capital of the breed. These range

from your generous gifts to the Angus Fund to including the Angus Foundation in your estate plans.

The Angus Foundation is proud to fund worthy leadership programs like LEAD, Raising the Bar and the Beef Leaders Institute. These programs are only possible because of the generosity many give to grow the Angus Fund and establish endowments to create a source of funding in perpetuity.

You have a resource in the Angus Foundation to make a difference. You may have questions about how to build a lasting legacy or how to make an immediate impact. It would be a pleasure to visit with you and work together on how you can make a bright future for the breed. 

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*Editor's note: For more information regarding the Angus Foundation, contact Thomas Marten at (816) 383-5100 or [tmarten@angus.org](mailto:tmarten@angus.org).*