

# from the office

## LEAD IN

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There is only one way to know if you're making progress in the Angus breed—by looking at the record. The 1983 Angus Sire Evaluation Report in this issue of the *ANGUS JOURNAL* again presents the greatest source of records and genetic information for accurate sire selection ever offered. In recent years, no single program has had more long-range impact on a breed than national sire evaluation, and we've only just begun.

The 1983 report is made possible by you, the members, who have collected and reported the nearly 2.5 million records of performance processed through AHIR. This data base has taken nearly 25 years to accumulate, and today the breed has matured to the point where utilization of objective facts is of primary concern to profit-minded cattlemen.

Sire evaluation results are not mythical or fancy figures. The report contains simple, hard facts about sires evaluated through an analysis of all field data and structured data accumulated since the inception of AHIR. Dramatic differences exist between sires in the breed. These differences are expressed as expected progeny differences (EPD) for traits of economic importance. These include birth weight, weaning weight, yearling weight and carcass traits. For example, the range for weaning weight in the 1983 report is -19.0 lb. to +55.1 lb. The range for yearling weight is -24.9 lb. to +95.7 lb.

To illustrate the value of this information, just imagine the economic difference between progeny of the high and low bull of the breed for yearling weight. Through the sire evaluation program, superior genetics are identified. You, as cattlemen, share the greatest advantage of being able to put genetics to work in your own herd.

Another impressive part of the 1983 re-

port is the genetic trends expressed for Angus over the past 17 years. The trends indicate, on an average, weaning weight has increased 1.06 lb. per year and yearling weight has increased 2.53 lb. each year. The overall increase of progeny from sires born from 1964 to 1980 is +1.63 lb. for birth weight; +18.7 lb. for weaning weight and +43.53 lb. for yearling weight. Information on genetic trends indicates emphasis in recent years has been placed on increased growth traits within the Angus breed.

As Angus breeders, you have different options in using the sire evaluation report. First, you can use bulls superior for specific traits to strengthen your own breeding program or to correct deficiencies in a cow herd. Second, you can identify bulls in the report that excel in all traits. These bulls will compliment nearly any breeding program in the country today. And third, the ultimate challenge is to use evaluated bulls as building blocks to produce the young sires that will be the leaders in our industry tomorrow. Systematic selection and breeding, backed by record keeping through AHIR, will gain results.

My congratulations to the supporters of AHIR and of national sire evaluation. Performance has come of age in the beef industry and we have just begun to observe the impact of programs on the long-range improvement of our Angus breed. Sire evaluation is the ultimate reward for those who set forth to place documented proof of where superior genetics exist in the Angus breed.

The Angus industry is especially grateful to Richard Willham, Jeff Berger and Doyle Wilson from Iowa State University for their dedication and assistance in analyzing the Angus data and making this year's report possible.

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