



Georgia on

What comes to mind when you describe the state of Georgia?

Most people think of peaches, Atlanta, Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler, cotton fields, Bulldog football, magnolia blossoms, and antebellum homes.

This southern state is home to 6,342,000 people and is the eighth fastest growing state in the country. It's also home to 43,552 farms.

Some 350 Angus breeders from 31 states had the opportunity to visit five of those farms on August 28. The Georgia Angus Association sponsored a tour preceding the National Angus Conference in Athens. It featured four top Angus operations as well as the University of Georgia's Wilkins Beef Cattle Unit.

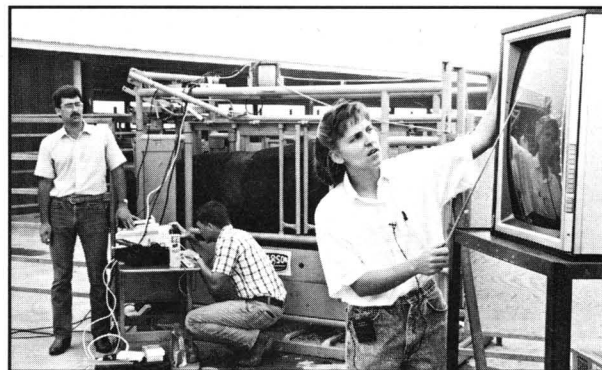
Almost all participants agreed they went home with a better understanding of Georgia agriculture and purebred beef production. Best of all, they got to know Georgia Angus breeders a little better. The Angus farm families serving as hosts showed us all the true meaning of "Southern hospitality" with their outgoing friendliness, charm and good food.

From now on, whenever I think of Georgia, I know that's what will be on my mind.

Photos & Story
by Jerilyn Johnson



Above: Black Witch Farm's Angus cowherd and shady pines attracted tour participants to a closer look. Right: Andra Nelson, University of Georgia graduate student, outlines the ribeye area of an Angus steer, via Sonaray and TV monitor screen, at the Wilkins Beef Unit near Rayle, Georgia.



Wilkins Beef Unit Rayle, Georgia

A sonaray evaluation on six Angus steers was demonstrated to tour participants at stop number 1. Research graduate student Andra Nelson outlined the ribeye area of each Angus steer on the T.V. screen monitor and calculated measurements.

Sonaray is just one research project which is helping animal scientists at Georgia University evaluate carcass composition and genetics.

Two days later, carcass data was provided on the six steers and comparisons made to the sonaray evaluations for the Angus Conference audience.

Terry Kiser, University of Georgia beef coordinator, showed tour participants part of the Wilkins Unit 180-head Angus cow herd. A pen of Angus cows and a herd bull owned by Charlie MacIntosh of nearby Caloga Farms was also shown.

Bridges Angus Farm Lexington, Georgia

The second stop featured the diversified family-farm operation of Ralph and Margaret Bridges and their six children. Along with a herd of 400 registered An-

gus cows, you'll find a 700-head of cross-bred commercial cows and a turkey operation that produces close to 500,000 tom turkeys per year on this 1,200-acre farm.

The Bridges sell about 75 Angus bulls each year and participate in all area bull test stations. Their bulls have finished at the top or near the top for the past five years. The rest of the bulls are grown out on native grass and winter ryegrass, then sold between 18 months and two years of age. They retain ownership of steer calves, sending them out to Kansas feedyards. Heifers are grown on grass and then bred to calve at two years old.

The turkey operation compliments the cattle business, the Bridges say, because they can use the turkey litter for fertilizer on the pastures, or as part of a feed ration. The toms are marketed year-round, which gives them better cash flow to keep their farm operation going.

Black Witch Farm Hoschton, Georgia

This picturesque farm set in the rolling hills of north-central Georgia, has been home to Ed and Wilma Minix and a quality herd of Angus cattle since 1986.

my Mind . . .



Left: With peach season already over with, Georgia-grown apples had to suffice. These two Georgia ladies had no trouble giving the delicious snacks away to tour participants at the Black Witch Farm. Above: Finding a good place to view cattle was difficult at times, as more than 350 people took part in the farm tour.

The Minixes, are not newcomers to the purebred business. They began their Angus operation 23 years ago on a 47-acre farm in Gwinnett County near Atlanta.

Ed Minix was general manager of The Varsity, the world's largest drive-in restaurant in Atlanta, until his retirement in 1986. Today he and his family devote all their time to their Angus and forage operation.

Black Witch Farm consists of 286-plus acres, a majority in Bermudagrass, alfalfa and clover. Their common Bermudagrass pastures are overseeded each fall with wheat and ryegrass for winter grazing. The cows and calves are fed nothing but forages.

They have used Angus Herd Improvement Records for the past 16 years and have entered bulls in test stations annually since 1970. In 1980 a bull called Black Witch Corbinaire 95, or "O.G.," bred in the Black Witch herd and owned jointly with Lemmon Cattle Enterprises and Lakewood Angus Farm, broke the all-time record for high selling bulls of all breeds at the Tifton bull test station.

Circle G Angus Farms Hampton, Georgia

An inheritance of 100 acres, some cowboy consciousness and 30 freshly steered bull calves gave James Gresham a start in the Angus business in 1969. These steers led to the purchase of a registered cow-calf pair, which was eventually built into a 100-head herd of quality registered Angus cows.

Gresham says the backbone of his operation has been the hiring of good farm managers over the years. Circle G has planned and constructed new facilities, implemented a sound, efficient breeding program and has a nationally competitive show string thanks to current manager, Bob Greaves.

In 1980, Circle G started an embryo transfer program which enables them to accelerate the turnover of generations. They now have up to six generations of embryo transfer calves and anticipate ending 1989 with around 300 embryo pregnancies. In addition, they have approximately 225 registered Angus and

200 open recipient cattle.

The cattle are ran strictly on grass and hay, with some grain supplement as pasture conditions dictate.

For the past 16 years the emphasis of Circle G has been in the showing, although they maintain performance records on all cattle. The most prominent member of their show string has been R&J Taurus 1186, who was supreme champion at the 1988 Angus Breeders Futurity and the 1988 Atlantic National. This bull has since emerged as one of the leading EPD sires in the country.

Little River Farm Madison, Georgia

A Southern showplace is the best way to describe this Angus farm and final stop of the tour. The 2,400-acre estate, named for Georgia's scenic Little River, is a unique blend of old South and modern sophistication.

Owners Art and Angela Williams of Monroe, Ga. have been in the purebred business less than two years, but have built their Angus herd to 354 head. The herd includes calves sired by Power Play, Scotch Cap, Pine Drive Big Sky, Graham and Shoshone.

Little River Farm was originally acquired in a lottery in 1803 by Edmund Byne Walker. It had been ceded to the state of Georgia by the Creek Indians.

Today it is a diversified agriculture operation with 880 acres of crops and pastureland (coastal bermudagrass and alfalfa hay), 1,500 acres of pine and hardwood timberland, a five-acre fishing lake stocked with bass and bream, and a two-acre catfish pond. The Williams use the property's main house and cottages, plus a 45-acre lake with beach and boathouse, to entertain family members and business associates.

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