



# When opportunity knocks, only you can open the door

► by Ron Bolze



Ever feel as though you have not been paid adequately for your cattle even though you've included positive carcass merit in your Angus genetics for generations? While auction-market studies document the higher value of Angus-type feeder cattle, if you have the right stuff, the real money lies in retained ownership.

That's where you can cash in on the true value of your genetics — through feedlot performance and carcass-grid premiums. That's where you can gather the information you need to retain customers. Now's your chance.

You've probably heard about the Best of the Breed (BoB) national Angus carcass challenge. Maybe you have already enrolled cattle in the first weeks of the new contest. If you need more details, pick up any current beef magazine, check out [www.cabfeedlots.com](http://www.cabfeedlots.com) or call, toll-free, 1-866-BoB-1160.



"This contest was made-to-order for my genetics," declared more than one prominent Angus breeder after learning the details of the contest. Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB), along with four other sponsors (Merial SureHealth, Allflex, Farmland

National Beef (FNB) and Agri Beef Co.), brings this opportunity to the beef industry's door.

Why is CAB co-sponsoring the contest? Two words: supply development. CAB licensees need more of that delicious *Certified Angus Beef®* (CAB®)

brand product that only one in seven cattle currently achieve.

If the lure of prize money on top of the millions of premium dollars from grid markets helps convince more producers to buy Angus bulls with positive traits for carcass merit, everyone wins. To showcase

the CAB-licensed feedlots' role as the home of Best of the Breed, CAB offers an additional \$10,000 divided among 10 prizes for the top pens of cattle fed in those yards.

Angus seedstock producers are limited only by their imaginations in how to provide additional services to commercial bull-buying clientele. What better way to retain past customers than to pay the entry fee on customers' cattle? Better yet, for those truly confident in their genetic selection programs, why not partner on the cattle and share in the financial rewards?

What's the worst-case scenario? Carcass data for \$4/head? Imagine the possibilities for your enterprise if your cattle emerge as Best of the Breed.

**Editor's Note:** Ron Bolze was CAB director of genetic programs until October 2001. He has since become director of cow-calf operations for Smithfield Foods.

## 10 reasons Angus seedstock producers, customers should open the door

- 1. Exclusively Angus.** The Best of the Breed contest is solely for recognizing superior Angus cattle. It was designed for you, as an Angus seedstock supplier, and your bull-buying clientele.
- 2. Recognition.** One of the challenges for any seedstock producer is trying to advertise or promote his operation to new prospective clientele. By working with your current bull-buying customers to showcase your Angus genetics in this contest, you stand to generate tremendous recognition for the kind of cattle you produce and how they work in commercial herds.
- 3. Confidentiality.** In any contest, what people fear most is losing. In this case, you can't really lose. Keep in mind that only the winning pens of cattle and the producers behind them will be recognized — all the other lots of enrolled cattle will be kept confidential. But you will know, and you can take the opportunity to work with your customers toward improving future showings.
- 4. Carcass data.** It is vitally important that cattle producers understand how their Angus genetics hang on the rail to meet the demands of today's consumers. The BoB contest offers that education to all participants through the collection of individual U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) carcass data.
- 5. Feedlot performance.** Just as important as carcass data, seedstock producers need to understand how their cattle perform in the feedlot. What kind of gains and feed efficiencies are their cattle achieving? What is the health of their cattle? While feedlot information is not part of the BoB contest, it is part of feeding with the feedlots licensed by Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) that host the contest. Producers acquire both feedlot performance and carcass data, with access to a leading quality-beef grid, all for \$4/head. That may be the most valuable combination that a producer gains by being a part of the contest.
- 6. Team building.** There is no question about the direction the beef industry is going. Angus seedstock producers will often be part of alliances or "beef teams." They will supply the genetics, but work in collaboration with commercial cow-calf producers, feedlots, packers and allied industry to generate a great beef product for the consuming public. The BoB contest is one opportunity to work with your cooperators in the supply chain while learning more about the genetics you use.
- 7. Electronic identification.** Everybody says it's coming; one of the buzzwords in the beef industry is electronic identification (EID) of cattle. Not to miss out on any opportunity, the BoB contest makes use of EID. As an Angus producer, you'll become better acquainted with that new technology and how it will be used on calves bearing your genetics.
- 8. Exposure to other new technologies.** The contest is designed to be a "cutting edge" contest that uses all the latest technology. We will evaluate many nutritional management strategies at the feedlot level to help ensure carcass quality and red meat yield. DNA technology, if commercially available, will be used to verify Angus parentage in the cattle.
- 9. Fun.** People in the cattle industry naturally like to compete. The contest is intended to be a fun experience for those participating.
- 10. Monetary rewards.** It is an opportunity to win a lot of money. The overall winning pen of cattle could earn more than \$200,000, and at least 23 other winners across the nation will win thousands if they have the right kind of cattle. There is no question that the contest represents golden opportunities for Angus producers. How you answer the door is up to you.