

MEMBERSHIP TIPS

by Jerry Cassady, director of member services



Valuable assets

When I learned of this month's Angus Journal theme — “Most Valuable Asset” — I began to make a mental list of the valuable assets to be thankful for within the American Angus Association.

If you describe something or someone as valuable, you mean they are very useful and helpful. Something or someone that is described as an asset is considered useful or helps a person or organization to be successful. These are simple definitions to describe commonly used words we may not think about often enough.

Registration certificate

Within any breed association, the registration certificate would be a primary asset created and documented for the respective membership. Our Association is fortunate to hold more than 20 million registration certificates within the registry documenting ancestry back to the beginning of our storied history.

Our breed registry grows by more than 300,000 animals each year. Each three-generation registration certificate contains a wealth of information pertinent to that animal and the people involved. An ever-evolving document, we continue to add information to improve the value of these certificates for our members and their customers.

Data

The Association and its members are also fortunate to have the largest,

most accurate single-breed database in the industry.

With more than 80 million data points all specific to Angus genetics, this is a very valuable tool to access for genetic improvement. I've heard some say this is our most coveted asset, and that may be true as it relates to moving the breed forward in the foreseeable future. There is true power in the data!

Angus cow

One would be remiss if the Angus cow was left out of this list. Truly the foundation of our breed, the female side of the equation cannot be overlooked. We often hear of the need for improved selection tools for the maternal side, and your Association is addressing this issue.

As we consider maternal traits, it is important to realize these are lowly heritable traits and thus, are more influenced by the environment compared to more heritable traits.

With that, more (lots more) good, clean data relative to breeding, fertility and longevity are necessary for those traits with lower heritability, hence the creation of Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) Inventory Reporting and the MaternalPlus® recognition program. This data reporting platform allows Angus breeders to better characterize

the female, and subsequently provide members what you are asking for.

The more granular we get with data recording, the more specific our tools can be. Without the data on every female for every breeding season and even every breeding service, we are left to make assumptions, and that just doesn't do breeders justice.

It takes good data to get there.

People and service

The membership of our Association must be included as a valuable asset as well. Whether you are a regular, life, junior, non-resident or affiliate member, you are certainly valued.

This applies from one end of the beef chain to the other. As we are aware, the beef industry is much larger than our membership. Consumers are valued as they select beef as their preferred source of protein. This improves demand for the commercial producers and feeders, which in turn improves demand for the seedstock breeders and the bulls they produce. We're all in this together!

Perhaps the most valuable asset we have in our lives may be the relationships we share. Relationships with immediate and extended family, friends near and far, and members

from coast to coast are covered.

One of my greatest assets is the team I am surrounded by within the Member Services department. My co-workers are great folks and even better employees dedicated to serving our members every day.

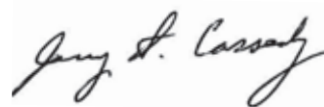
Summary

Realizing we all have our own list as it pertains to what we consider as valuable, I hope we can all agree we are very fortunate as an Association to have the resources available to provide service as a valuable asset to

our members and their customers.

Our Association is the largest beef breed association in the world, a cooperative network of independent producers working together to better the Angus breed and beef industry. We enjoy the fact that approximately 70% of the market share in this country is Angus-based.

There is a lot to be thankful for. Still, we must not become complacent, as there are competitors that would love to take our place as the beef industry leader. AJ



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Editor's note: For more information on programs and services available, contact the Member Services department at 816-383-5100, or email me directly at jcassady@angus.org.



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