

LEAD IN

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The improvement in all levels of the cattle business in 1988 has been measured in part by a similar year for the American Angus Assn. and its members. This positive business trend has marked a second successful year in a row for Angus activity nationwide as the fiscal year came to an end September 30.

Good news in 1988 came from specific departmental programs. In AHIR, Angus breeders reported 256,370 birth, weaning and yearling weight records for a whopping 16 percent increase for the year. This program, highlighted by the National Sire Evaluation and Pathfinder Cow Programs, continues to grow at a time when breeders are searching for sound, documented and predictable genetics for their future breeding programs.

Certified Angus Beef continued its winning ways with nearly a 48 percent increase in activity. Sales of CAB during the twelve months were 63.6 million pounds, up from 43 million pounds in 1987. Looking at these figures it is hard to believe that in fiscal 1963 total CAB sales amounted to just 1.6 million pounds.

During the past year, CAB was marketed through 44 food service distributors, 5,000 licensed restaurants and 625 grocery stores and meat markets throughout the country. This volume of sales meant that 1.5 million steers and heifers were visually identified at the packing plants as being eligible for the CAB program and 350,000 cattle were actually certified. That's a lot of Angus cattle and at the rate that the program is growing, it can't be help but have a positive influence on Angus demand nationwide.

There was other good news in 1988. Membership continued to rise for the second year in a row as 1,612 new Regular members joined the Association for a 7.2 percent increase. This figure was supported by 946 new Junior members for a whopping 17.37 percent increase. The basis of all Angus activity lies in a strong membership base and these figures would indicate that Angus are indeed gaining a larger share of the potential market in the industry today.

Nearly as encouraging were registration figures as the Angus breed continued to be the most popular beef breed in the U.S. with 143,520 head recorded during the fiscal year for a 1.6 percent increase. The breakdown of registrations was 36.7 percent bulls, 62.1 percent females and 1.2 percent steers.

Transfers showed a small decline during the year to 86,357 head for a decline of 1.4 percent.

In saving some of the best until last, the average price of Angus bulls and females sold at auction hit an all-time record high. A total of 10,380 bulls sold through 361 production, consignment and dispersion auctions sold for an average of \$1,940 per head. Females followed at \$1,678 and the overall average was \$1,788, up \$121 from 1987.

The year just completed should excite everyone in the registered Angus business. As the cattle industry improves, it's also the best potential for you, as Angus breeders, to capitalize on the demand that exists for functional, predictable Angus cattle for today's industry.

Your Association's goals will continue to offer aggressive, promotional and breed improvement programs for the industry and combining this with the improved Angus seed stock offered by you, as producers, lays the groundwork for even better times ahead.

