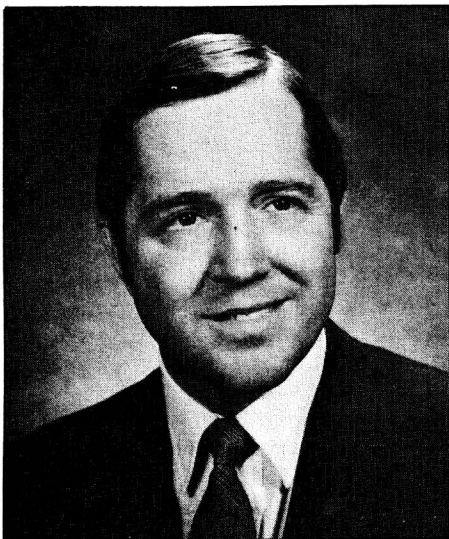


from the office

LEAD IN

by Dick Spader
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Although we are tempted to believe it now and then, these days not everything in our business is beyond our control. There are at least two things Angus breeders can do now that should have a positive effect on profits in 1982 and the more distant future.

First, it seems to me that registered Angus breeders are in a better position to develop a sound breeding program than ever before in history. The combined Sire Evaluation Report alone is enough to support this claim. The report (printed in last October's *ANGUS JOURNAL*) is the largest collection of information in the world on top proven herd bulls evaluated on their genetic ability to transmit economically important traits to their offspring. Whichever trait you wish to infuse into your herd you can find a bull in the report that will supply it either through his use artificially or through the use of one of his sons. Most important, there are bulls

above average to outstanding in all traits— weaning weight, yearling weight, maternal ability and birth weight.

The bull you use this breeding season is going to affect your sales a year from now—or less if you sell calves. Despite low feeder and finished cattle prices, the bull market is not going to disappear. Every 20 commercial cows or so are going to need a bull next year, and the year after. What's more, commercial cattle producers, like you, are going to be under intense pressure to improve their production efficiency—that means wean more calves and produce more pounds of beef per acre, with a minimum of labor costs. One of the best ways they can do this is to use more top quality, performance tested Angus bulls.

That's why it is so important that we use all the tools available to us to improve breeding programs—to offer production efficiency to commercial bull customers.

Which brings us to the second point: Advertising and merchandising.

An improved advertising and merchandising program can pay almost immediate dividends. If you have cattle that can provide your customers with calving ease, more live calves, more pounds of beef weaned per acre, higher prices per pound and the peace of mind that goes with not having to pull 10% or 20% of all calves born, you have what the commercial cowman is looking for.

This winter take a good look at your advertising and merchandising program. See if it is communicating in the strongest possible way the economic benefits your herd can offer to the commercial cowman who lives down the road or in the next county.

The worst kind of advertising brags. It

says "I have the best," "My herd bull is the greatest," etc. People laugh at this.

Advertising that gets customers and sells cattle is based upon facts. When you describe your herd or your cattle or your breeding program, you provide information people can use. The best kind of advertising translates facts into benefits. It goes one step beyond facts and explains what an estimated progeny difference of 16 lb. for weaning weight means in extra profit, or how a -3 lb. on birth weight translates into more live calves and peace of mind and extra sleep at calving time.

A sound evaluation of your advertising program might show that you don't need to spend more money on advertising. You may just need to advertise more effectively.

Constantly reminding your customers of the quality of your cattle and the care and thought that you put into your breeding program is sound merchandising. There is no less expensive or effective way to do this than to transfer one of the new Performance Registration Certificates to each of your buyers. The performance certificate documents the genetic value of the animal or animals the buyer has just purchased.

Transferring cattle to new owners is always good business, even if the buyer is not in the registered business. With the Performance Registration Certificate, value is increased markedly and there is no extra cost. The fee for a regular transfer and for transferring a performance certificate is the same.

Despite the uncertainty in our business today one thing is certain—conditions are going to improve. Those who continue to make progress will obviously be in the best position to take advantage of opportunities in the future. 