



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Take advantage of being on Team Angus

Back when I worked for one of the national beef industry publications and “alliance” was the new industry buzz word, we had quite a time classifying the Angus dynamic. It certainly wasn’t typical of the pockets of producers trying to align themselves with others of similar viewpoints to vertically coordinate or pool resources to get a competitive edge for their small group. But, as we published lists of the alliances seeking higher monetary returns for their members, you couldn’t ignore what the American Angus Association had done to give its members and their customers a competitive advantage.

Team Angus

While the trend was to align with a few exceptional entities to position your alliance to be one of the survivors of consolidation, the Association agreed upon a target, provided the data and the tools to get there, and promoted the advantage of the breed to the end user.

It’s an alliance that embraces 35,000 members and their customers. Its success is in being inclusive rather than exclusive and in keeping information in the public domain. It’s sort of ironic that a breed group, the clique of all cliques, is creating the platform by which individual producers can stay independent.

Established goals

In establishing the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand, the Association set an end-product target for Team Angus. Through Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB), the Association has created a demand-driven premium for Angus cattle at harvest. That

premium has encouraged premiums for Angus feeder calves and Angus seedstock.

Through the Feedlot-Licensing Program (FLP), a network of feedlots dedicated to the same end-product target has been established. Yet the network is set up to allow independence. And independence creates the competition that encourages each industry sector to do its best.

We have the tools

The reliability of the Angus database in predicting progeny performance of Angus cattle gives seedstock and commercial producers the vehicle with which to improve their cattle. Angus expected progeny differences (EPDs) allow us to compare cattle within the breed, giving customers the flexibility to shop among herds and allowing the marketplace to establish the value of the seedstock. The ability to make planned matings increases the rate of genetic improvement for individual herds and the breed as a whole.

Of course, with all this independence, there still has to be communication among the industry segments to create marketing opportunities. But those marketing tools are also available through the Association.

From the national breed advertising campaign to breeder advertising kits made available to producers for advertising on a local level ...

From faxing feeders information on Angus-sired feeder calves to enabling the flow of information from the packer back to the rancher ...

These tools are created to give Angus producers the means by which to survive and to keep their customer base for decades to come. The breed’s strength relies upon your use of the tools.

- Every time you register a bull ...
- Every time you transfer a pedigree to a commercial customer ...
- Every time you enroll a customer’s herd in Beef Record Service (BRS) ...
- Every time you maintain the identity of an Angus-sired calf to harvest ...

You strengthen the breed and preserve your independence.

I certainly don’t mean to sound negative toward other alliances; they continually set standards of excellence and efficiency we, as an industry, might otherwise think impossible. My only goal is to bring to light the fact that, as a member of the Association, you belong to Team Angus. And as a player, you have available to you a wide assortment of tools to strengthen your position in the future of the cattle industry. The more you utilize these services, the stronger your position in the industry will be.

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