



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Keep up with the leaders

To say the 2007 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Meeting and Research Symposium was interesting would do the event a great disservice. It goes beyond interesting to almost downright necessary.

Not one to miss

Someone once told me that if I ever attended a BIF meeting, I'd never want to miss another one. He was right.

If you ever feel comfortable as an Angus breeder, sitting at the top, you gotta go. Sitting through one session will knock the complacency right out of you. At the same time, attending will make you very proud of the role the American Angus Association has played over the years to foster breed improvement and technological advancement.

We'll bring you full coverage of the event in the August issue. In the meantime, you can listen to the presentations, view the PowerPoints (most are posted in pdf form), and read summaries and proceedings at www.bifconference.com.

This year's program was certainly right for the times. Speakers took on the challenges of the daily themes, "Performance Programs at a Crossroads" and "Challenges to Conventional Wisdom."

Of course, finding the means to incorporate DNA into genetic evaluations was a big topic of discussion. I encourage you to listen to the Thursday presentation by Ronnie Green and Friday's general session

presentation and Emerging Technologies Committee presentation by Jerry Taylor.

Actually, the entire Emerging Technologies Committee, which Bill Bowman chaired, was excellent. You will also want to listen to the presentation by Mike Tess concerning guidelines for incorporating genomic information into selection tools and J.R. Tait's presentation, which considered whether we can genetically select for a more healthful lipid profile in beef cattle. This type of research will become one of the leading topics of discussion in coming years.

Friday's general session took a look at why the beef industry hasn't made more visible progress in increasing quality grade. You'll want to listen to the presentations by Pete Anderson, Dan Moser and Bob Weaber.

One of the highlights of the meeting was the opportunity for audience participation. Throughout the meeting, questions were asked to which attendees indicated their answers via an electronic keypad. Responses to some of the questions were summarized and displayed almost immediately, while Darrh Bullock summarized others in discussing whether the industry could define an ideal animal.

We had several award winners and BIF board appointments among the Angus family, so I encourage you to visit www.bifconference.com to read about them. I do want to recognize Dave Nichols of Bridgewater, Iowa, for attending every BIF meeting since its organization and Roy Wallace of Select Sires, Plain City, Ohio, for attending every meeting but the organizational meeting.

Making it possible

I would be remiss to not thank our sponsor for making our coverage of the event possible. Biozyme Inc. of Saint Joseph, Mo., sponsors the site as part of its long-term commitment to the Angus Foundation.

Get registered

The next great meeting is just around the corner. The National Angus Conference & Tour is Aug. 29-31 in Peoria, Ill. Find the schedule, hotel and travel information online at www.nationalangusconference.com. Online registration is available on the web site, which is sponsored by Purina Mills, LLC, and Alpha Animal Health.

Angus Productions Inc. (API) will provide real-time coverage of the event so attendees can revisit presentations, and those who don't have the opportunity to attend can listen to the presentations.

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