



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Where are we headed?

New Year's Eve is considered the traditional time to declare resolutions — goals to undertake in the new year to better ourselves and our situations or to better the lives of those around us. It's a new tax year, a new calf crop is arriving for many, and we're a month closer to green grass. Have you set resolutions for your 2007 calf crop?

A few questions

Breeding season for the 2007 calf crop will soon be upon us. Sire selections made this spring will determine what the breed has to offer commercial producers in 2008. The decisions you are making now build the roadmap to our future. So, where are we headed? What do you base your sire selections upon?

Do you base them on your picture of the ideal animal to perform in your production system to achieve maximum profit?

Do you keep a buyer "wish list" — a list of comments your customers have made that offer insights into their genetic needs?

Does geography factor into your breeding decisions? How about climate?

Do you choose sires according to what's popular? Do you look at who sold the most semen last year, or who had the most calves registered last year? Do you look at whose calves sold for the most money?

Do you choose sires based on projected expected progeny differences (EPDs)? If so, which EPDs are you interested in and why? Do you focus on maternal, paternal and/or terminal traits?

Do you expect to sell bulls, replacement heifers or both?

Do you prioritize functional traits of soundness, udder structure and/or libido?

Do you target the calves you raise as seedstock for the purebred Angus sector, parent stock for hybrid seedstock, the commercial cow-calf sector, the show sector or some specific alliance?

Do you use a couple bulls or a dozen?

If you would like to share with other readers your goals for your 2007 calf crop and can summarize them in 150 words or less, send me a letter to the editor at shermel@angusjournal.com, or mail it to Shauna Rose Hermel, editor, Angus Productions Inc., 3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506. Depending on response and room in the March issue, we'll share your letters or an overview of them in the "Editor's Mailbox" column.

Symposium coverage

The 2005 Range Beef Cow Symposium in Rapid City, S.D., did not disappoint in offering a tremendous lineup of speakers. Snow and poor weather prevented many

from attending the Dec. 6-8, 2005, symposium, which was hosted by the departments of animal science and Cooperative Extension Services of South Dakota State University, the University of Nebraska, Colorado State University and the University of Wyoming.

Angus Productions Inc. (API) provided online coverage of the event. We'll bring you a synopsis in the February *Angus Journal*. But, if you would like a preview, visit the newsroom at www.rangebeefcow.com now to read summaries of the presentations.

Likewise, API will provide online coverage of the Cattle Industry Annual Convention and Trade Show, which will be Feb. 1-4 in Denver, Colo. A special symposium on bovine viral diarrhea (BVD) precedes the convention, and API will provide highlights of it as well. Visit www.4cattlemen.com in early January to review the schedule and view preconference news releases. Visit the site during and after the meeting to catch API's coverage of the event.

Happy New Year, and may you make good on all your resolutions!

E-MAIL: shermel@angusjournal.com

ANGUS PRODUCTIONS INC.

3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506; 1-800-821-5478; fax: (816) 233-6575; office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (Central)

home page: www.angusjournal.com

Staff are listed by name, phone extension and e-mail prefix. All direct phone numbers are "(816) 383-5..."; all e-mail addresses are "...@angusjournal.com"

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Field editors — Barb Baylor Anderson, 305 Valley View Dr., Edwardsville, IL 62025, (618) 656-0870, anderagcom@sbcglobal.net ■ Kindra Gordon, 11734 Weisman Rd., Whitewood, SD 57793, (605) 722-7699, kindras@gordonresources.com ■ Janet Mayer, 259 Mile Hill Rd., Johnstown, PA 15909, (814) 322-4687, jmayer5013@aol.com ■ Becky Mills, Rt. 1, Box 414, Cuthbert, GA 31740, (229) 732-6748, lovettmills@alltel.net ■ Troy Smith, HC 72, Box 18A, Sargent, NE 68874, (308) 527-3483, wordsmith@nctc.net

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