



► Tybar Ranch annually displays a pen of bulls in the Denver yards during Angus week at the National Western. Marketing bulls private treaty to cattlemen interested in PAP-tested and proven genetics has been a successful endeavor for this Carbondale, Colo., operation.

## Marketing in the Yards

Producer and branded program use the yards in Denver to spotlight their partnership.

Story & photos by **Wade Lewis**

A collective sigh of relief may have been heard around the Angus world when another successful week of Angus events at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) came to a close. The week was overflowing with activities.

For many Angus breeders, “Denver” is the big event of the year. Planning may take months, culminating in a week’s worth of fast-paced activity. A new crop of champions are named on the hill, new and old sires rub shoulders in herd bull alley, and pens are filled to capacity with carload, pen, sale and display cattle. It’s the happening place to be in January.

Tybar Ranch, located on Colorado’s western slope, is one of many who use this opportunity to showcase their breeding programs. Manager Mark Nieslanik says the NWSS gives them a chance to visit with a wide range of producers from around the state and the nation. Their display pen, located off the center aisle in the yards, is a prime spot for selling their PAP (pulmonary arterial pressure)-tested bulls.

### Another option

This year Tybar took a new

approach. Their commitment to commercial customers prompted them to seek a partner who could offer a guaranteed market for Angus-sired calves.

“We wanted our customers to have marketing options, which included association with an Angus beef program. Dwight Hartley’s Premium Gold Angus Beef (PGA) was a natural fit for us. PGA offers purchase programs, retained ownership or shared-risk options,” Nieslanik explains.



► While some, like American Angus Association president Joe Elliott, preferred to eat their PGA burgers “a la natural,” others went all the way — two patties, mustard, ketchup and pickles.

“Carcass data on every animal is also important. Plus, PGA feeds cattle at Heartland Cattle Co., near McCook, Nebraska. We have been sending our heifers out to Heartland’s heifer development center for the past five years.”

In order to introduce the partnership between Tybar and PGA, Hartley offered to host a hamburger feed at the Tybar pen during Angus week in Denver to familiarize Tybar customers and others with the branded product. Clear skies and temperatures topping out near the 60s Jan. 15 presented a perfect day for the burger feed.

Two types of hamburgers were featured — fresh burgers, which were grilled on the spot, and heat-and-serve cheeseburgers, designed for families on the go. “This hamburger can be taken from the freezer, cooked in the microwave for 1 minute 45 seconds, and it’s ready to eat, complete with grill marks,” Hartley says. “It’s just one of the value-added products we have developed.”

With sales approaching \$130 million, Hartley doesn’t see a top to the market yet. “It’s our goal to develop a

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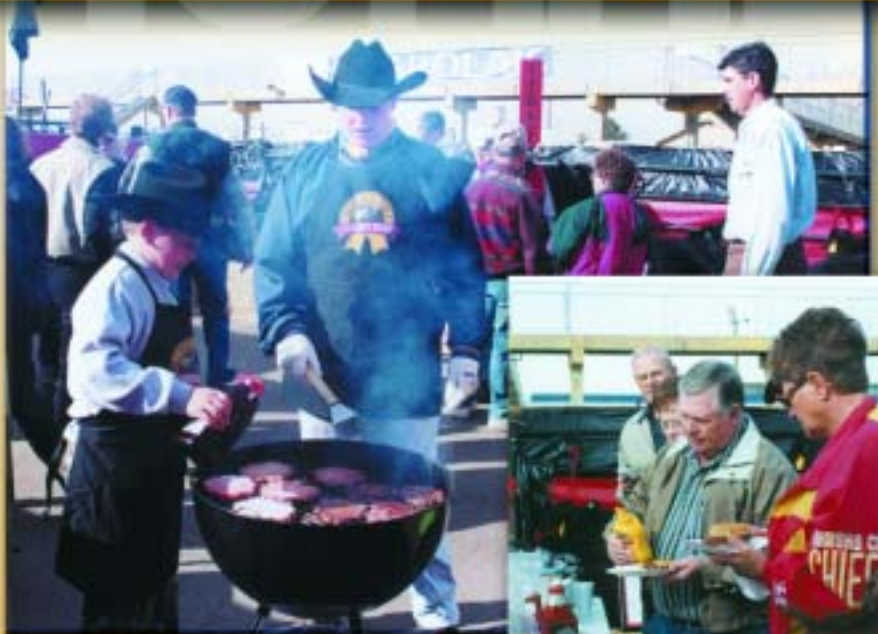
## Marketing in the Yards

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relationship with a number of PGA seedstock providers who can help us identify and source cattle for our growing demand," he says. "I've spent the last 25 years in the Angus business. It's always exciting to come to Denver and visit with producers from around the country. This was a great way for us to help one of our providers and get exposure for PGA."

The smell of grilling hamburgers encouraged a large crowd to gather, and with word circulating through the yards of free hamburgers, it didn't take long to serve 600 burgers.

"This was certainly a Denver to remember," Nieslanik says. "We couldn't have dreamed up better weather, demand for Angus is at an all-time high, and our customers are excited about the opportunity to become involved with PGA. That's what it's all about!"



► **Above:** Master chefs Wade and Zachary Wells were kept busy at the grill. More than 600 PGA hamburgers were served during the lunch.

► **Right:** The hamburger line was steady during lunch hour.