



Tech Notes

by **Scott Johnson**, director of Angus Information Management Software

Using software to sort cattle

This month we explore questions about sorting by the Registration/Transfer and Category fields via the Angus Information Management Software (AIMS) program.

How do I enter the names of the breeders to whom I want to transfer a calf when I register it?

Not too long ago, we added the ability to register and transfer calves in one export. In a nutshell, the process simply involves filling out the normal registry information for the calf (this only works on first-time registered calves), then clicking on the Transfer button at the bottom of the Registry tab. This will take you to a new screen where the Transfer information is entered. Most fields are self-explanatory, but it's probably not obvious how to take advantage of the Customer fields.

To transfer the calves, you must provide ranch name, address, city, state and ZIP code. In the case of AIMS, this information is provided by the Customer Manager. To access this option, simply double-click the Buyer ID field; then find the customer to whom you are transferring. Once you double-click (or use the Select button) on the appropriate customer, AIMS will take you back to the Transfer screen and fill in the customer information. However, if not all fields are filled in, the transfer will not validate.

Also, notice that the Buyer ID is the unique identification of this customer in your database, it is not the buyer's member

code. If the member code is present, AIMS will send it as part of the export, but it is not required since you may be transferring it to a commercial customer or you don't know the member code.

Since the Association enters membership names as one field, AIMS requires that the Ranch Name field have the name in it. If you are using an individual's last name and first name, you'll need to repeat that in the Ranch Name field.

Once you have provided all of the appropriate information, you can click the Validate then Close button. As the label implies, it will validate the information before closing the window. Once the data is validated, the Valid Transfer field will have a check mark beside it. As you will discover, clicking on the Valid Transfer field only brings up a message about its purpose.

And finally, when you go to export this information — using the "Registration and Transfer" export operation — a window will display the status of the export. The window tells you how many are exported for Registration and Transfer, Registration only and *not* Registered. Check these numbers to make sure they match your intentions of how many should fit in each category.

What is the Category field used for on the screen where I select the pen I want to open?

The Category field was added to help users subdivide or sub-sort pen names. For example, let's say the following list is a list of your pens:

Category	Name
	All Animals
	Active cows
	Bull pen
	Calves to register — heifers
	Recips
	Falun pasture bulls
	South pasture
	Ultrasound bulls
	Weaned calves
	Yearling heifers
	Yearling bulls
	Zeandale ranch

Although this isn't a really long list (due to space), you can see that if it included 50 pens, it would get a little tricky finding everything. So, let's use the Category field to provide a means to sub-sort the pens:

Category	Name
	All Animals
Cows	Active cows
Bulls	Bull pen
Cows	Calves to register — heifers
Cows	Recips
Bulls	Falun pasture bulls
	South pasture
Bulls	Ultrasound bulls
Calves	Weaned calves
Cows	Yearling heifers
Bulls	Yearling bulls
	Zeandale ranch

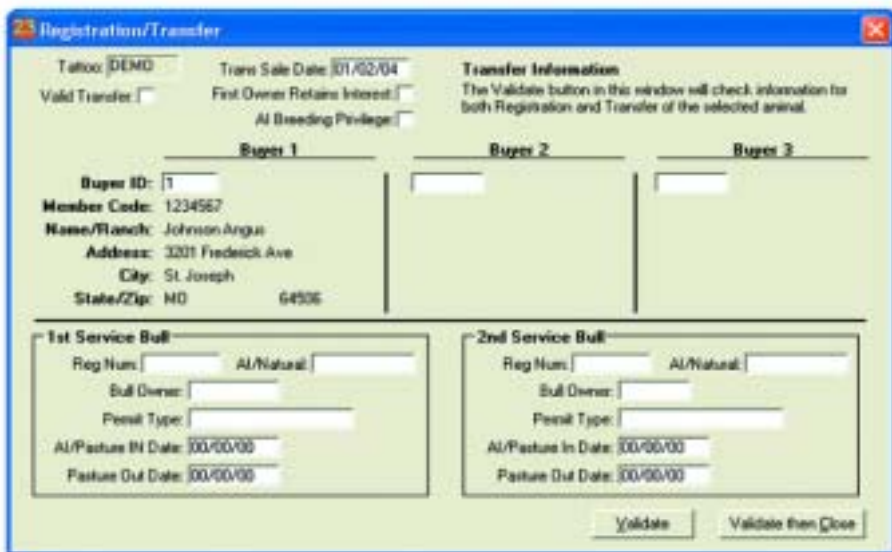
Now, you can sort the list simply by clicking on the "Category" header. It will sort like this:

Category	Name
	All Animals
	South pasture
	Zeandale ranch
Bulls	Bull pen
Bulls	Falun pasture bulls
Bulls	Ultrasound bulls
Bulls	Yearling bulls
Calves	Weaned calves
Cows	Active cows
Cows	Calves to register — heifers
Cows	Recips
Cows	Yearling heifers

As you can see, those with no category sort first, then using the Category field, they are sub-sorted by bulls, calves and cows; within each, it sorts them alphabetically.

To reverse the order, simply click on the header again. To get them sorted back on just the pen name, click on the "Name" header.

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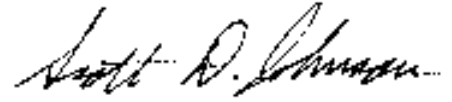
The category can be assigned when you make new pens, but you may also want to go back and add category designations to existing pens. First, open the pen you wish to work with, then there are two methods to add the category: 1) right-click on the pen name along the left side of the AIMS screen or 2) use menu commands Pen | Basic Info. Both methods end up at the same screen where you can add or change the category, as

well as determine the Default Tab and Comment.

On the same Basic Info screen, there is a button labeled “Default pen when AIMS opens.” Have you ever wondered what that means? If you click that button, this will be the pen that opens the next time you start AIMS. Actually, this can be determined another way as well — go to Tools | Default Options, and change the Initial Pen field to whatever pen you want to open when AIMS starts. This second method has existed for a long time, but speaking from experience, the button on the Basic Info screen is much quicker.

But wait, there’s more...

I recently added another way to determine what pen opens first; it’s another Default Option setting, labeled “Last Pen is Initial.” The options are simply Yes or No (when this was added, it was set to No so that it would not override your existing preferences). Change this option to Yes, and the pen that was open when you closed AIMS will be the one that opens when you start AIMS.



E-MAIL: scottj@angus.org