

Don't overlook the fundamentals

Winter is, for the most part, a slack time for farmers and ranchers. In days gone by, cowboys used winter months to repair saddles, bridles and harnesses. They did chores around the ranch, fixed wagons and repaired corrals. When it got dark, they went to bed or to various alternate places to occupy time.

Time to meet

Things have changed somewhat in modern times. Chores still have to be seen to, but cowboys and ranchers do not do much leatherwork. Wintertime has become the time cowboys use to go to meetings, and there are plenty of them to attend.

Of course there are the big meetings — like the American Angus Association Annual Meeting and the Cattle Industry Annual Convention — that attract hundreds of cowmen and allied industry representatives. The R-CALF USA national meeting is also scheduled in winter, along with countless other meetings on the local, regional and national levels.

In fact, there are meetings all the time. There are meetings to plan meetings, and conference calls are initiated to organize meetings to plan larger meetings. Sometimes

it appears the world revolves around meetings.

Meeting planners are always looking for topics and speakers to draw a crowd. It seems as though a good crowd makes for a successful meeting, even if speakers and subject matter are marginal.

Topics addressed

During the past couple years, favorite subjects have included country-of-origin labeling (sometimes referred to as COL or COOL) and whether or not this should be mandated by the government. Then, there's the issue as to whether country-of-origin labeling is a marketing program or a human health issue. After much debate, most people have leaned to the marketing side.

Emotions flared when the subject of reopening the Canadian border surfaced.

Here, again, the question arose: Is it a marketing issue or a health issue? Well, common sense tells us it is not a health issue, so it must be a marketing dilemma related to resumption of normal trading relations with our export partners.

Another hot topic is animal identification (ID). We know without doubt that at some time beef producers will have a government mandate to document premises, management and traveling habits of all cattle in the United States, from calving pasture to plate. There's no need to despair. Let's be on the front end of this movement and receive the benefit instead of fighting it and being victimized by it (paraphrased from a quote by Thomas A. Edison). The American Angus Association, through our AngusSourceSM program, is ready for this to happen.

Keep basics on program

While we spend time, effort and dollars attending these meetings, oftentimes we leave in frustration, which comes from not knowing how to proceed or just what to think regarding specific issues. Perhaps that's a good thing in that it serves as motivation to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506-2997
 Office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Central)
 phone: (816) 383-5100; fax: (816) 233-9703
 e-mail: angus@angus.org ■ home page: www.angus.org

OFFICERS

Minnie Lou Bradley, president, 15591 CR K, Memphis, TX 79245; bradley3@srcaccess.net ■ **John Crouch**, executive vice president, 3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506; jcrouch@angus.org ■ **Ben Eggers**, vice president, 3939 S. Clark, Mexico, MO 65265; eggers@socket.net ■ **Joe Hartley**, treasurer, PO Box 553, Vinita, OK 74301; jot_hartley@hotmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Terms expiring in 2005—**Leo Baker**, 11440 Angus Ln., Saint Onge, SD 57779; msbaker@mato.com ■ **Gregg Blythe**, 3207 Old River Rd., Decatur, AL 35603; clydec7@aol.com ■ **Bill Davis**, HC 57, Box 4075-1, Sidney, MT 59270; rolnrok@direcway.com ■ **Robert (Bob) Schlutz**, 260 Colonel's Dr., Box 66, Columbus Junction, IA 52738; rwschlutz@aol.com ■ **John Schurr**, 40842 Farnam Rd., Farnam, NE 69029; john@schurrtop.com
Terms expiring in 2006—**Al DeClerk**, 3914 Engelberg Rd., Pochahontas, AR 72455; eafherd@cox-internet.com ■ **Joe Hampton**, 2600 Back Creek Rd., Mount Ulla, NC 28125; rhampton@webkorner.com ■ **Paul Hill**, 11503 SR 554, Bidwell, OH 45614; champion@zoomnet.net ■ **Dave Smith**, 1601 N. CR 200 E., Greensburg, IN 47240; dsmith@stewartseeds.com ■ **Rob Thomas**, 42734 Old Trail Rd., Baker City, OR 97814; thomasangus@direcway.com
Terms expiring in 2007—**Jarold Callahan**, 2202 N. 11th, Yukon, OK 73099; callahan@expressranches.com ■ **Norman Garton**, RR4, Box 153, Nevada, MO 64772; ngar2@yahoo.com ■ **Jay King**, 28287 Woodside Dr., Rock Falls, IL 61071; saukvalleyangus@essex1.com ■ **Richard (Dick) Tokach**, 5520 CR 81,

Saint Anthony, ND 58566; rctokach@westriv.com ■ **Phil Trowbridge**, 349 Leggett Rd., Ghent, NY 12075; p.trow-gall@att.net

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Executive vice president: John Crouch
 Executive administrative assistant: Diane Strahm
Vice presidents: Finance—Richard Wilson ■ **Information & Data Programs**—Bill Bowman ■ **Industry Relations**—Jim Shirley

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF BY DIVISION

Finance—Milford Jenkins, director of Foundation development; Kenny Miller, assistant director of finance; Richard Wilson, director of finance
Industry Relations—James Fisher, director of activities & junior activities; Sara Moyer, director of industry & member communications; Jim Shirley, director of commercial programs; Shelia Stannard, director of activity communications and event coordinator
Information & Data Programs—Lou Ann Adams, director of information systems; Bill Bowman, director of performance programs; Scott Johnson, director of Angus Information Management Software; Sally Northcutt, director of genetic research; Bryce Schumann, director of member services & office management; Carol Waller, assistant director of member services & office management

AMERICAN ANGUS AUXILIARY

President—Shirley Williams, Van Buren, Ark. For a complete list of officers, refer to page 46.

REGIONAL MANAGERS—Refer to page 165.

CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF LLC

President—Jim Riemann, Wooster, Ohio
 For a CAB staff listing, refer to page 101.

research these important issues and become involved in solutions.

It sometimes seems many of those who attend these meetings become so emotionally involved with national political issues that they forget the real reason they are in the cattle business. They forget that their basic economic health depends on the application of genetic and economic values in their own herds.

Perhaps from an educational standpoint

there should be a major thrust at each meeting we organize to reintroduce basic production topics geared not only to new breeders, but also to seasoned breeders who perhaps need a refresher course on contemporary grouping, adjusted weights, ratios, expected progeny differences (EPDs) and \$Values.

Younger people who enter the purebred industry have a thirst to know and understand the tools we have at our disposal. The seasoned breeders have the same thirst, but sometimes they are reluctant to ask the questions for fear of embarrassment.

We must constantly remind ourselves that

not only do we have a dynamic business, we have a dynamic membership. Last year, membership in the Association increased by 12%, adding 3,266 new members to our rolls. When we become involved in planning programs and field days, we need to remember that basic information on the Angus industry presented in an easily understood manner is always in vogue. Both our new members and our seasoned veterans will appreciate it.



E-MAIL: jcrouch@angus.org