



# Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

## Best ideas tweaked by many

*In conversations with those who have attended the Beef Improvement Federation's BIF's annual meeting and research symposium, it's common to hear someone cite the first meeting they attended, followed quickly by, "and I haven't missed one since." I can say the same.*

### Forum for critique, exploration

It is so unique in its content and its approach. The amount of sharing of what private industry in other industries would consider intellectual property and not let out of the back room is impressive. Even private industry shares at the BIF symposium.

When academia, breed associations and breed leaders can put aside their individual competitiveness for a few days for the betterment of the whole industry, it gives us the opportunity to look at challenges from a point of view we may not have considered. It helps us foresee problems tunnel vision may not have allowed us to see. In the end, it prevents us from making mistakes we might have made without a peer review and it helps us to hone ideas for more successful and efficient rollouts. Undoubtedly, a little competition keeps us on our toes and encourages us to continue to advance our programs and services for members and their customers.

No one organization has all the answers. No one entity can aspire to be the silver bullet for the industry. Rather, a viable industry

relies on internal competition — competition that keeps us honest in our outlook, that necessitates our seeking greater efficiencies in what we do, that fosters improvement in every aspect of the business, and that holds us accountable to our customers in a competitive environment.

I worry that when universities, breed associations and private industry prioritize their competitive edge, seeing it as a means of survival, that the discussion will lessen. I worry that we will seek more patents and corners on the market than we will seek peer review. I worry that in arguing our case for why we should be No. 1 that we will lose sight of the fact that No. 1 in a dying industry is still dying.

Let's look for the tides that raise all ships and avoid breaks that split and cause the wave to crash.

### Coverage online

Angus Productions Inc. (API) is providing online coverage of this year's BIF symposium online at [www.bifconference.com](http://www.bifconference.com).

The event is widely recognized as the

leading forum for the exchange of ideas between those who create technologies for breed improvement and those who put such technologies into practice. Experts from the United States and abroad discussed a range of topics — from recent hair-shedding evaluations to international database options to incorporating genomics into genetic selection tools.

Visit the Newsroom at [www.bifconference.com](http://www.bifconference.com) to read summaries of the sessions, view proceedings papers and PowerPoint presentations provided by speakers, and listen to audio of the sessions. Visit the Awards page for short biographies on the award winners. And, finally, visit the Photos page to browse through galleries of photos from the post-conference tours and the meeting itself.

The site is compiled by API and is made possible through the sponsorship of BioZyme Inc. through its significant contribution to the Angus Foundation. For more information about API or event coverage, contact me at [shermel@angusjournal.com](mailto:shermel@angusjournal.com) or 816-383-5270. For more information on BIF, contact Executive Director Joe Cassidy at [joe\\_cassady@ncsu.edu](mailto:joe_cassady@ncsu.edu) or 919-513-0262.

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