



Angus Stakes

► by **Shauna Rose Hermel**, editor

Staying on track

As cattlemen and women, you're accustomed to putting in some long days and cold nights to get the herd fed and to get those new calves on the ground strong and healthy. As you do, you're already thinking about what sires you need to mate to your cows to offer seedstock your customers will prize two or three years down the road.

This month's keys

It's a business model that requires long-term planning and a long production-to-market interval. That's the part most of us enjoy — selecting sires, seeing the outcomes of planned matings, developing replacement heifers and bulls, watching them grow and mature, and sending a bull off to a commercial buyer's herd who recognizes his value. Others enjoy the marketing aspect — finding the buyer that will value your seedstock the most.

The four main keys to success that we highlight in this issue cover the spectrum, from reproductive efficiency to developing seedstock, herd nutrition and marketing. All four are critical components to the success of any purebred operation.

While covering development, nutrition and reproduction are hallmarks of our traditional coverage, I'm not sure we've done justice to providing the marketing insights

you need. We emphasize that in this issue, and with the merger of the Association's Public Relations Department and Angus Productions Inc. (API), I'm sure it will become more of a mainstay in the book.

Evaluating success

To be successful at implementing any of these keys takes constant research, evaluation and adjustment. Doing that well ensures that the long days and cold nights are fruitful.

The same applies to producing the *Angus Journal*, the *Angus Beef Bulletin* and our other information vehicles. We love putting the information together for you, but we want to make sure we are on target and applying our efforts toward the right subject matter.

Two years ago we launched a readership survey to help us stay in tune with your needs and make sure we are covering the stories that we need to fulfill our part of API's mission — to be that indispensable information

source. That survey helped us establish the 35 Keys to Success theme we are using to celebrate 35 years under the ownership of the American Angus Association.

Just as you need to be thinking forward to what your customers will need from you in two years as you make that semen purchase, we need to be thinking in terms of what stories and subject themes we need to be researching for articles in 2016 and beyond. Your input is critical, and we want it in two ways:

1. Please go online and fill out the readership survey available at www.surveymonkey.com/s/AngusJournalsubscriber15. We'll conduct a drawing in April and award prizes to 10 respondents who provide their membership information.
2. Send an email to me (shermel@angusjournal.com) with "Article Suggestions" in the subject header. You can be as specific as "So-and-So would make a good profile for getting started in the business" to as broad as "I need nutrition information." We'll share that information with our staff and our field editors.

Cattle Industry Convention

Watch for coverage of the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention & National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Trade Show at www.4cattlemen.com. The event takes place Feb. 4-7 in San Antonio, Texas.

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