



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Need a contingency plan

The last six weeks have been busy — as the pages of this issue document. It's a bit ironic that some of the most important meetings for us to attend occur during that Thanksgiving-to-Valentine's Day stretch. It tends to be our busiest production season for the publications because it is the busy sale season for you. One of the common threads in the events that we attend is the emphasis on global beef and the importance of global markets.

Careful what you wish for

I don't want to contradict the importance of global markets or question the added value that beef exports put into your pocket. As Brett Stuart of CattleFax detailed during the CattleFax Outlook Seminar at the 2014 Cattle Industry Convention in Nashville, those exports add an average of \$307 per head to the value of each carcass (see "CattleFax Outlook for 2014" on page 274). That's 21% of the value of each carcass being derived from sales of U.S. beef in foreign markets. Who wants to give that up?

A bonus, much of that value is derived from things we don't have an appetite for here in the United States — tripe, for instance.

As Tony Clayton of Clayton Agri-Marketing Inc. explains, demand for U.S. livestock has reached unprecedented levels (see "Export Economics" on page 318). It's adding value to the U.S. livestock sector.

That's all good. Actually, it's great. My question is, what's our contingency plan? What happens when the next disease incident — like the finding of the cow with bovine

spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) — closes borders to beef and/or live cattle from the United States? What happens the next time foreign policies use ag products and services in brokering foreign policy deals? We know it has happened in the past.

Can we handle losing 21% of the value of our product overnight without a significant drop in input prices, as well?

Protecting export values starts with biosecurity and doing what we can to prevent the introduction and spread of a disease that would put our exports at risk. Another is to be active legislatively to ensure live animals and food are not used as bartering tools in foreign diplomacy. All well and good, but when those efforts fail, what is the industry's and what is your contingency plan?

I don't have an answer, but as an industry and as individuals we need to be thinking of one.

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AngusAuctions.com launched

Angus Productions Inc. (API) Feb. 3 announced its collaboration with DV Auction to better serve the Angus community through www.AngusAuctions.com.

API, the American Angus Association's award-winning publishing entity, and DV Auction, the originator in online livestock auction broadcasting, announced the partnership, which includes the creation of a marketing website for cattlemen to buy and sell Angus genetics.

DV Auction will provide the core technology behind the service.

"We are excited to position this service as the ultimate source in online exposure for the Angus breed," says Dan Broz, DV Auction founder and CEO. "The exposure to our 186,000 registered account holders, as well as the 25,000 members of the American Angus Association will create tremendous value for cattlemen who buy and sell through this service."

The website features live auctions where visitors can bid online, plus dynamic features such as live auctioneer closes and "Buy It Now" pricing. The site hosts several informative components that complement the marketing platform, educating producers about the value of Angus genetics in seedstock, and the commercial and feeding segments of the industry.

"With API's industry knowledge and relationships, this new service is a premium opportunity for Angus genetics in today's online marketplace," says Terry Cotton, API general manager. "It's a one-stop-shop for cattlemen who are looking for current market reports and integrating superior Angus cattle into their herd."

Visit www.angusauctions.com or www.dvauction.com to learn more about the new partnership and to view a list of Angus cattle sales.

— by *American Angus Ass'n staff*

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