

# Handing Over the Reins

Angus breed offers the most complete package for family mapping a future for the young generation in the beef industry.

Story & photos by **Gary Fike**, Certified Angus Beef LLC

A quiet-mannered, classic southern gentleman, Wayne Day may be best known for his successful career managing the family's W-31 Insulation Co. in Goodlettsville, Tenn., but he has branched out into other areas of business. They include a NASCAR-themed auto parts enterprise and good Angus cattle.

Odd combination? Maybe so, but Day also has two grandsons. One is interested in racing cars. The other's passion is beef cattle. More specifically, Nick Rippey sees his future in Angus cattle. Get the connection?

The Day operation consists of 475 cows scattered across farms in Tennessee and Kentucky, but headquartered in the scenic,

rolling hills on the north edge of the Volunteer State's Cumberland Valley. This business — as yet not formally named — is built mainly on genetics from Deer Valley Farms Angus bulls from near Fayetteville, Tenn. The quality shows.

Walking through the steer calves on the

**"...they have the complete package. That's why we chose to be involved with the Angus breed."**

**— Wayne Day**



► Wayne Day (left) and grandson Nick Rippey bought registered Angus cows and heifers in fall 2011. Their vision includes raising registered bulls for their commercial herd someday.

main farm, in small pastures of board fences and tall oaks, Day and Rippey talk about their breed preferences.

"Angus cattle are where it's at," Rippey says. "From calving ease, to the marketability of the calves to the most well-recognized branded-beef company," Day says, "they have the complete package. That's why we chose to be involved with the Angus breed."

Relaxing against the pickup hood, he admits, "I really didn't know much about cows when I started in this business several years ago." He paid the tuition to learn, sending steers to western Kansas feedlots for a few calf crops and honing his eye for quality with feedlot data.

"Now," he says, "the cost of corn and transportation to get them there have somewhat dulled my interest in that part of the business, at least for now." That's why lately Day has sold at local auction markets, realizing the premiums high-quality Angus calves bring at that stage.

He and grandson Rippey would like to return to cattle feeding in the future, again to learn more about performance and carcass quality in the bulls they have selected, and there's a new angle: seedstock.

The registered females grazing on a carpet of bright green cool-season grass backed by the fall colors of oak and hickory trees certainly look like the right kind, but there will be a need for proof.

This is Rippey's favorite enterprise. He and



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his grandfather bought registered Angus cows and heifers in fall 2011 at the Southern Light Farms dispersal near Clarksville, Tenn. Their vision includes raising registered bulls for their commercial herd someday.

"I'd just really like to see what we can do with this set of females," he says. "I want to be the engineer and create the genetics for the future herd." From the farm to FFA activities

at the local high school, Rippy has his harness set for a career in the beef industry.

Day lights up when the young scion talks about their shared interest.

"Nick really likes the cattle business, and watches over these purebred females." And Rippy lights up hearing his grandfather talk about the future, envisioning the day when he takes the reins.

As they walk through the cows and look at another fine set of Angus calves, the common interest grows. They share a sense of being, a closeness based on business but made sweeter by the family bond.



**Editor's Note:** Gary Fike is a beef cattle specialist for Certified Angus Beef.

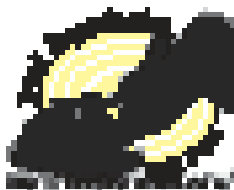
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