

Putting Business into the Business Breed

by Barb Baylor Anderson

Getting back to the basics is working for the Michigan Angus Association. For the last two years, members have hammered out a mission statement and strategic plan they say will guide them successfully into the year 2020. The key in the process has been focusing their outlook on what Angus breeders do best: promote quality Angus cattle.

“We’ve had a lot of discussions, and one thing is certain: We are the business breed, and we need to always act that way. Michigan breeders take it very seriously,” says Monte Bordner, Angus breeder from Sturgis, Mich., who led the 2020 Vision process for the Michigan Angus Association. “I am proud of our mission statement because it allows producers to focus on the Angus ‘brand’ and what it means to their operations.”

The mission statement is, “to enhance the value of the Angus brand via marketing, youth development, education and social opportunities.” The guiding principles of the 2020 Vision are to encourage and extend the influence of Angus cattle with the Michigan beef industry; to promote interests of membership; to promote cooperation and a closer relationship among the membership; to work to the general advantage and profit of the membership; to cooperate with the American Angus Association in development of the breed and to cooperate with district associations within the state; and to provide educational opportunities for its membership, affiliates and the Michigan cattle industry.

Back to basics

Developing the mission statement and strategic plan began in spring 2007, when the Michigan Angus Association Board of Directors and Executive Board decided to conduct a long-range planning session. The goal was to evaluate how the state association was conducting its business, how to improve what was being done, and consider what to focus on for the future to better serve Angus breeders and commercial customers.

“We wanted to make sure we had seamless continuity from one set of leaders to the next, rather than having to start from scratch every time we elected officers. We wanted to better connect with our members and find ways to stay in front of commercial buyers,” Bordner says. “We needed something on paper that was a roadmap for the association.”

Border says the leadership of three members was instrumental in the success: Steve Fitzner, Michigan Angus Association past president from Bellevue; Chuck Reid, current president from Eaton Rapids; and Pam Bryson, association secretary from Bellevue.

Member feedback was gathered from a

Michigan Angus Association

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Welcome to the Michigan Angus Association website. We hope you find this website useful as it provides information on upcoming association events, our very active membership, our outstanding Michigan Angus Auxiliary, our nationally competitive Junior Association recent show and sale results and available Angus cattle in Michigan.

Our objective is to advance the Angus breed and to create opportunities for our membership to improve their success in the business.

If you have questions, suggestions or are interested in association membership, please feel free to contact myself or our association secretary, Pam Bryson at gbryson@aol.com.

Thank you for visiting the Michigan Angus Association website and let us know where we can help!

Chuck Reid, President
Michigan Angus Association

Breeders Aggressive Against AM
Angus breeders testing to eliminate AM from the gene pool.
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How to look up an animal's status
The most recent information available regarding the AM status of an animal registered by the American Angus Association can be obtained by contacting an "HFD/Pedigree Lookup" for that animal's registration number online. The lookup feature is available under the "Data Searches/Tools" menu in the left navigation bar at www.angus.org. The AM status is listed immediately after the registration number.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 12-14 – Junior Beef Show & Beef Showcase, MSU Pavilion

July 17-19 – Michigan Livestock Expo, Mason, MI
For more information visit: www.milivestock.com

July 19-25 – National Jr Angus Show, Perry, GA

August 22nd - Highpoint Livestock Female Sale
Selling 30 head
Helper calves, Bred Heifers and Bred cows

August 23 – MAA Field Day, Bryson Farm, Bellevue, MI

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www.michiganangus.org

Breeding Cattle Page | Show Cattle Page | Website designed by EDUE Technologies

►As part of its strategic planning process, the Michigan Angus Association launched a web site at www.michiganangus.org.

Michigan's strategic planning tips

The Michigan Angus Association has some tips for other state organizations to consider when launching into the strategic planning process:

- ▶ Obtain a facilitator who has experience in the field and can keep you on task.
- ▶ Kick off your process with an industry overview to keep planning in perspective.
- ▶ Consider getting a third-party viewpoint from another breed organization or Extension specialist who can provide a critical analysis of your group.
- ▶ Obtain buy-in from your membership, and seek member input.
- ▶ Develop a mission statement that is member- and customer-friendly.
- ▶ Allow the plan to provide a living structure. Give committees the opportunity to develop the blueprint for plan implementation.

Contact Monte Bordner at 269-651-8353 or monte@bordnerfarms.com for information.

survey. 2020 Vision Committee volunteers then met to get an update on the cattle industry from Dan Buskirk, Michigan State University (MSU) associate beef professor, and an overview of planning criteria from Ken Geuns, MSU Extension specialist. Many committee members attended an American Angus Association outreach meeting. Finally, the committee conducted a "SWOT" analysis, outlining the organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Topics covered everything from marketing to member services to communication.

"The SWOT analysis generated a great deal of enthusiasm. As you go through the process, it becomes easier to sort out priorities. And if you go through the process right, you can end up with a living document to guide your association," Bordner says.

Low-hanging fruit

Once the plan was on paper, Bordner says the "low-hanging fruit" was obvious as first steps of implementation. The Michigan Angus Association began by creating a timeline for action and developing/updating job descriptions for current officer, board positions and committee chairs. The association also launched its web site, www.michiganangus.org, to include a member directory, newsletters, banner advertising and an events calendar.

The strategic plan was divided into five general areas: marketing, communication, membership, education and youth. Within each area, tactics were outlined and marked with "D" for done, "I" for implementing or "E" for exploring. Bordner says a director will be appointed to each of the areas to invite

more members to get involved, spread the association workload and groom members for future leadership roles.

"The details need to come from the committee level," he says. "We just identified some of the items we have done and need to do to maintain a strong organization."

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—Monte Bordner

For example, marketing items include expanding markets and commercial opportunities. Communication involves both internal contact with members and external contact with the media and participation in cattle industry events. Membership includes developing new member information, mentoring opportunities and transitioning youth to regular membership. Cattle industry event sponsorship and MSU support fall into the education category, while the youth game plan includes encouraging greater

Michigan participation in events, scholarship and leadership support at the regional, state and national levels.

Down the road

Bordner hopes that the strategic plan long-term will allow the association to perform tasks in a timely fashion, as well as provide a means for developing a stronger, more current database and finding ways to become more efficient and fiscally sound.

"We need to keep the road map in front of us and adjust the plan accordingly," he says. "We have it, so we must use it, not shelve it. As a working document, we can revise it as necessary so we are always looking ahead to find ways to be more visible and effective."

