



Movin' Forward

► by **Bryce Schumann**, CEO, American Angus Association

The end of mediocrity

A tombstone outside Ed Hendee's restaurant marks the final resting place of a chicken-fried steak, something he says a great steak house should never have on its menu.

The rise of quality

Hendee, a Houston-based radio commentator and restaurateur, is the owner of Taste of Texas, a casual, upscale restaurant that he founded in 1977 along with his wife, Nina.

Back then, when they abandoned their "average" menu for food items that would exceed their customers' expectations for quality, a lot of people didn't think they'd survive.

Bankers refused to loan them money.

Food writers said their higher prices would drive away business.

And, pundits believed customers would turn away from their narrowly focused menu, which no longer included items like chicken-fried steak, fish and chicken.

What actually happened was the opposite of all the pundits' predictions.

And a big piece of the Hendees' success was their decision to focus on quality, particularly through the use of the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand.

"We decided if we were going to be anything, we needed to be the best at something," Hendee recalls.

What actually happened went against all of the conventional wisdom of the time. Instead of doing things on the cheap, the Hendees switched to *Certified Angus Beef*, a beef product known for its consistency and quality.

Focus on greatness

Today, their restaurant overflows with

customers. Their business is thriving. And their commitment to quality stands as a fitting example for others to model their own business ventures after.

Hendee is quick to credit the high-quality CAB brand to his restaurants' success, and like other restaurateurs around the country who have moved from average to focusing on greatness, he is deeply grateful to the farmers and ranchers who produce this great product.

"You don't win a customer by giving them what they want," Hendee says. "You give them more than they expect. You exceed their expectations."

During the last year, despite the downturn in the economy, this simple message has resonated across the Angus business.

In fact, CAB achieved record sales levels for the third consecutive year, increasing in 2009 by nearly 5% over 2008 levels. During the last 12 months, the brand has set a half dozen monthly sales records, and we

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continue on pace to set another annual record this year.

While much of the increase has taken place among consumers who are eating more at home, it indicates that their buying decisions, in large part, continue to be motivated by quality.

We need to keep this in mind as we head into spring, particularly as we approach the breeding season. Take some time to evaluate your cow herd to ensure you're producing

only the highest-quality cattle for people like Ed Hendee.

In following Hendee's example — by "burying mediocrity" and embracing the highest quality possible — you'll be strengthening not only your economic position, but that of countless others downstream.



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What's New on the Web

Videos, show results and more now online.

by **Crystal Albers**, assistant director of communications/web editor,
American Angus Association

At www.angus.org, we've introduced several new features to assist Angus farmers and ranchers. Now you may view a more comprehensive event listing, watch videos, order identification (ID) tags, and view show results in one location.

The home page features regularly updated news, articles on Angus and industry representatives, and important Association updates.

An improved **Angus Calendar** includes expanded search capabilities for the listing of upcoming Angus Sales and Events, located on the home page. Searches by date — previously limited to a three-month time span — now provide a listing of *all* submitted Angus sales and events throughout the year and beyond. Submit your own Angus event online or search for other events using any or all of the following categories: keyword, state, date and type of event.

The newly added **Show Results** link at www.angus.org features photos, placings and information on winning animals from prominent shows across the country. Search show results by keyword, state and/or date.

The **Videos** link features Angus and industry videos, including recent show videos, Angus news, and segments from the national *I Am Angus* series.

The American Angus Association also now offers customizable, low-cost tag options and easy, online ordering through its **American Angus Tag Store**. Available at www.angus.org, the Tag Store offers Duflex® visual ID panel tags, e.Tags®, Combo e.Tags®, ChoiceSets™ and COOLTags™ in a wide range of affordable, customizable tag options. The interactive Tag Store provides producers with the ability to select the tag type and color, and then customize and preview the tag prior to ordering.

The tags are affordable and available to anyone — not just members. The Tag Store

offers applicators, readers and other tag-related products. Tags are manufactured by Destron Fearing in three to five business days and shipped directly to the producer via UPS ground. Producers can order online or via phone at 816-383-5100.

Visit www.angus.org to access these features, as well as the full range of the Association's many programs and services.

