



Movin' Forward

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

World of opportunity

Ranchers devote their lives to raising America's food, and that comes with a lot of responsibilities. From rising feed and fuel costs to weather to tightening regulations, Americans are understandably preoccupied with the day-to-day issues in our own backyards. However, a recent trip to Argentina brought the bigger picture back into focus and served as a helpful reminder to look beyond our borders to the opportunities ahead.

Breed leaders

At the World Angus Secretariat Technical Meeting earlier this year, breed leaders from roughly 20 countries met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to exchange ideas and to discuss technical issues relevant to the breed worldwide.

The meeting also offered a chance to learn about the continuous growth of the Angus breed across five continents.

Past American Angus Association President Joe Hampton joined me as we learned about the growing popularity of Angus genetics on the global front. Like the United States, many other nations continue to experience rapidly shrinking cow herd numbers. Meanwhile, a growing middle class is demanding more — and better — beef. Every nation in attendance at the

technical meeting was in general consensus: the Angus breed is poised for future growth.

Recent technological advances in genetic evaluation and American Angus breeders will help get us there.

Association members historically have been quick adopters of technology. U.S. Angus breeders have developed the largest beef cattle database in the world. Today, Angus producers are able to reap the rewards of the industry's most advanced genetic selection tools, which now include DNA technology. This capability is the envy of our international Angus counterparts, and it offers unparalleled opportunity to expand our position as global providers of quality genetics and quality Angus beef.

While many countries continue to only discuss the use of genomics within genetic

evaluation tools, we have been able to fully implement this technology into many of our expected progeny differences (EPDs) and provide this valuable information to our members on a weekly basis.

A new world

As we toured Argentina — one of the southernmost regions occupied by Angus cattle — it was exciting to see the impact that U.S. genetics is already having on the worldwide Angus population.

I believe the growing use of U.S. Angus genetics is only the beginning of a larger trend in a global community that continues to shrink with advancements in communications, travel and science.

During our discussions regarding genetic evaluation, marketing, genetic defects, parentage verification and even youth programs, it became apparent that we as American Angus breeders will be increasingly engaged with the international community into the new year and beyond.

Our world is growing, and it's going to take a coordinated effort to feed future generations. With many of the initiatives under way at the Association, I believe U.S. cattle producers are poised to lead our global counterparts in the shared purpose of feeding the world.


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