



Movin' Forward

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

Staying ahead

The American Angus Association moves into 2015 by continuing to advance genetic evaluation.

Opportunity

This issue marks the start of a new year for the Angus breed, one that promises unlimited opportunity for thousands of cattlemen across the nation.

The Association and Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) are ensuring Angus breeders and their commercial customers make the most of that opportunity by recently releasing improvements to selection tools offered through the nation's largest single-breed beef cattle database.

The American Angus Association last month released its regularly scheduled national cattle evaluation (NCE), along with biannual information like percentile tables, breed averages and more. Importantly, it also contained new enhancements to the suite of dollar value indexes (\$Values), which were first offered through the Association in 2004.

The value of \$Values

When \$Values were introduced about a

decade ago, few people were collecting feed intake data, let alone submitting the information to Angus headquarters.

Technological advancements along the way, however, made it easier to record an individual animal's feed intake. Producers today are better able to track and document this valuable information, which is now incorporated into bioeconomic selection tools like feedlot value (\$F) and beef value (\$B).

This data, along with updated economic assumptions, allows our team of genetic researchers to improve the selection tools offered to Angus members by obtaining a better estimate of profitability through the feedyard and on the rail.

The success of \$Values and their effect on the big-picture beef industry is no secret, and these type of advancements will continue through our organization well into the future.

The horizon

As the Association enters a new year, it focuses on continuing its efforts in the development of tools to measure reproductive and lifetime productivity traits. The catalyst will be more breeding records submitted by members through the MaternalPlus® program.

The MaternalPlus program is the Association's voluntary inventory-based reporting system that offers several benefits to producers, including additional information at weaning processing time — including calving ease, birth weight and weaning weight expected progeny differences (EPDs) for calves out of inventoried cows — as well as use of the official MaternalPlus logo in marketing materials.

The program works through the Association's traditional reporting methods like AAA Login and Angus Information Management Software (AIMS), and it allows users to track disposal codes and better manage their herds.

It also contributes to breed-wide advancements and allows for the further development of selection tools used to identify more efficient females and, ultimately, advance the breed for years to come.

Learn more about the MaternalPlus inventory-based reporting system at www.angus.org, at 816-383-5100 or through AAA Login.

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