



Movin' Forward

by **Richard E. Wilson**, Interim CEO, American Angus Association

Strength of the breed

When I first came to the American Angus Association in 1969, things looked very different than they do today, yet one thing has held constant.

Time-tested

While many readers may not be familiar with me, I'm certainly familiar with you as members of the American Angus Association. I've had the sincere pleasure of working for this great organization for nearly 46 years, starting in the late 1960s and overseeing the financial and business aspects of the Association since that time.

For the past four decades in my capacity as CFO, and now as interim CEO, I've had the good fortune to work with people who I believe represent the best of American agriculture.

Angus farmers and ranchers who devote their lives to raising this breed of cattle do so with the greatest purpose in mind, feeding families across this country with the highest-quality beef possible. In fact, the fundamental belief in the superiority of Angus genetics to provide that quality has tied generation to generation.

The genetic merits of Angus, with an exceptional ability to outperform in the

pasture and on the rail, have fueled the successes of the breed as a whole despite the changing times. We have a superior product and believe in it in such a way that backs the success story we've all enjoyed. That's not about to change.

The right course

In the early years of my tenure, the Association was undergoing interesting times, with debate on significant and course-altering topics like open artificial insemination (AI) policy, the formation of the Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Program and the purchase of the then *Aberdeen-Angus Journal* and what would become Angus Productions Inc.

The organization had just \$2 million in assets, compared to the more than \$55 million it most recently posted. It was the formative years of the performance movement and programs that turned out to make us the success we are today — a time of one landmark decision after another.

Luckily for the breed, there was solid

leadership at the heart of each of those decisions. Leaders at all levels of our organization stepped forward to grow opportunities for members. The people of our breed became our most valuable asset, on which you can't put a dollar value.

Our membership today remains founded in these forward-thinking, hard-working principles, and we're poised to continue that success story.

Next chapter

The facts of the breed today offer an optimistic outlook. The first half of the year ended in sales data that showed a nearly unprecedented season, reflecting increasing demand for registered-Angus genetics and an indicator that more commercial producers plan to grow the nation's beef supply with quality.

Quality beef and quality people will see us through the Association's next chapter.

The Board of Directors announced in early July further progress in the process of identifying and evaluating potential candidates for the Association's CEO position. The executive search firm Witt/Kieffer, based in Oak Brook, Ill., specializes in executive-level recruitment and will conduct the search. Their website is www.wittkieffer.com.

In the meantime, I look forward to serving as your interim CEO and continuing to work with the members who have built this organization into what it is today.

Richard E. Wilson

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