



Movin' Forward

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

State of the breed

The American Angus Association completes its fiscal year Sept. 30, and, once again, I'm reminded why we serve this vibrant organization.

Success story

Since 1969, I've watched the fiscal year numbers accrue each fall. That's 46 years of anticipating trends and watching the number of registrations, transfers, sale averages and all other business metrics tick toward their final tally. They're the numbers that the Association uses to gauge how effectively we've navigated the year's markets and driven relevance in the industry.

Ultimately, though, we as a staff know the numbers tell the story of our members. It's your hard work, your selection decisions and late nights inputting performance records that have built the success of the breed. In fiscal year (FY) 2015, I'm proud to report those successes were many.

In the numbers

While we still have three weeks left in the FY at press time, year-end indicators already tell an outstanding story. Registrations through August were up 8.3%, and bull sale averages reported to the Association were

up 35% to an average of \$6,703 per head. A significant accomplishment: The first 11 months of FY 2015 resulted in a \$99 million increase over reported gross sales from the same period last year, at \$414 million in total gross sales.

Producers are putting an ever-increasing emphasis on genomic testing and applying genomic-enhanced expected progeny differences (GE-EPDs) within their genetic selections.

Since introducing the low-density (LD) genomic testing option in June, Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) has received 95% more test orders compared to the same months of 2014, with nearly 75% on the new lower-cost LD platforms. The number of GeneMax® tests used among commercial cattlemen continues to climb, with sales of GeneMax Advantage™ up 10% compared to a year ago.

Sales among *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand licensees have exceeded expectations and will again result in a record-setting year for brand sales. That's no small feat.

Meanwhile, the Angus Foundation continues to set its own records. The nonprofit arm of the organization awarded 127 scholarships in FY 2015, managing more than \$260,000 in total scholarship funds. Its research focus continues to grow, with more than \$1 million since inception invested in projects studying such important issues as environmental adaptability, heat stress and heifer efficiency.

Angus Productions Inc., home to Angus Media from print to television to radio, reports increases in *Angus Journal* subscriptions and *The Angus Report* viewership, as well as the introduction of new technologies that improve how producers receive valuable information and market their cattle.

All the potential

At the end of the day, all of these things are positive indicators for our future. Our breed is poised to further strengthen its leadership role in the industry. We're in a strong financial position. We have a professional and capable team in place with solid programs spanning the industry from conception to consumption. Our adoption of technology and genetic selection is driving the science of the beef business with unlimited potential. Our breed and our members have all the potential in the world to continue exceeding expectations with new and forward-thinking leadership — and I have no doubt that the best is yet to come.

Richard E. Wilson

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