



The Front Gate

by Allen Moczygomba, CEO, American Angus Association

Business is growing

"It's a good time to be in the Angus business." I made that remark during the Angus Convention in Kansas City last November. While it was true then, it's even more true today. When times are positive for our members, it also means times are good for your Association.

Indicators are positive

As you might imagine, just like you do for your business, we constantly monitor trends. In our case, we monitor activity by members in terms of registrations, how the registrations are recorded, transfers, animal records, genetic test trends, *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand sales and purebred sale prices. We compare current numbers to the immediate past year and, in some cases, to historical trends.

Here's the good news: Registrations in March totaled 23,759 head, an increase of 3,725 cattle vs. March 2015, for a booming growth rate of 18.6% vs. a year ago. Year-to-date (YTD) we've registered 13,181 more head than in 2015 — a growth in registrations of 7%. That 7% growth rate, mind you, is on the heels of the 2015 record growth rate of 7.4%.

To put that into perspective, if registrations continue at their current pace, we'll end up

registering approximately 342,000 animals, which will rank 15th in all-time registrations for the Association, replacing the 341,203 head that were registered in 1963 in the rankings. Keep in mind, however, that in 1963 the total cattle inventory in the United States was 104.5 million, almost 14% larger than the 2016 cattle inventory of 92.0 million.

We're also seeing growth in the number of cattle registered electronically (5.7%), growth in general across the various Angus Herd Improvement

Record (AHIR®) categories, growth in AngusSource®, growth in parentage testing of 39.6% YTD, and growth in genomic tests of approximately 14%. Figs. 1 (below) and 2 (see page 16) reflect the growth patterns.

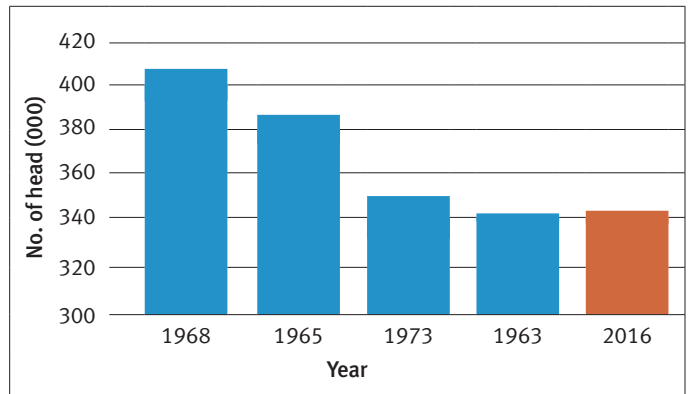
Calibration 5

Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) released its fifth calibration of genomic-enhanced expected progeny differences (GE-EPDs) in early April. The process further refined how DNA test results are incorporated with pedigree, performance measures and progeny data into selection tools released through the weekly American Angus Association National Cattle Evaluation (NCE).

Calibration allows AGI, in partnership with scientists at Zoetis, to update the equations used to incorporate genomic test results into GE-EPDs. As AGI receives new

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Fig. 1: Year rankings for number of head registered, American Angus Association



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DNA test results, as well as new data on tested animals, it allows both AGI and Zoetis to further train the models used to generate GE-EPDs. The result is increased accuracy of genomic predictions for animals within the Association's growing database.

So how much will the most recent calibration affect Angus GE-EPDs? For the vast majority of animals, producers likely won't notice any significant shifts in GE-EPD values. For proven animals with large amounts of progeny data submitted, changes will be fairly minimal. Lower-accuracy animals with little or no progeny that have been tested with available genomic tests (Zoetis HD50K or i50K; GeneSeek GCP-HD or GGP-LD) will potentially change to a

greater degree than those considered proven animals.

A tip of the hat goes to the entire AGI team for their tireless efforts in releasing the most recent calibration as AGI continues to serve as a model for the purebred cattle genetics industry.

Thanks again for your support of the Association. In next month's column, we'll take an in-depth look at spring sale prices.



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Fig. 2: No. of SNP parentage tests, American Angus Association

