



The Front Gate

by Allen Moczygemba, CEO, American Angus Association

Lessons from Colin Powell

In May of 2012, I had the privilege of attending the graduation ceremonies of the graduating class of Eisenhower Fellows in Philadelphia. If you're not familiar with the program, the Eisenhower Fellowships is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit international leadership organization that has as its chairman of the board retired Army General and former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Looking forward

That day in downtown Philadelphia, Powell presided over the graduation ceremony of approximately 25 Eisenhower Fellows. Prior to the awarding of their honorary degrees, Powell invited each of the soon-to-be graduates to individually ask him questions regarding the keys to being a successful leader. One of the students asked Powell the importance of one's past influencing future decisions. Powell responded by saying simply, "Your past is not your future."

I share that story with you because Powell's message is extremely relevant as we begin finalizing the priorities that will drive our Long Range Strategic Plan. While our past has been filled with success, we can't rely on the past to carry us forward into the future.

Beginning this spring, we've been collecting market research and insights across the beef industry for the Board of Directors to carefully weigh as we work toward updating the plan. Specifically, we've hosted five panel group discussions representing various segments of the industry, including: (1) seedstock; (2) cow-calf; (3) fed cattle; (4) allied industry/academia; and (5) marketing/retail product.

The panel groups averaged in size six key opinion leaders from each of the respective industry segments. Moderated by Certified Angus Beef LLC's (CAB's) Mark McCully, the panelists shared their views to Board members and staff on the current status of the Angus breed and the Association and, more importantly, the future opportunities that exist.

In addition to the panel group discussions, we've also conducted surveys of the commercial market, have surveyed readers of the *Angus Beef Bulletin* and, most importantly, conducted an online survey of our membership. Finally, add into the mix beef industry trends and demographics along with insight from the Board of Directors, and we've got a great foundation on which to build our Long Range Strategic Plan.

As in 2011, our updated plan will create strategies that help us ensure that the Association meets its strategic goals and objectives. The 2011 Long Range Strategic Plan was the genesis of some notable successes for the Association: the launch of MaternalPlus®; the grand opening of the CAB Education and Culinary Center; the expansion of Angus TV, which now dominates in the number of viewings in the livestock sector; and the introduction of low-density genomic tests. The success of all of these initiatives helped Angus grow its market relevance and market share.

In turn, the new Long Range Strategic Plan will serve as the same strategic foundation to ensure that Angus cattle and the American Angus Association continue to be the leader in the purebred cattle industry in the world. Because as we all know, the past is not the future.

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