



Friends from the South

Members of the recently formed, yet successful, Mexican Junior Angus Association visit the NJAS in Tulsa.

Story & photos by **Mathew Elliott**

This year the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) had a little international feel to it. Fourteen members of the Mexican Junior Angus Association made the trip to Tulsa, Okla., this year to be a part of the NJAS.

The junior Asociación Angus Mexicana is only three years old, but it already has approximately 300 members from throughout the Republic of Mexico. They have been holding seven or eight meetings per year to conduct business, but Junior President Renato Gutiérrez González says the group is always in contact through e-mails and phone calls.

“The junior program was started three years ago,” Board Director Carlos Torres Jr. says. “A proposal was made in the national



► After forming only three years ago, the junior Asociación Angus Mexicana now has approximately 300 members all around the Republic of Mexico.

assembly, and a president, along with a director board with the young ones who had the most experience with cattle, was named.”

Most of the junior shows take place together with the senior national shows. Torres says they are two separate events, and usually the junior show will take place the following day.

“Then several activities take place, like show contests and fitting and clipping seminars,” Torres says, “which are a success among the junior members.”

At some shows there are also photography contests, breeding contests and other activities. There is also a junior annual meeting with all the junior board members, and they decide where the national show will be.



PHOTO BY CHELSEA GOOD

► Above: Participating in the livestock judging competition was just one of the activities the delegation enjoyed during the NJAS.

► Right: Members get a closer look at the heifer after the clipping and fitting demonstration Tuesday.





New friends in new places

There are events that take place in different shows all around the Republic of Mexico, but some Mexican Angus breeders also make it to the United States to learn about the beef industry.

“Some Mexican members like to go to the Denver show (National Western Stock Show) every year,” Torres says. “We also attend the Houston [Livestock] Show, not with cattle because of the closed border, just as visits.”

This wasn't González's first trip to the U.S. either; in fact, he has been on several trips to the U.S. to learn about the beef industry.

“In 1997, I got to go to Houston, Texas, and in 2000, I went to Denver, Colorado,” González says.

Another trip had him in Minnesota, where he spent several weeks working on a Charolais ranch. It was here that González learned how to clip cattle.

This trip to Tulsa taught González many things. “I've learned a lot about genetics, clipping, feeding and how your junior program works,” González says. “I have also enjoyed meeting new friends.”

One of González's favorite parts of the

NJAS was the Auxiliary-sponsored All-American *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) Cook-Off. He enjoyed how the juniors promoted CAB beef through their skits, and he also learned a lot about CAB beef while being entertained, he said.

Torres enjoyed the people he met, saying how friendly they all were. “They were always asking us if we would bring cattle next time we come,” Torres says. “We were invited to Iowa next year, and we met a lot of friendly people. We are hoping to come back and invite everyone to our national [show] in Mexico.”

While in Tulsa, the delegation also visited several ranches in the Tulsa area. González enjoyed visiting these ranches and then discussing what he'd learned with the “best cattle breeders in the U.S.”

“This is a huge opportunity for business among our two countries,” Torres says. “We saw your genetics and champions, and we are very interested in them.”

Torres says he hopes attending the NJAS has been a learning experience as to how to maximize productivity, buy and sell cattle and genetics, and prepare for the opening of the border.



► **Above:** Mexican Junior President, Renato Gutiérrez González, speaks to the crowd during a short break in the steer show. González spoke of their junior association and invited everyone to visit Mexico and see their cattle.



► **Left:** The Mexican Junior Association officers stand with the NJAA junior Board members after the opening ceremonies.