

# ANGUS, AMERICA'S BREED



PHOTOS BY ERIC MULL, COURTESY OF AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

Left: “Certified Angus Beef® is a testament to having a powerful brand that provides unmatched customer service coupled with the highest-quality products in the world,” said Allen Moczygemba, American Angus Association CEO, at the fifth-annual Angus Convention hosted Nov. 3-5, 2018, in Columbus, Ohio. “Angus is now synonymous with beef.”

*Journal* had a 109-page increase in advertising during the nine months finishing the fiscal year, while the *Angus Beef Bulletin* had a 58-page increase in advertising in the two months following its redesign launch.

Angus enthusiasts embraced the digital age in 2018, increasing total page views of online sale books by 4 million — from 38 million to 42 million.

“The Foundation continued in its mission of serving youth, education and research,” Moczygemba said. “We hosted the 50th anniversary of the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) this past year.”

In addition to the NJAS, the Angus Foundation supported a number of other events and conferences for the Angus community, said Moczygemba. Among those listed were the American Angus Auxiliary’s Women Connected Conference, the 2018 Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) conference and the Beef Leaders Institute (BLI).

“Finally, Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) had a terrific year in their 40th anniversary,” Moczygemba said, setting attendees up for details to be shared later by CAB President John Stika.

## RAISING STANDARDS

- We believe in proper cattle care.
- We believe in empowering the next generation of cattle producers.
- We believe in supporting our local communities.
- We believe in stewardship of our natural resources.

## Angus Convention celebrates CAB 40th anniversary, education and business.

by Lindsay King, assistant editor, *Angus Journal*, & Shauna Hermel, editor, *Angus Beef Bulletin*

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Despite a year of sporadic weather patterns and widespread hardship for the entire ag industry, registrations for Angus cattle were 327,067, making 2018 the 18th largest for registrations in the 135-year history of the American Angus Association.

“Each entity had individual successes, but more importantly [has] started initiatives that will pay dividends in the future,” said Moczygemba, crediting a good working relationship between the Board of Directors and staff.

Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI)

recorded a 28.3% increase in genomic profiling, with more than 162,000 tests collected for the year, bringing the breed’s total genomic profiles in inventory to more than 500,000, he shared. That’s more than three times that of any other beef database.

Based on the volume of genomic testing done, members collectively saved \$1.5 million this year, said Moczygemba, attributing the savings to price reductions instituted by Neogen GeneSeek Operations and Zoetis. He said it is a direct result of the members

embracing the new technology to improve their operations.

Angus Productions Inc. (API) took on two complete magazine redesigns this past year, launching the redesign of the *Angus Journal* with the January 2018 issue and the redesign of the *Angus Beef Bulletin* with the September 2018 issue. The redesigns

included an editorial restructuring to further distinguish the focus of the *Angus Journal* on the membership and the purebred Angus business, while focusing the *Angus Beef Bulletin* on the commercial cow-calf sector buying Angus bulls.

Well-accepted by readers, the redesigns also helped spur advertising, “which is an important thing,” said Moczygemba. The *Angus*

## Continuing the story

At last year's convention, the big news focused on efforts to drive share in the commercial marketplace, specifically by launching the feeder-cattle program, Moczygemba reminded. "We've made a lot of progress since that time. The program is out in the marketplace."

While many have compared last year's launching of Angus Link<sup>SM</sup> to CAB's beginnings, Moczygemba said there are some distinct differences — most notably, marketplace signals.

He reminded the audience of how failing to listen to the customer (feeders, packers and consumers) is detrimental to any organization. The breed learned that the hard way in the 1970s as it pursued the beef industry trend toward longer, taller cattle. Meanwhile, beef quality deteriorated and demand fell.

Beef consumption during those next 20 years went down because the product didn't taste as good and lacked consistency, he said. The American Angus Association Board became concerned when registrations fell from 405,000 in 1968 to 141,000 in 1986, a drop of 63.5%.

Another difference in the start of the two programs, Moczygemba said, was how few people there were 40 years ago with the vision to launch a branded-beef program.

"We all know a value-added feeder-calf program adds dividends. If you can document management and health, you're going to get a dividend," said Moczygemba, "but there's still an unmet need to document the genetics of feeder cattle. Everybody in the industry will tell you that."

Though market signals for the need of a feeder-cattle program are clearer today than they were for a branded-beef program 40 years ago, that doesn't lessen the decision.

"In fact, I'm going to tell you the



Angus enthusiasts across the country gathered in Columbus, Ohio, for the 2018 Angus Convention. Visit the Newsroom at [www.angusconvention.com](http://www.angusconvention.com) for comprehensive coverage.

decision a year ago was more difficult than the one 40 years ago," said Moczygemba, "because when you are in a position of strength, as we are, any type of change is hard. No matter how large the opportunity, no matter



Regional Manager Jeff Mafi helps explain foot scoring during the live-animal sessions of the Merck-sponsored Angus University educational program.

how obvious it may be, it's hard when you are having success.

"It's not fair to compare the decisions. They were four decades apart — different circumstances, different market conditions," he continued. "But each decision was made with some common attributes."

First among those commonalities, he said, was vision — a vision that the Angus business would be better in the future. Also, they both required courage, perseverance, resolve and time.

"It takes time to build a program, launch a program, generate awareness, get acceptance and get use. It builds upon itself, but it takes time," he observed,

noting the successes celebrated by CAB today weren't a sure thing as the program was launched.

It began with a letter penned by Harold Etling in 1975 explaining the need for a branded-beef program. It took three years to sell the first pound (lb.) of branded product. It took another two years to sell the first 1 million lb. Today, customers buy 100 million lb. of CAB product per month.

"It's an incredible success story," said Moczygemba. "The program wasn't just to sell beef; it was to create demand for premium-quality Angus cattle. In turn, those producers had to be rewarded for producing Angus cattle."

The first producer premium wasn't realized until 1987 — nine years after the first pound of CAB product was sold.

"It's a tribute to this association, to you as breeders and to



CAB President John Stika welcomed the crowd to Ohio to celebrate the brand's 40th anniversary, inviting guests to its headquarters in nearby Wooster, Ohio.

commercial cattlemen that believed and saw the value and wanted to provide a product that consumers wanted," Moczygemba noted. It started with a vision and

was backed by courage, commitment, perseverance, resolve and time.

"It took one other thing. It took a great brand, a great brand like the Angus brand, behind it. Great brands can be powerful; they can be impactful. They can move the market, and they can give extensions to new brands and synergies, such as *Certified Angus Beef* and hopefully now with Angus Link as well. There's a common denominator there. It's the word Angus. You put all those things together and you will ultimately have success; but it wasn't easy, and it wasn't fast."

The end result of the vision 40 years ago and the breed's commitment to providing quality beef: "Angus has become synonymous with beef," said Moczygemba.

## Today's consumer

Consumers change. They evolve. They have different needs, different expectations, he cautioned.

"Today they want to hear a story; they want to know where that steak came from, who raised it, how it was raised, what it was fed. I think that's a good thing. We have a great story to tell," he said.

Moczygemba emphasized the importance of cattlemen telling their own story rather than letting others who may or may not have all the facts tell it.

He shared the belief statement, Raising Standards, developed this year for the Association and its entities. It focuses on four pillars: cattle care, the next generation, community and environment.

"It reflects what you do every day and often what you've done for generations," he noted. "We're Angus. We're the leading beef brand in the world. We're the leading beef breed association in the world, and we've got a great story to tell. We're Angus; we're America's breed. █"

Editor's note: For additional coverage of the 2018 Angus Convention, including session summaries and video, visit the Newsroom at [www.angusconvention.com](http://www.angusconvention.com).