Tips for buying bulls

I don't like shopping, and I definitely don't like laying down a pile of money that I'm unsure will be worth the investment.

Todd and I have been looking at options to replace our 1994 GMC Sierra 4x4. I love that truck. It was one of our first big purchases as husband and wife, and it's been a goody. Still, there's only so much weather a body can take. Shopping to replace it, it appears we're going to have to pay more than we paid for our first house. If I'm going to pay that much, I want to know I'm making the right decision.

Well, the price of bulls hasn't been going down either, has it?

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Adding certainty

Buying bulls — whether in the pasture or in the jug — is a must for any cow-calf producer. In this issue themed "The Bull Buyer's Resource," we loaded up on content to help add certainty to your purchase decision. We want to help you get a return on your investment through best management of your herd sire and marketing opportunities for calves out of those registered Angus bulls.

We hope you'll join us Wednesday, Jan. 5, at 9 a.m. in the Super Barn Sale Arena during the 2022 Cattlemen's Congress in Oklahoma City, Okla. The American Angus Association will host an Angus University education session that will build upon this topic.

Regional Manager Jeff Mafi will offer tips for sorting through a sale book, as well as how to sort through bulls offered by private treaty. Oklahoma State University's Mark Johnson will discuss how to find a balance for your cow herd, including how to apply expected progeny differences (EPDs), what to look for phenotypically and how many bulls you need to turn out to cover your cow herd. Jill Peine, ruminant nutritionist for Ridley Block Operations, will cover bull fertility, including a bull's nutritional needs and using a breeding soundness exam (sometimes referred to as a BSE).

We hope we can make you more certain of a return for your investment in Angus genetics.

Kentucky

Our hearts go out to those in Kentucky and surrounding states who were affected by the tornadoes in mid-December. The Kentucky Cattlemen's Foundation is collecting donations to provide relief. Donations for local producers in need of farm supplies can be mailed to KY Cattlemen's Foundation, Attn.: Tornado Relief, 176 Pasadena Dr., Suite 4, Lexington, KY 40503. To donate materials, call the Hardin County Extension office at 270-765-4121.

Bull buyer's checklist

David Gazda, American Angus Association regional manager for Florida, Georgia and South Carolina, offers the following checklist:

- ☑ **MARKET:** Identify the market you are producing for.
- ☑ **HERD PERFORMANCE:** Know your herd performance so you can select bulls that provide directional change and allow you to meet your production goals.
- ☑ **SECURING SEEDSTOCK:** Begin searching for bulls a minimum of 60-90 days prior to breeding season in order to purchase the bull(s) that meet your production goals and needs.
- ☑ **SEEDSTOCK SUPPLIER:** Identify successful, reputable seedstock programs in your region that will assist you in genetic selection and marketing.
- ☑ **BEFORE THE SALE:** Identify multiple bulls that meet selection criteria, then rank in purchase preference, assigning a price you would be willing to pay to each individual. Arrange to see bulls in advance or have someone evaluate bulls for you prior to sale. Videos generally do not show foot conformation. Make sure the bull has received all needed vaccinations, and has passed a complete breeding soundness exam.
- ☑ **AFTER THE SALE:** Make sure you have received a properly transferred registration paper within 60 days.