

# THE SOURCE

## Are you ready to work calves?

by Ginette Gottswiller, American Angus Association



We received an early Christmas present from St. Nick this year while working calves a few days before

Christmas and on Christmas Eve.

We fall calve and normally work our calves in November after I come back from Angus Convention.

Between weather and family health issues, we didn't get done with harvest until December. This is the latest I can recall we have ever worked our fall calves.

I was looking forward to it as much as I did a dentist appointment, which I even had a few days before for a cracked tooth. We were gifted with calves that flowed through the chute, cows that must have wanted on the nice list to receive a little extra hay in their ol' feedbunk, and nothing breaking for a change. It was truly a great gift this year.

Gifts usually make people happy. They don't have to be wrapped up with a pretty bow. They can come in all shapes and sizes. Are you looking for the perfect gift for your calves this year? Give them an AngusSource® Verification Certificate and matching ear tag.

### More jingle

Enrolling your calves in the American Angus Association's AngusSource program can be like getting a Christmas present on sale day. Producers the past year saw some extra jingle in their pockets. Calves enrolled in age-and-source-verified programs during the last

eight years have averaged an additional \$2.05 per hundredweight (cwt.) for a load lot of calves on sale day. Plus, on average, calves that were also enrolled in Non-Hormone Treated Cattle (NHTC) last year brought an additional \$2.30 per cwt.

You may think it will be too difficult to enroll your calves, or that it may take too much time. I'll bet it will take you less time to enroll your calves than

it will take you to go Christmas shopping in the store or online!

### Time ROI

Most producers already keep the information needed to complete their age-and-source enrollment on every set of calves they raise. Plus, most producers like going through the training over the phone rather than being expected to read and remember how to get the most bang for their buck. The phone training takes a little less than half an hour.

Are you one of those people who thinks the cost far outweighs the benefits? The cost to enroll 50 head for age and source verification averages \$5.10 per calf. The more calves you enroll, the better the price. Enroll 350 calves and the cost goes down to \$3.48 per calf.

Remember how your calves could average a little more on sale day? Let's use 70 calves selling at 650 pounds (lb.) as an example. If they are enrolled in our



The perfect time to enroll in AngusSource age-and-source verification program is three weeks before working your calves.

PHOTO COURTESY GINETTE GOTTSWILLER

age-and-source program and average \$2.05 per cwt. more this year on sale day, that equates to around \$13.32 per calf, or about \$935 for the group. If you take off the enrollment cost, your gain would be around \$578.

I always hear people saying, "My time is so valuable." You are right, it is very valuable. Most people spend about two hours getting their paperwork and phone training completed. The time spent enrolling and the average increase in selling price figures out to your time being worth around \$289 per hour more for you to enroll in our age-and-source program.

This year think about how you

plan to market your calves and consider using your time to enroll your calves in AngusSource. When you work your calves, it's a perfect time to place the AngusSource radio frequency identification (RFID) ear tag in your calves. You never know, St. Nick could be there on sale day and deliver you a wonderful gift early this year because you totally made the nice list! |

Editor's note: The American Angus Association offers a host of programs to assist commercial cattlemen in profiting from their Angus genetics. The *Angus Beef Bulletin* features two columns to share insights about the programs. Ginette Gottswiller, director of Angus Source, will author "The Source." Chris Engel, director of Angus Link, will author "The Link."

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