



SURFING FOR BULLS

Take a guided tour of Angus Media’s online sale book portal.

by Shauna Hermel, editor

In the last fiscal year, 51,321 Angus bulls were sold at auctions reported to the American Angus Association. That doesn’t count those not reported or sold by private treaty. Finding the right bull for your herd can feel like searching for a needle in a haystack.

More and more buyers are turning to Angus Media’s online sale book portal for assistance. Premiered more than two decades ago, the page has become the highest-traffic area within the Angus website. In 2020, it accounted for 34 million of www.angus.org’s 62 million page views.

That’s for good reason, says Brett Spader, company president, emphasizing its popularity is fed

by the user experience and the content it delivers.

“Selecting a bull is one of the most important drivers for financial success that cattlemen can control,” he observes. “These genetics often stay in the herd a number of years, so making the right decision is crucial. Producers are wise to do thorough research to learn more about genetics, breeding programs and values of registered Angus bulls.”

The sale book portal offers a quick and easy way to access more than 800 sale books posted each year, Spader says.

Search functions help browsers find the ranches, and then the individual animals that meet their needs quickly and conveniently.

For those wanting to really drill into bloodlines, the online option provides the ability to research animals in production across the country through pictures, videos, audio, genetic predictions, pedigrees and sale reports — all in one place — whether viewing on desktop, tablet or phone.

Buyers can also review expected progeny difference (EPD) values and dollar value indexes (\$Values)

updated after the print version of the book went to press.

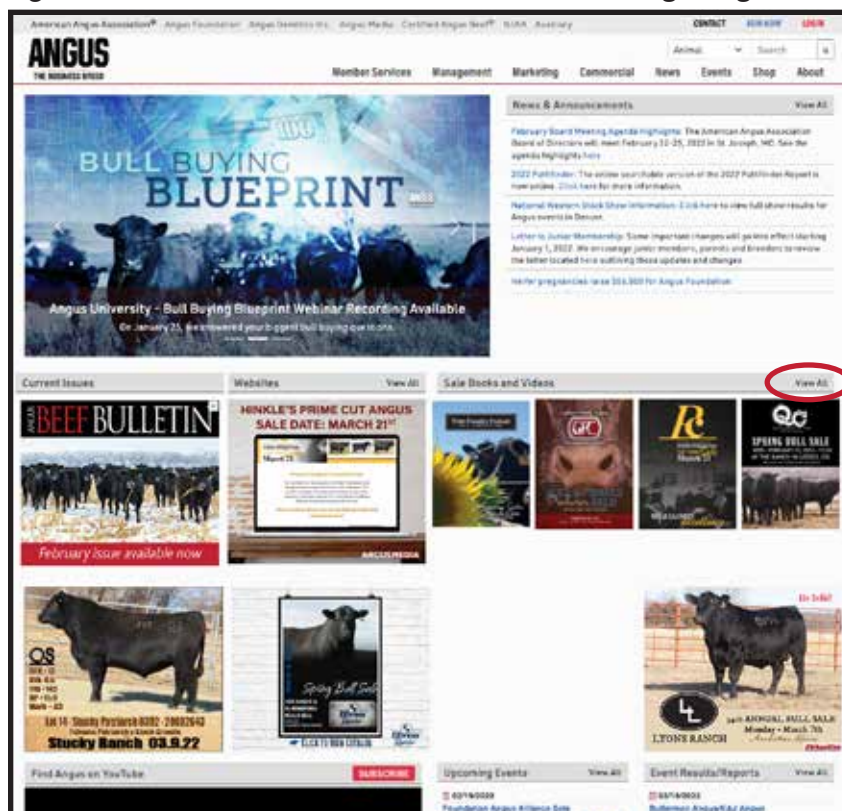
As Angus Media expanded its Pasture to Publish platform to build sale books, it enhanced the functionality of how those books are viewed once posted online, notes Gail Lombardino, Print Services Department lead. “It’s not just a flip-book experience. There’s so much a person can do with the features online.”

Many have been added and fine-tuned based on customer feedback, she says. “Every day we are adding new tools.”

A guided tour

It’s easy to find the sale book portal. Simply type “Angus sale books” into a Google search. “Current Sale Books - American Angus Association” should be your first option. The link will take you

Fig. 1: Find the “Sale Books and Videos” link on www.angus.org



directly to the “Current Sale Books” page hosted by Angus Media.

Or, if you are on the Association’s home page, www.angus.org, find the section called “Sale Books and Videos” (see Fig. 1). Click “View All” to get the “Current Sale Books” page (see Fig. 2).

The page houses sale books created by Angus Media’s Print Services Department and those created out of house that the breeder pays Angus Media to host.

A quick way to distinguish, says Lombardino, is to look for the green flag that says “Live EPDs” under the sale book’s cover image. This is actually one of the core advantages to viewing a sale book created by Angus Media online.

The American Angus Association runs its National Cattle Evaluation (NCE) on a weekly basis, updating EPDs and \$Values each Friday to reflect new data submissions that increase the accuracy of the predictions. The EPDs in a sale book created through Angus Media’s Pasture to Publish are automatically updated weekly in the online version up to the day of the sale.

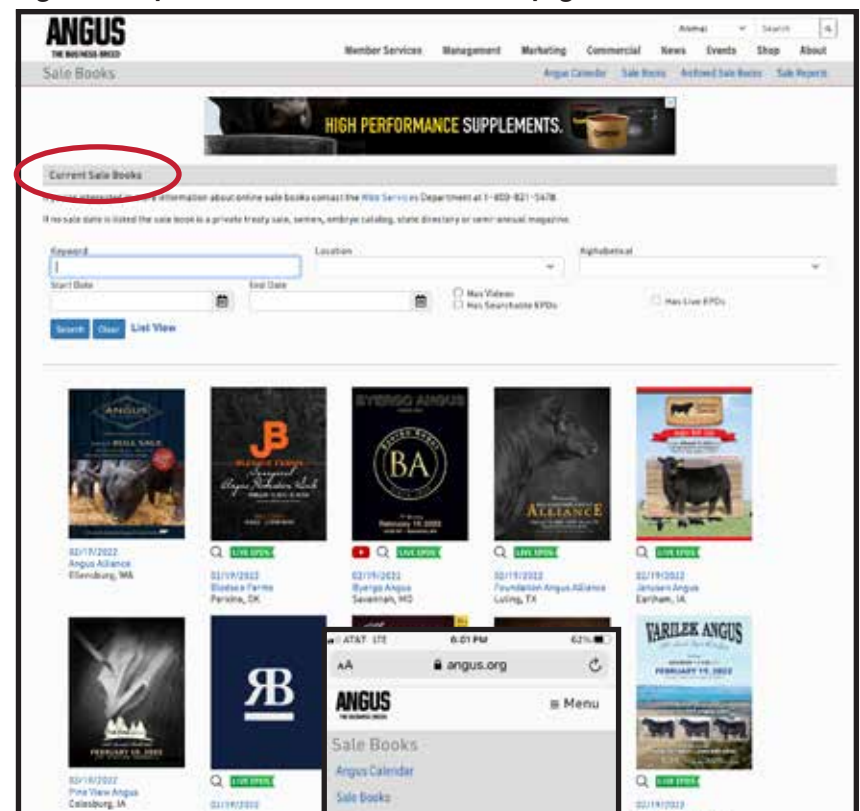
If you find a bull you like, you can put him on a “Watchlist” to

review his EPD profile again prior to the sale. More on that later.

The “Current Sale Books” page hosts sale books listed by date of the sale, followed by sections for state publications and for private-treaty sales and miscellaneous resources.

Each sale is represented by the cover of its sale book and is listed with the sale date, ranch name, ranch location, and icons to flag features within the book. The magnifying glass signifies searchable EPDs, while the red

Fig. 2: Example of the “Current Sale Books” page



play button denotes videos are included. A feature soon to be added, a yellow flag will indicate the online book includes a supplement sheet with added information.

Find a sale

If you know what sale or publication you are looking for, type the name in the “Keyword” search to access it directly. If you are looking for sales within a

particular state, choose the state from the “Location” pull-down menu. You can also search for sales falling within a date range. Or,

simply scroll down and browse the library.

Clicking on a sale brings up the online version of the sale book with a host of features to help you

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Key features of the Angus Media sale book portal and the books within

Sale book portal at <https://www.angus.org/AngusProductions/Salebooks>

- ▶ Ability to search sale books from across the country by keyword, location or sale date
- ▶ Ability to research bloodlines in production across the country, accessing pictures, videos, audio, genetic predictions, pedigrees and sale reports all in one location
- ▶ Archive of past sale books, including sale report information

Individual sale books

- ▶ Weekly automatic EPD updates provide the most current information
- ▶ Real-time look at data to ensure individual fits your needs
- ▶ Ability to search within a book based on multiple parameters — EPDs, sire/dam, keyword, age
- ▶ Direct clickable contact information to the seller
- ▶ Ability to download the online file to your device or print
- ▶ Ability to magnify smaller font areas for easier viewing
- ▶ Viewable in traditional flip-book format or web view, which is perfect for mobile devices
- ▶ Sale supplements posted within the online sale book
- ▶ Ability to create a watchlist of animals to share with other individuals or to revisit prior to the sale
- ▶ Sale reports posted in the archived online sale book

find the bull you're looking for. Look to the gray navigation (nav) bars at the top and the bottom of the page to navigate. On your phone, click the three-line icon in the upper left to reveal a handy menu (see Fig. 3).

The sale book will open in flip-book form, allowing you to look at it as it was printed. Click the page-turn icons to the outside of the pages or use the slider bar below the book to flip/slide to the page of interest.

For most sale books in the library, you can also navigate through the sale offering using the "Lots" option in the upper nav bar to pull up a list of lots in the sale. Each will have abbreviated information — name, birth date, sex, registration number and sire with a photo or video. This feature isn't available in sale books not created by Angus Media unless the rancher requests their sale book be made searchable.

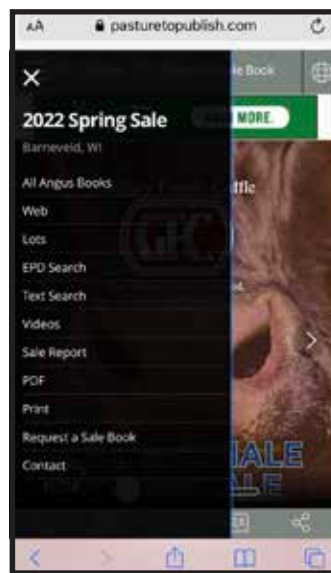
This is a great place to toggle

between views. The flip-book view presents the sale book page containing the lot (see Fig. 4). The web view presents a more dynamic display including an enlarged photo or video, footnotes, and photos and videos of animals related to the lot. On your mobile device, click "Lot Details" to see this same information.

Footnotes can also be updated in the online sale book, allowing the rancher to, for example, provide ultrasound or DNA profile results collected after publication of the printed book. For a female sale, added information might include a calf birth date and sex.

Note the buttons at the top of

Fig. 3: Navigation menu in mobile view



the lot list.

Choosing "Page Lots" shows those lots listed on the two pages of the flip-book. "All Lots" would include every lot in the sale book. Clicking "Watchlist" would reveal those lots you have added to your watchlist.

Searchable

Before we get too far ahead, go back to that "Current Sale Books" page.

In addition to the "Live EPDs" flag, you'll note some sale books sport a magnifying glass. It indicates the sale book's EPDs are searchable.

Click on one of these sale books to open it. At the top of the page, in the gray bar, click "EPD Search" to access a within-sale-book search function that operates much like

the Association's Sire Summary Search function (available at <https://bit.ly/ABBSiresearch>).

The tool allows you to search that sale book to find animals that fit your guidelines — maybe sired by a certain bull or falling within a range of EPD parameters.

You can specify those parameters as an EPD, say a calving ease direct (CED) greater than 4, or a percentile rank. Maybe you want to exclude the extremes and choose a bull within the 10th and 40th percentiles.

The search criteria are organized by section — \$Values, Management EPDs, Maternal EPDs, Carcass EPDs and Dairy Indexes. Open a section and click the boxes to the left of the values you want to use in your decision-making. Then choose whether you prefer to use numbers or percentiles. The slider bars and boxes default to the full range within that sale book for that particular trait. Set your range of

selection using the slider bar or the input boxes.

Your search parameters should be specific to your herd goals and needs. For the sake of example, as shown in Fig. 5 (see page 104), I searched for bulls using minimum thresholds for CED, weaning weight (WW) and yearling weight (YW).

You can request lots be ranked in order (descending or ascending) by one of the search criteria. The example shows a list of bulls meeting a specific criteria ranked in descending order by weaning weight.

That search yielded one reference sire and five lots in the sale (see Fig. 6, page 104).

Clicking on one of those lots will pull up the sale book page featuring that lot if you are in flip-book view or the dynamic display if you are in the web view.

Watchlist and more

Note the gray icons to the right

Fig. 4: View by lots in flip-book view

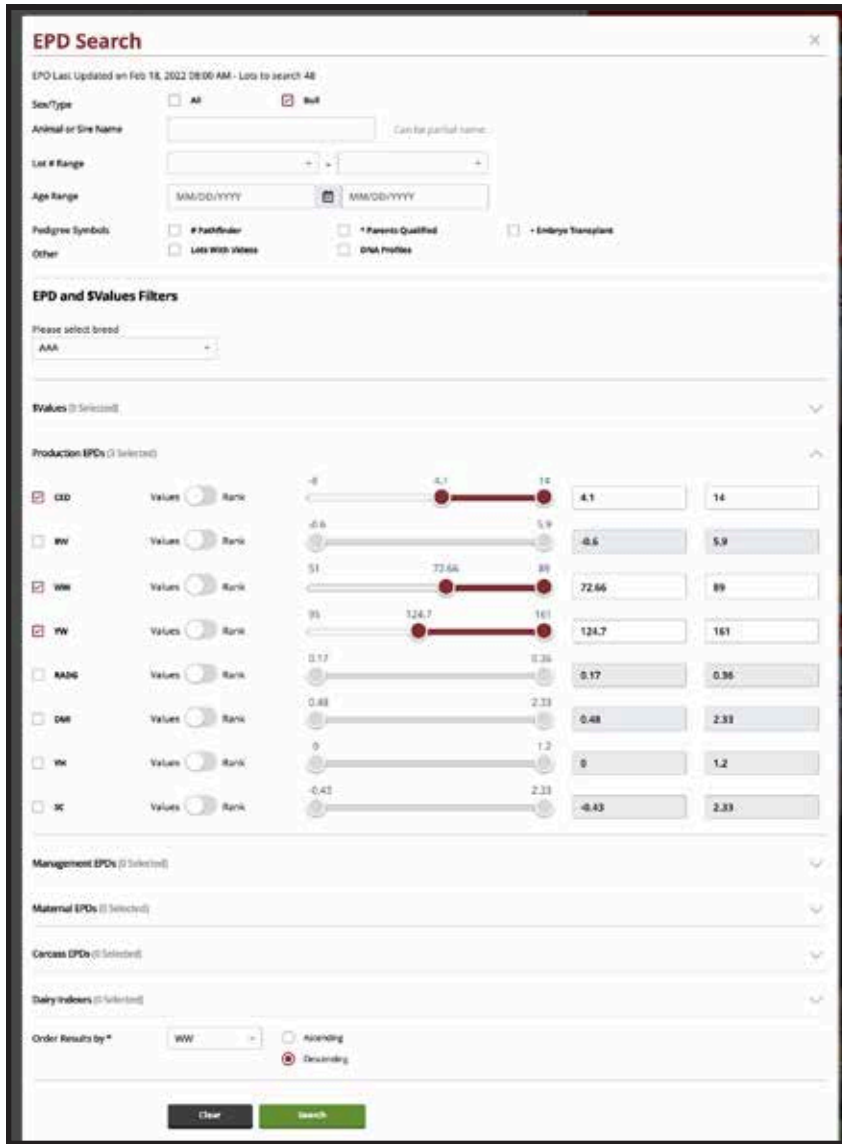


of each lot. You may have noticed them in the original lot list, too. These icons provide some handy features. For instance, click the eyeball to the right of the lot to

bring up the dynamic view of the animal with footnotes and any pictures or videos of animals used as reference for the animal. Share the lot to Facebook or

Twitter, or to someone by email, by clicking the share icon (that web-looking icon). One of the features Lombardino
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Fig. 5: Search a sale book by defining search criteria



is most excited about is the “Watchlist.” If you research ahead and want to follow up to see if those EPDs do really change, click the star (it will turn yellow) to add that lot to your watchlist. Then click the “Watchlist” button at the top of the column to designate when you want to be reminded.

If you plugged in your own email, you’ll get a confirmation email within minutes, then an email timed prior to the sale as you designated. That email will contain the animals you selected and easy links back to the sale book to review.

Any time you return to the sale book, you will have the option of looking at the whole book or just your watchlist.

Videos available

Remember that red play button icon on the “Current Sale Books” page? It indicates the online sale book features video of some of the lots within the sale. Opening one of those sale books, you’ll see an addition to the gray nav bar at the top of the page — a yellow flashing “Video” link.

Click the option to pull up all the

lots for which video is available. Depending on the sale book, it may be five premier lots, or it may include every lot.

Click on the lot in which you’re interested. Viewing from your desktop, the video will play at the top of the page, while the sale book page will display to your left if you are in flip-book mode or the individual lot information if you are in web mode.

You can tell which mode you are in by looking at the right end of that gray nav bar. If you are in flip-book mode, you’ll see a gray globe with “Web” beside it. Click that option to go to the web view. While you are in web view, you’ll see the open-book icon with “View Flip Book” beside it. If you are viewing on your smartphone, you’ll likely prefer the web view.

You’ll also notice in the gray nav bar options to “Request a Sale Book,” to go to the “Current Sale Books” page by clicking “All Angus Books,” and to view the sale report after the sale. This is another feature of books produced by Angus Media.

After the sale

To see this feature, start on the “Current Sale Books” page. At the top, you’ll note a different gray nav bar that offers ways to navigate to the “Angus Calendar,” “Sale Books,” “Archived Sale Books” and “Sale Reports.”

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Fig. 6: Result of an EPD search

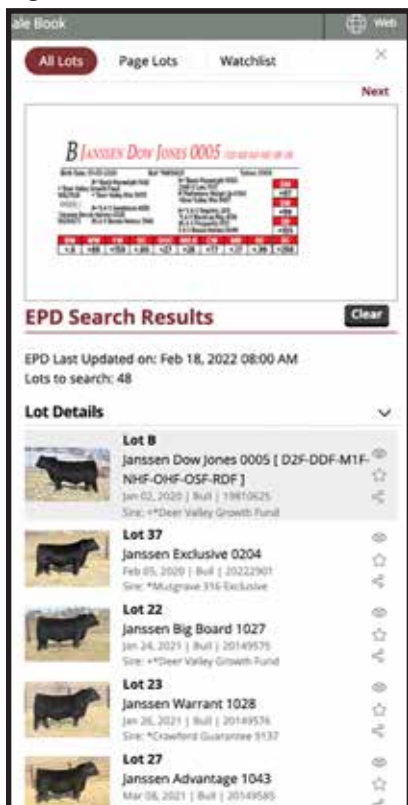


Fig. 7: Select animals for a watchlist

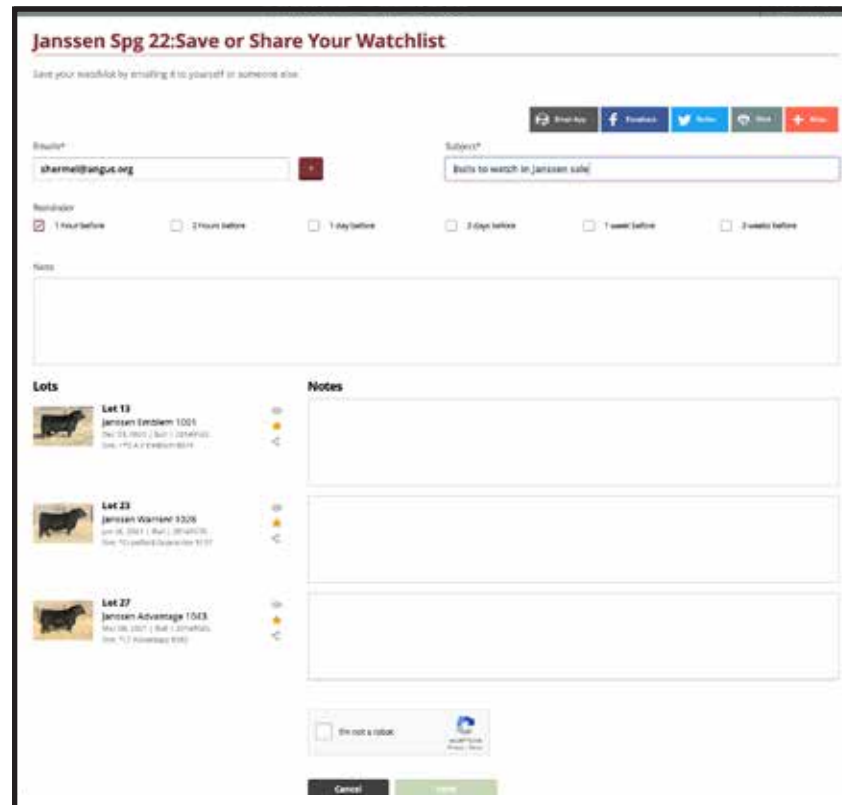
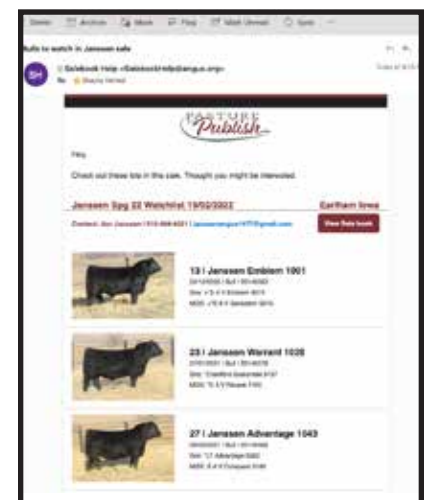


Fig. 8: Watchlist emailed according to your specifications



“Sale Reports” will take you to a listing of past sales. Click on the sale name to pull up the sale report summary. You can also access the information by going to “Archived Sale Books” page. Choose the sale book, then the “Sale Report” option in the gray navigation bar.

Sales will vary in the detail reported. Some will just have a summary of averages by animal category. Others will list top lots and may include the buyer’s name as well as the animal’s registration number hot-linked to the Association animal search, the animal’s birth date and its sire.

Bottom of page

Don’t overlook the gray nav bar at the bottom of the page. In the desktop view, you’ll find options to download a page or the full sale book, to print, contact information for the sale and the share option to share through social media or by email.

Toward the right of that bottom nav bar you’ll find a slider bar to find the page, as well as options to shrink or expand the view or to make it full-screen on your computer.

Look for more

More features to assist buyers — like that yellow flag for supplements — are in the pipeline.

“Selecting your registered Angus bull is not an impulse buy, but rather a decision that will enable your future success for years to come,” says Spader. “Our team is excited to continue to bring new features, data and insights to bull buyers unique to the Angus breed.”

Whether you’re looking for a potential herd sire or wanting to check out what a particular sire’s calves brought at a popular sale, Angus Media’s sale book portal can be like jumping into that haystack with a metal detector and a magnet. ■