

## Stika named director of feeder-packer relations

After serving for a year as an assistant director, John Stika was promoted to director of the Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Program's Feeder-Packer Relations Division effective Jan. 24. Stika helped in making the division's Feedlot-Licensing Program (FLP) a success and developed its quality assurance program, "Commitment to Quality."

"With John's abilities in leadership, meat science, database analysis and quality assurance, we are looking forward to his directing the division," says Larry Corah, assistant executive director of the CAB Program.

Stika says the most important issue facing the Feeder-Packer Relations Division and the FLP is increasing the cow-calf sector's knowledge, interaction and support.

"We need to grow the Program to the point where we no longer need to explain the eight carcass specs — because every producer will know them," Stika says. "Currently, there may be more understanding on the product and consumer side as to what sets *Certified Angus Beef*™ product apart. We can change that, and we must in order to grant the

cow-calf sector a sense of ownership in the FLP."

All of those carcass specifications are important, he adds. "To achieve our goal of a 30% *Certified Angus Beef* acceptance rate, we must emphasize a balance between quality and yield. That's consistent with the work the American Angus Association has done in developing expected progeny differences (EPDs) for percent retail product," Stika says.

How or why will seedstock and commercial Angus producers put their support behind the FLP? Stika says that will come as the Program and its licensed feedlots live up to promises made. Producers will need evidence that these feedlots are best equipped to get the most out of their Angus cattle.

"We'd like to think that if you feed Angus cattle and want data, our group is diverse enough that there is no reason not to feed in a licensed feedlot," Stika says. "But we have to concentrate now on finding all of the keys needed for the licensed yards to generate the universal support the Program needs.

"This will take more than publicity," Stika says. "First we have to deliver what

we say we will do, and then we can tell that story."

Stika noted that producers and feedlot operators should not make any changes in their contact list based on the staff change. "This doesn't change who is best qualified to answer questions within Supply Development on specific issues," he says. "Bryce Schumann, assistant director, certainly has the most expertise in the areas of identifying potential feedlot partners, as well as compliance issues, for example. Both of us are equally involved in this [feedlot-licensing] program."

Prior to joining the CAB Program, Stika was involved in academic research and teaching, first at Kansas State University, where he obtained bachelor's and master's degrees in animal science, then at the University of Kentucky, where he is completing a doctorate in meat science.

Stika works from the Manhattan, Kan., Supply Development office and lives in Westmoreland, Kan., with his wife, Deanna, and young sons, Tavis and Gavin.

