

THE FRONT GATE

New Tools to Succeed in Today's Marketplace



In the first half of the 20th century, prior to the era of school consolidations, most rural communities had a local school. Typically, it was a one-room schoolhouse that taught first through 12th grades.

It was no different at the Three Oaks community school in south Texas. Like many kids who lived in the country, each morning school was in session my father and his brothers saddled up and rode off to school. While it wasn't a particularly long distance — a little over 2 miles — nonetheless my father rode a horse to school every day just like many of your parents did.

The juxtaposition of that era vs. today's technology-driven world is a fitting metaphor for the redesign of the *Angus Beef Bulletin* and the Association's increased focus on serving our members' ultimate customers — the commercial cattle producer.

While it's obvious to acknowledge that commercial cattlemen are important to every purebred breed association, at least those that want to prosper long term, the commercial segment is of particular significance to the American Angus Association. A belief in the Angus breed by ranchers and beef producers across the United States has propelled the Angus breed into a dominant market share in the beef genetics of the U.S. beef herd.

However, today's success can't be taken for granted. Today's cattlemen and cattlemen need, and demand, new tools to help them succeed in a global marketplace. The redesign of the *Angus Beef Bulletin* is just the beginning of a number of initiatives by the Association for the commercial sector.

The *Angus Beef Bulletin* has long served a critical role in allowing the Association to serve our members' commercial customers — those who have purchased a registered Angus bull within the past 36 months. While that was true in the past, it's even more true today. That's why the Association has invested resources in redesigning the magazine with a focus on providing quality content packaged in a compelling graphic design.

In addition, there are other programs in the works for the commercial sector.

Angus Black Book. This fall, we'll be releasing a new mobile platform designed especially for commercial cattlemen. The Angus Black Book will provide commercial producers with a robust recordkeeping system that includes production, health and pasture management features. It will have unmatched recordkeeping capabilities and will be accessible with a simple swipe of your screen on your mobile device. Best of all, it will be free.

AngusSource®. The newly designed AngusSource program offers all cattlemen, regardless of the breed used in their operation, access to five process verification programs (PVPs). The basic AngusSource program will be an age- and source-verification program, while other offerings include non-hormone treated cattle (NHTC), Never Ever 3 (verified natural), Cattle Care & Handling, and Calf Management. The new AngusSource program is priced competitively and backed by the great service you expect from the American Angus Association (see story on page 60).

Angus LinkSM. The Association's new feeder-calf program is designed for cattlemen who use registered Angus bulls as the foundation of their breeding programs. The purpose of the program is to identify the genetic performance potential of feeder cattle. The program is developed from the Association's dollar value indexes (\$Values) and provides three scores. The beef score indicates overall feeding performance and carcass value; the feedlot performance score is based upon average daily gain and dry-matter intake; and, finally, the grid score is based upon marbling, fat and ribeye. Angus Link will allow you to effectively communicate the genetic merit of your feeder cattle to potential buyers. In today's data-driven world, that's a good thing. To learn more about Angus Link, see stories on pages 12, 18 and 64 in this issue and visit www.anguslink.com.

The Three Oaks school was shuttered in the early 1950s. It had become obsolete; replaced by more efficient systems and, ultimately, new technologies. Today it serves as a community center and a stark reminder that organizations must constantly evolve or get left behind in the past.

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