

COWLEY NAMED AGI PRESIDENT

Beef industry veteran joins from Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

by Holly Martin, American Angus Association

The American Angus Association named Joel Cowley president of Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI). With his combination of beef industry experience and innovative leadership, Cowley will guide the company's genetic evaluation technology and research programs.

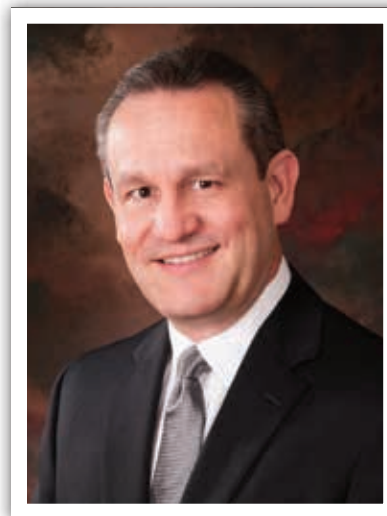
"In a time of advancing science and fast-paced innovation, Joel will lead AGI's efforts to remain at the top of our game and connect that science to the cattlemen who depend on it," says Mark McCully, Association CEO. "He is a true leader, and his animal breeding training, coupled with executive experience, make him ideally suited to lead AGI to the next level."

Cowley's roots are firmly planted in the beef industry. He completed his undergraduate studies at Colorado State University, where he competed on the livestock judging team. Cowley earned his master's degree in animal breeding at Texas A&M University while serving as the university's livestock judging coach. He also

served as a beef cattle extension specialist at Michigan State University, where he completed his MBA.

Most recently, Cowley was the president and CEO of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, where he directed the efforts of 35,000 volunteers and 130 full-time staff to conduct an event that draws more than 2.5 million visitors in 23 days and annually awards \$27 million to youth and education.

Though he enjoyed being part of an event that hosts the world's largest livestock show and connects urban consumers with agriculture, Cowley says he wanted to have a more direct influence on



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production agriculture and welcomed the opportunity to work with Angus breeders.

He previously worked for Certified Angus Beef LLC as an

executive account manager and then assistant director of foodservice.

"Angus breeders are the leaders in improving their genetics, their breed and the beef industry," Cowley says. "I am fortunate to be asked to lead those efforts, and am looking forward to working on the research that will continue the advancement of genetic evaluation of beef cattle worldwide."

In addition, Cowley has served on the Texas FFA and the Texas 4-H Youth Development foundations, as well as the boards of the University of Houston Bauer College of Business and the Academy Sports and Outdoors Texas Bowl. He recently was named Texas A&M University Department of Animal Science Outstanding Alumni and a *Houston Business Journal* Most Admired CEO. ■

Editor's note: Holly Martin is director of communications for the American Angus Association.

Association launches combined \$Value index

The combined value (\$C) dollar value index (\$Value) launched by the American Angus Association characterizes profitability differences across the entire chain by combining the two underlying breeding objectives that drive the Association's maternal and terminal economic indexes.

Expressed in dollars per head, the economic selection index includes all 15 traits involved in maternal weaned calf value (\$M) and beef value (\$B).

The breeding objective that drives the \$C model is built around a 500-head commercial cow herd that replaces 20% of its breeding females per year with heifers retained from its own herd. The herd then retains ownership on the cull heifers and their steer mates through the feedyard phase and markets those cattle

on a quality-based carcass-merit grid.

"The idea of combining maternal and terminal traits into one economic selection index allows a producer to make genetic progress in several different traits at once while accounting for the relationships among these traits, which may pull costs and revenues in different directions," says Kelli Retallick, Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) genetic service director. "For example, continuing to increase weaning weight, yearling weight and carcass weight results in more saleable product, increasing revenue; however, it also drives up input costs across other segments of the operation due to the positive correlation with cow size."

The expected progeny differences (EPDs) directly influencing \$C are calving ease direct

and maternal, weaning weight, yearling weight, maternal milk, heifer pregnancy, docility, mature cow weight, foot angle, claw set, dry-matter intake, marbling, carcass weight, ribeye area and fat thickness.

"Essentially, what \$C tries to accomplish is giving commercial cattlemen a way to select cattle that give them nearly all the horsepower that \$B affords them, but puts the bumpers up around cow traits such as mature cow weight, docility and fertility, which affect costs associated with an individual operation," Retallick says.

For more information about \$Value indexes, see "Sorting Gate" on page 34 and visit <https://www.angus.org/Nce/ValueIndexes.aspx>.

Editor's note: Release provided by the American Angus Ass'n.