



# DATA-DRIVEN QUALITY

Arkansas producers find success with Angus information, services for replacement females and feeder calves.

Story & photos by Whitney Whitaker, American Angus Association

**W**hether in life or livestock, the team at Moore Cattle Co. of Charleston, Ark., embraces the motto that anything worth doing is worth doing right. The drive to obtain the highest levels of quality is focused on females, fed cattle and the Angus family.

Jim and Missy Moore are the third generation to own and operate the farm, which was established nearly a century ago as a Hereford operation. Now, it's a 275-head Angus herd situated on 1,200 acres of land, where the couple is dedicated to continuous herd improvement.

"Part of that passion was instilled in me long ago, because my father and grandfather both preached quality. They would say that you can feed and take care of a good one just as easy as you can feed and take care of one that's not as good," Jim Moore says. "We just feel that for the beef industry to

thrive, for beef demand to thrive, we have to produce a product people can't get enough of."

### Measuring up

The Moores use data — a lot of data. They diligently collect carcass records and use DNA testing. They raise their own females, sell replacements and feed cattle. That makes it hard to find a bull that does it all, but careful study of

the data can point to the most balanced bulls to use.

"We are big numbers people, and to be able to manage things, we think you should be able to measure things," Moore says.

They've collected performance data on every calf from conception to the rail for the past 25 years. That helps them identify cows that produce high-performing calves. They maximize the mating by selecting the right sire for each female.

The Moores haven't purchased any females in more than 50 years. They DNA test heifers with GeneMax® Advantage™, and they use both phenotypic and genotypic information to make good keep/cull decisions.

"A lot of times in the industry, we think we need to work on the top end," Moore says. "What we have found over the years is that it is the bottom end where you can make the most improvement."

### Mining the data

The Moores retain ownership of their cattle, and they apply diligent recordkeeping to that phase of the operation.

"We realized early on that if we wanted to get paid, we had to go for quality," Moore says. "In that sense, we started looking at marbling genetics a long time before others did."

They sell cattle through the U.S. Premium Beef (USPB) grid, which places a higher emphasis on quality. Typically, a load lot will represent about 10 sires, so once the cattle are finished, the carcass data is grouped by each individual sire. Moore uses that to analyze the sire marbling score, ribeye area, hot carcass weight and other measures. It's another culling tool for him. *Continued on page 28*

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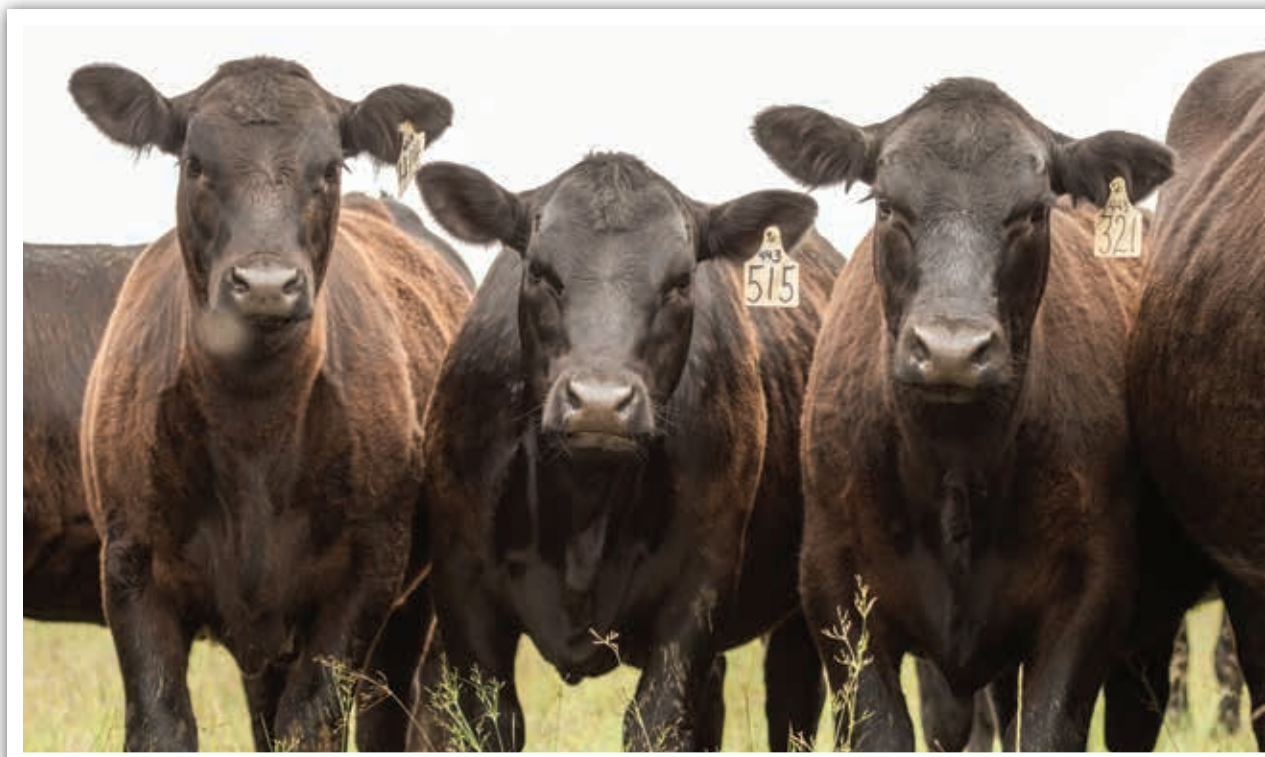


Feeding data show Moore how the animals actually performed compared to what genomics predicted would happen. To keep their cattle excelling in feedlot performance and carcass genetics, the Moores use high-performing, balanced bulls mated to the most efficient females, which allows them to raise higher-quality replacements. Jim believes using natural service shows him the increased genetic potential of the bulls he has purchased.

### Data sharing

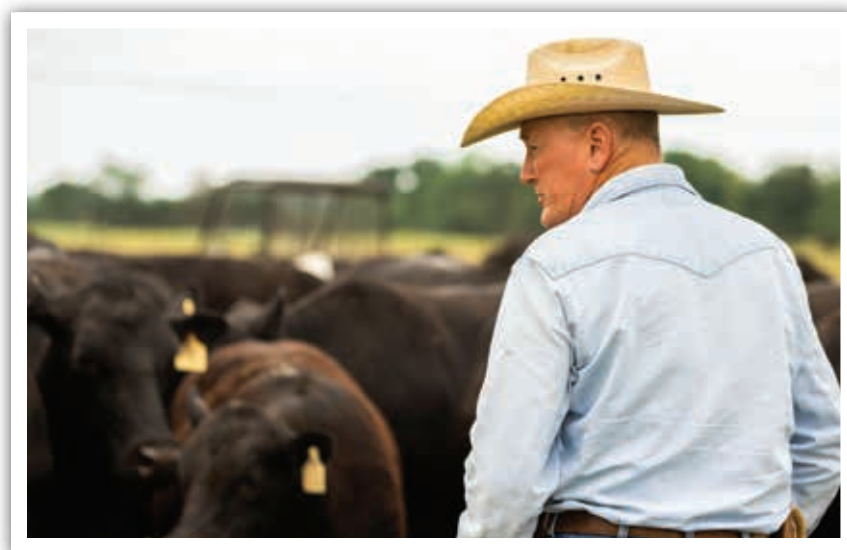
Data is used in every facet of the Moore operation, but sharing that data with the American Angus Association allows them to contribute to the greater industry, too.

“Following the genomic testing, another defining moment for us was reporting all our carcass data to the American Angus Association,” Moore says. “Turning in this data gave us a



Above: Jim and Missy Moore have collected performance data on every calf from conception to the rail for the past 25 years.

Right: While many in the industry focus on the top end of their herds, Jim Moore says he takes a different approach: “What we have found over the years is that it is the bottom end where you can make the most improvement.”



better view of the bulls we were using, while refining the accuracy of the EPDs. The eye can only tell so much.”

Therefore, they are firm believers in going the extra mile to collect additional data as it proves to be a game changer.

Moore says he’s taken advantage of the Association’s large offering of tools and programs. Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) offers DNA testing, AngusLink<sup>SM</sup> is a value-added program, and the *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> (CAB<sup>®</sup>) brand creates pull-through demand.

“Part of the reason we believe in the Angus breed is because they are doing more for their customer base,” Moore says. “They are also

consistently pushing the envelope with better cattle every year.”

The family’s purchase of registered Angus bulls gives them access to all of those services. It’s the way they use those tools that sets them apart.

“We feel raising quality beef is an obligation that we are passionate about,” Moore says. “If we are going to be in the commercial sector, we need to do the best job we can to meet consumer demands, so we feel it is an obligation to provide that quality product.”

Editor’s note: Whitney Whitaker is a communications specialist for the American Angus Association.