



Your Link to

by **RON BOLZE**, director of genetic programs, Certified Angus Beef LLC

When opportunity knocks, only you can open the door

Ever feel as though you have not been paid adequately for your cattle even though you've included positive carcass merit in your Angus genetics for generations? While auction-market studies document the higher value of Angus-type feeder cattle, if you have the right stuff, the real money lies in retained ownership.

That's where you can cash in on the true value of your genetics — through feedlot performance and carcass-grid premiums. That's where you can gather the information you need to evaluate those genetics. Now's your chance.

You've probably heard about the Best of the Breed (BoB) national Angus carcass challenge. Maybe you have already



enrolled cattle in the first weeks of the new contest. If you need more details, pick up any current beef magazine, check out www.cabfeedlots.com or call 1-866-BoB-1160 (it's a toll-free number).

"This contest was made-to-order for my genetics," declared more than one prominent Angus breeder after learning about the details of the contest. Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB), along with four other sponsors — Merial-SureHealth™, Allflex, Farmland National Beef (FNB) and Agri Beef Co. — brings this opportunity to the beef industry's door.

Why is Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) co-sponsoring the contest? Two words: *supply development*. CAB licensees need more of that delicious *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand product that only one

in seven cattle currently achieve.

If the lure of prize money on top of the millions of premium dollars from grid markets helps convince more producers to use Angus bulls with positive traits for carcass merit, everyone wins. To showcase licensed feedlots' role as the home of BoB, CAB offers an additional \$10,000 divided among 10 prizes for the top pens of cattle fed in those yards.

Producers are limited only by their imaginations in how to network with their seedstock suppliers and CAB-licensed feedlots as they go for the gold.

What's the worst-case scenario? Carcass data for \$4/head? Imagine the possibilities for your enterprise if your cattle emerge as Best of the Breed.



There are at least 10 reasons for Angus seedstock customers to open the door.

Exclusively Angus. The Best of the Breed (BoB) contest is solely for recognizing superior Angus cattle. It was designed for Angus bull buyers like you and your Angus seedstock suppliers.

Recognition. By working with your seedstock suppliers to showcase your Angus genetics in this contest, you stand to generate tremendous recognition for the kind of cattle you produce and how they work in the feedlot.

Confidentiality. In any contest, what people fear most is losing. In this case, you can't really lose. Keep in mind that only the winning pens of cattle and the producers behind them will be recognized — all the other lots of enrolled cattle will be kept confidential. But you will know, and you can take the opportunity to work with your seedstock suppliers toward improving future showings.

Carcass data. It is vitally important that cattle producers understand how their Angus genetics hang on the rail to meet the demands of today's consumers. The BoB contest offers that education to all participants through the collection of individual U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) carcass data.

Feedlot performance. Just as important as carcass data, cow-calf producers need to understand how their cattle perform in the feedlot. What kind of gains and feed efficiencies are their cattle achieving? What is the health of their cattle? While feedlot information is not part of the BoB contest, it is part of feeding with the CAB-licensed feedlots that host the contest. Producers acquire both feedlot performance and carcass data, with access to a leading quality-beef grid, all for \$4/head. That may be the most valuable combination that a producer gains by being a part of the contest.

Team building. There is no question about the direction the beef industry is going. Commercial cattlemen often will be part of alliances or "beef teams." They will work in collaboration with seedstock producers, feedlots, packers and allied industry to generate a great beef product for the consuming public. The BoB contest is one opportunity to work with your cooperators in the supply chain while learning more about the genetics you use.

Electronic identification. Everybody says it's coming; one of the buzzwords in the beef industry is electronic identification (EID) of cattle. Not to miss out on any opportunity, the BoB contest makes use of EID. You'll become better acquainted with that new technology and how it will be used on your calves.

Exposure to other new technologies. The contest is designed to be a "cutting edge" contest that uses all the latest technology. We will evaluate many nutritional management strategies at the feedlot level to help ensure carcass quality and red meat yield. DNA technology, if commercially available, will be used to verify Angus parentage in the cattle.

Fun. People in the cattle industry naturally like to compete. The contest is intended to be a fun experience for those participating.

Oh, did you remember ...

Monetary rewards? It is an opportunity to win a lot of money. The overall winning pen of cattle could earn more than \$200,000, and at least 23 other winners across the nation will win thousands if they have the right kind of cattle. There is no question that the contest represents golden opportunities for producers using Angus genetics. How you answer the door is up to you.

