



ANGUS

BEEF BULLETIN

"The Commercial Cattleman's Angus Connection"

Volume 17, Number 4 • October 2002

INSIDE

Features & News

The key to an enduring lease arrangement is equitable terms 23

The Alabama BCIA is staying active in spite of the fact the organization has died a slow death in many other states 28

The FDA's approval of the CIDR is deemed the first advancement in reproductive control in 20 years 36

Six-factor comparison evaluates MGA and CIDR synchronization strategies 40

Research discovers unexpected costs of the internal parasite *Neospora caninum* 42

An Oklahoma stocker shares his perspective on getting the most out of the range, and it starts with monitoring 46

Column Links

• Up Front 6

• Association Highlights 10

• Commercial Relations Department 18

• Certified Angus Beef LLC 32

• Veterinary Link 52

• AngusSource Angus-Influence Sales 54

• Angus Sales 60

• Advertiser Index 72

Staff

• Angus Productions Inc. 4

• American Angus Association 10

• Certified Angus Beef LLC 34

• Regional Managers 69

Services

• National Junior Angus Association membership application 16

• Angus Journal subscription form 49

• American Angus Association membership form 69

ON THE 'NET

www.angusbeefbulletin.com

www.angusproductions.com

www.angusjournal.com

www.angus.org

www.certifiedangusbeef.com

The most current listing of Angus sales and events is available online at www.angusalmanac.com

Sale reports are available online at

www.angusproductions.com/api_salering_set.html

Both are searchable by breeder, location and date.

Taking the Luck Out of It

2002 CAB Commercial Commitment to Excellence honoree tests the best.

by **HEATHER HOPPER**

The Hubachs of Rea, Mo., can't afford guesswork. Their 250 commercial Angus cows serve as a test herd for structured sire evaluation. But for the winner of the 2002 Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) Commercial Commitment to Excellence Award, the guesswork is eliminated.

Johnnie Hubach and his wife, Kami, accepted the award at the CAB Annual Conference in Asheville, N.C., a crowning moment for a story that began 21 years ago. When Johnnie Hubach was 16 years old, he found himself at the reins of the 1,200-acre farm held since the early 1900s by the family of his mother, who had died when he was very young.

It was 1981, the dawn of a recession often called the "farm crisis" for its combination of drought, inflation and markets that turned many farm families out of their homes. Hubach's grandfather had just passed away, and because of his father's truck-driving job, it fell to Johnnie to look after the cows and farm.

He was up to the challenge, finding an ideal partner a few years later. Johnnie's father, John, retired from trucking since 1997, and Carolyn, mom to Johnnie, are equal partners in the farm now. Today the Hubachs' daughter, Jordan, represents the fifth generation on the land. Everybody pitches in to keep the operation self-sufficient. "The farm raises all of the herd's feed," Hubach says. "It supports itself."

Self-reliance is important to Hubach, who works the night manager's shift at a local steel-building



"Our genetics are getting better every year," says Johnnie Hubach, winner of the 2002 CAB Commercial Commitment to Excellence Award. [PHOTOS BY STEVE SUTHER]

factory in addition to managing the farm. The family teamwork is critical on long February nights at calving time when Hubach can't check heifers until he gets home from work just before midnight.

The total package

The annual CAB Commercial Commitment to Excellence Award recognizes a producer with "progressive management, exceptional recordkeeping ability and a history of working with Angus structured sire evaluation with a link to a licensed CAB feedlot."

Records were always important, but became increasingly so as goals changed. At first, the only consideration was to maximize weaning weights, and the farm kept no replacement heifers. "I probably sold a lot of good females over the years," Hubach says. "Heifer development wasn't something I knew a whole lot about — I just felt like I was selling better genetics than I had in the cows."

That feeling eventually turned the focus toward keeping replacements, and that meant searching for "the to-

(Continued on page 4)

Taking the Luck Out of It (from page 1)

From left, Jordan, Johnnie and Kami Hubach represent the fourth and fifth generations to tend the farm held by the family since the early 1900s.

tal package." The farm began an artificial insemination (AI) program in 1990 with the help of American Breeders Service (ABS, now ABS Global) representative Alan Kapp.

"We bred 10 heifers the first year," Hubach recalls. To obtain proven genetics and high-accuracy bulls, the farm increased AI numbers to 60 heifers and 100 cows by 1996, buying most of its natural-service herd bulls from Mill Brae Ranch, Maple Hill, Kan.

Blessed by their proximity to American Angus Association headquarters, Hubach counted neighbor and former Association executive vice president, the late Dick Spader, as a friend and mentor. "I valued his opinion a lot, and we used to discuss breeding decisions once or twice a year," Hubach says.

Transition to a test herd

On one of those occasions in 1997, while at Association offices in Saint Joseph, Mo., he met John Crouch, then director of breed improvement. Learning of Hubach's extensive AI program, Crouch suggested he consider being a test herd and introduced him to C.K. Allen of Woodland Farms. Allen is the 2002 CAB Seedstock Commitment to Excellence Award winner.

"I wanted good females that would produce calves that grow and grade," Hubach says, emphasizing the need for balanced expected progeny differences (EPDs). That goal had guided his selection for years, but being a test herd allowed for free use of some impressive genetics that seemed a perfect fit. Allen and Hubach agree on reference sires and test bulls for the program each year, considering pedigree and performance on any unproven sire.

"We try to take the luck out of it," Hubach says. "I haven't used a bull that I don't feel comfortable with in the herd yet."

The average conception rate from AI over the last 10 years has been 75%, and that has allowed for rapid genetic improvement. To capitalize on that, the Hubachs keep up to 70% of the best heifers for breeding. And to make room, they sell 7-year-olds — "our most productive cows," Hubach notes.

He works with one of the youngest herds in the state, the average cow being a 4-year-old. "Most producers don't like to mess with heifers," Hubach says. And with a decade of predictable genetics thrown in, "we think we are selling them a problem-free kind of cow," he adds.

Besides the advantage to the farm for rapid genetic improvement, Hubach also avoids selling old cows at hamburger prices. Data collected at the farm, in the feedlot and in the packing plant show how proven genetics can increase profits. "Our genetics are getting better every year," Hubach says.

"If you don't know what you are raising, you will be discounted," he says, quoting what seedstock producers have told him for years. Hubach took heed to that warning.

"All of our calves can be sire-identified," he explains. "If we run multiple bulls with the herd, they are full brothers." Each calf is double-tagged at birth, one in the left ear for the dam's sire and a tag in the right ear for the calf's sire.

Allen buys the calves, excluding heifers kept as replacements, and feeds them in partnership with Gregory Feedlots in Tabor, Iowa. David Trowbridge, feedlot manager, says

the Hubach calves are always in excellent health and have the genetics to work in the feedlot. "We would love to have more cattle perform as predictably as the Hubach cattle," he says.

In fact, the Angus steers fed there last year graded 91% Choice or better with 55% accepted as *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) and 81% Yield Grades (YG) 1 and 2. The group earned an average of \$132.55/head more than Select YG 2s on IBP's Real Time grid. This year, despite unusual weather and markets, Hubach steers improved average quality grade to more than 93% Choice and lost only \$10.67. By comparison, those Select YG 2 steers were losing \$104.44 per head.

Prior to the Woodland Farms connection, Hubach steers fed at Van Meter Feedlot in Guthrie Center, Iowa, from 1997 to 1999, typically graded near 70% Choice, with 62% to 87% receiving YG 1s and 2s combined.

To make the most of carcass data and keep track of such a young herd, the Hubachs use the Cow Sense computer program. Kami enters the data that includes weaning and yearling weights, conception rates on cows and all health records. The record shows an increase in weaning weights, daily gains, conversion rates and a considerable improvement in carcass quality.

"Few commercial cattlemen get carcass data. Not only do the Hubachs get the data, but they are meeting CAB standards, and doing it way above average," Allen says. "Their herd does exactly what it needs to do, and that is to produce the end product."

The landscape may have changed some over the years in the northwestern Missouri hills, but Hubach's ultimate goals have not. "We always wanted to raise efficient, productive, easy-keeping cattle that result in consumers having a good experience when they eat beef," he says.

Through the test herd program, Hubach has learned how to improve the genetic capability and value of his females, which in turn improves the quality that ends up on the plate. "It is our livelihood. We have to produce something people will continue to enjoy," he says. "CAB sets the target a producer needs to strive for. That's how we tie quality to the breed."



Founded March 1985
ANGUS
BEEF BULLETIN
"The Commercial Cattleman's Angus Connection"

Produced and published by Angus Productions Inc. in cooperation with the American Angus Association and Certified Angus Beef LLC.

3201 Frederick Ave. • Saint Joseph, MO 64506-2997
phone: (816) 383-5200 • fax: (816) 233-6575
office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (Central time)
Web site: www.angusbeefbulletin.com

Staff are listed by name, phone extension and e-mail prefix. All direct phone numbers are "(816) 383-5..."; all e-mail addresses are "...@angusjournal.com"

General manager – Terry Cotton, 214, tcotton

Editorial Department

Editor – Shauna Rose Hermel, 270, shermel;
Assistant editors – Corinne Blender, 277, cblender; Stephanie Veldman, 215, sveldman;
Artists – Christy Benigno & Mary Black;
Proofreader – Lucille Standlee

Field editors

Kindra Gordon, PO Box 645, Spearfish, SD 57783, (605) 722-7699, kindras@gordonresources.com;
Eric Grant, PO Box 296, Oak Creek, CO 80467, (970) 736-0580, wahoo_eg@yahoo.com;
Janet Mayer, 259 Mile Hill Rd., Johnstown, PA 15909, (814) 322-4687, jmayer5013@aol.com; **Becky Mills**, Rt.1, Box 414, Cuthbert, GA 31740, (229) 732-6748, lovettmills@alltel.net; & **Troy Smith**, HC 72, Box 18A, Sargent, NE 68874, (308) 527-3483; wordsmith@nctc.net

Contributing writers

Heather Hopper

Advertising/Production Department

Manager – Cheryl Oxley, 216, coxley;
Advertising assistants – Doneta Brown, 289, dbrown; & Rich Masoner, 223, rmasoner;
Production assistant – Carol Beckett, 226, cbeckett; **Advertising artists** – Monica Ford, & Julie Seitz-Aud; **Advertising proofreader** – Jacque McGinness; **Intern** – Angela Beisinger

Special Services Department

Coordinator – Sharon Mayes, 221, smayes; **Artist** – Janet Herkelman; **Assistant** – Vickie Whitsell;
Proofreader – Linda Robbins

Web Marketing Department

Director – Angie Stump Denton, 211, astump;
Assistants – Abra Ungeheuer, 239, abra; & Tanya Peebles, 234, tpeebles; **Artist** – Ray Palermo

Photo Department

Coordinator – Donna Conley, 217, dconley;
Digital imaging specialist – Kathrin Gresham

Circulation coordinator – LaVera Spire, 220, lspire

Network systems coordinator – Bruce Buntin

Office assistant – Lauralee West

Angus Productions Inc. Board of Directors

Chairman – Steve Brooks;
Vice chairman – John Crouch;
President – Terry Cotton;
Business manager – Richard Wilson;
Dave Smith; Ben Eggers; Abbie Nelson; Mark Gardiner; Brian McCulloh & Paul Hill

Member
LPC
LIVESTOCK
PUBLICATIONS
COUNCIL