

# THE SOURCE

## Too much information

by Ginette Gottswiller, American Angus Association



Seems like there is volume after volume of information these days when you are in the cattle business. Some of the information is quite helpful and useful, but sometimes information is like a musk thistle — sticky and doesn't seem to accomplish a darn thing.

We talk to producers every day, and many share that they get frustrated when it comes time to market their calves. There are a ton of things to think about. Here are a few questions Sarah Woods, Emily Vinton and I ask to determine if enrolling in the value-added programs at the American Angus Association is a fit for your marketing program.

### Where and when do you plan to sell?

Many times producers underestimate the time it takes to enroll their calves in value-added programs. The process isn't difficult, but at minimum you will need to send in copies of your calving records, fill out an enrollment form and do training over the phone for each calf crop.

Once the paperwork is completed, it does take five to seven business days to ship the AngusSource® radio frequency identification (RFID) tags to your farm or ranch. I encourage producers to start at least eight weeks prior to the video sale book deadline or before they plan to market their calves.

**RETAINED OWNERSHIP:** Determine if there is any price advantage at delivery time to have

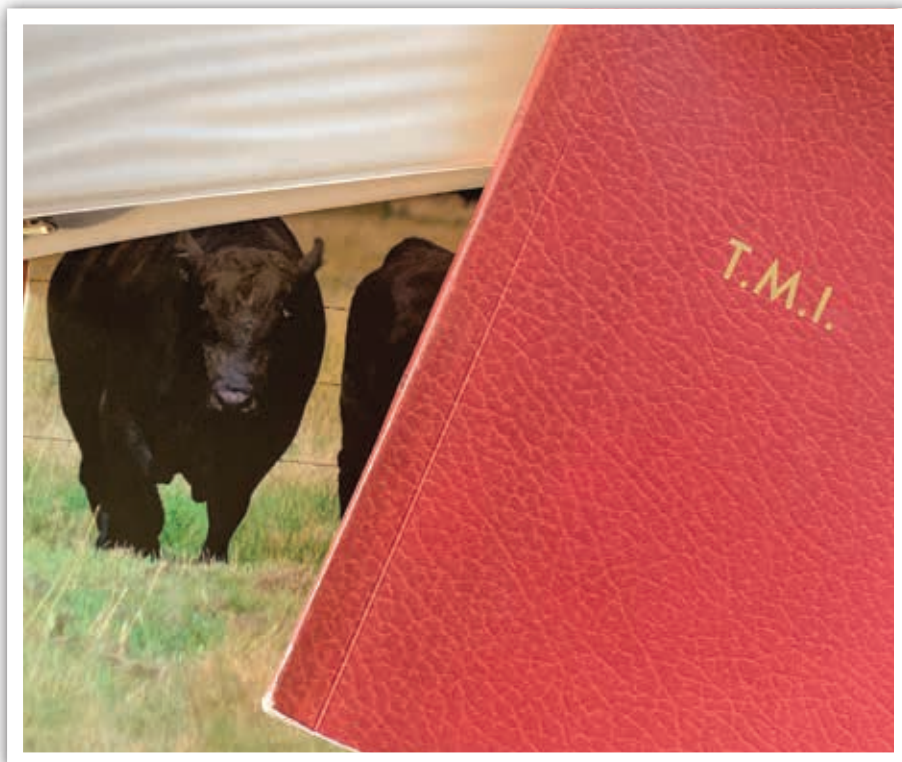
age- and source-verified (ASV), Angus-Sired Genetics, Non-Hormone Treated Cattle (NHTC) or NeverEver 3 (NE3) verifications. Is the feedyard you plan to use verified for those claims? If not, either choose another feedyard or don't enroll, because you will lose your verifications if you go to a feedyard that isn't verified for your claims.

**FARMER-FEEDERS:** Are you feeding out your own calves on your farm or ranch? If so, you need additional verification for the feeding phase at your operation.

**SALE BARNs:** Some sale barns are verified to sell NHTC and NE3/Verified Natural calves through a verification provider. If your sale barn is not approved, the calves will lose their verification. It is very important to remember if a link in the verification chain is broken for NHTC- or NE3-enrolled calves, then all your hard work is like a stretched-out log chain — not worth a darn.

**VIDEO SALES:** Because the calves are being picked up at your operation, a video sale does not have to be verified to sell NHTC or NE3. However, if you and your rep don't advertise your calves as being enrolled in the valued-added programs, you are pretty much burning your money in a fire pit.

For example, think about shopping for a Ford truck. Buying a Ford Platinum compared to an XL model can be the difference between night and day for starting price. Depending on the buyer, the price paid can be very different. Calves verified for NHTC, NE3,



Angus-Sired Genetics, and Calf Management can all play a part in getting more bidders interested on sale day. However, if a potential buyer doesn't know you enrolled, he may be eating a donut, grabbing a cup of coffee or drinking a can of pop rather than bidding.

It doesn't matter to us where you sell your calves. It is important to know when and where you plan to sell to determine which or if any programs will be a good fit for your marketing plan.

Information is king at the feeder-calf sales. AngusSource offers producers a cost-effective way to pass documented information to potential buyers. AngusSource is one of the few verification programs that offers marketing support every time you market your calves. That marketing support is up to you. The marketing document can be filled out online, or give Sarah or Emily a call at 816-383-5100.

They will help you get your calves on the marketing emails that go out weekly to more

than 800 potential buyers. If we don't know when and where your calves are selling, it is pretty darn difficult to help you market them!

AngusSource currently offers the following verification programs:

- ▶ Age and Source (AS)
- ▶ Angus-Sired Genetics
- ▶ NHTC
- ▶ AS-NeverEver 3
- ▶ AS-Cattle Care and Handling
- ▶ AS-Calf Management

The American Angus Association and our Commercial Programs Department are committed to helping commercial cattlemen receive the best price for their feeder calves. Learn more about the commercial programs offered by the American Angus Association. Our department is full of cattle producers like yourself who want the best prices for our calves, too.

Call us at 816-383-5100 to learn more or visit [angussource.com](http://angussource.com). You'll be glad you did! |

Editor's note: Ginette Gottswiller is the director of commercial programs for the American Angus Association.

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