

THE LINK

Can you hear me?

by Ginette Gottswiller, American Angus Association



There wasn't any light from the moon. I had shut off the combine and its lights when I heard the crunch of frozen cornstalks.

"Is someone there?" I called out.

There was no sound except for my breathing. I felt hands around my neck. I screamed, but no one heard me.

"Seth Andrew, stop that!"

Oh boy, was he in trouble.

How many times do you remember your mom screaming your complete name at the top of her lungs?

"Are you listening to me?"

Time to hear

Being heard is an age-old problem. Communication is difficult.

For 17 years commercial cattlemen who use Angus genetics have had the opportunity to enroll in AngusLinkSM, a marketing program to show the difference between their Angus-sired feeder calves and other black-hided feeder cattle.

When the feeder-calf market is good, enrollments go down. When the calf market is tough, the phone doesn't stop ringing from producers who want to enroll. Do you really think cattle buyers only look for good Angus genetics in a down market?

Buyers look for feeder calves that are managed well and that have been preconditioned. Buyers prefer to have them weaned, too. Every year more buyers want to know what bulls were used to sire your feeder calves. The video companies want a copy of your *completed* Verification Certificate before the sale. Buyers want to know what bulls were used, the scores of your Genetic Merit Scorecard[®] (GMS) and for what claims are your feeder calves approved.

As a producer, your time is

valuable. There are so many things that need your attention. You need to choose the things that *must* be done. Compare those to the things that would be *beneficial* to get done, and then prioritize that list.

Payback

How do you prioritize your to-do list? Let's look at the monetary investment to enroll in AngusLink.

The average enrollment size is around 300 head. Age and Source, GMS enrollment, and the radio frequency identification (RFID) ear tag will cost \$3.25 per head. We have seen some calves receive approximately \$45 more per head this year at some of the sales when they had Age, Source and a GMS. That would mean those calves would have received approximately \$41.75 more than other calves that were not enrolled in Age and Source and did not have GMS numbers.

Can you tell me a better way to spend \$3.25 to get more than \$40 back from your investment? While any investment carries risk, this is one investment that more than 85% of the time yields a better return than the \$3.25 investment you made to enroll your calves.

Help me understand why more people do not take advantage of this fantastic opportunity. More than 85% of the time, you will win more money than you spend. It takes about an hour of your time to complete the enrollment.

Is anyone listening? If you can hear me and want to take advantage of this opportunity, call the Association's Commercial Programs Department at 816-383-5100. Ask for Sarah, Rachel, Jennifer or myself to hear about the benefits of the GMS and AngusLink. Talk to you soon, because I know you are listening! |

Editor's note: Ginette Gottswiller is the Association's director of verification services.