

ASSOCIATION LINK

New program promotes awareness to the consuming public

Most of us would agree we take a lot of things for granted. The conveniences and comforts of modern technology, our health, the ones we love and, maybe most importantly, the privilege of living in a free country. Being able to live and work on a farm or ranch is something most of us take for granted every day.

For years beef producers have taken the consuming public for granted. Educating consumers about the safety, healthfulness and delicious taste of beef always has been someone else's job. Years of flat-to-declining demand for beef products is the wake-up call this industry has been receiving for more than 10 years — but has refused to answer.

Most consumers don't know agriculture is the nation's largest employer, with more than 22 million people working in some phase of it, from growing food and fiber to selling products in the supermarket.

The majority of U.S. consumers know little about the origin of their food or how it is produced. Frankly, many of them don't care. They feel it is the producer's job to provide a safe, wholesome beef product — no questions asked. They take for granted the safety and abundance of this nation's food supply.

As the world's largest beef breed organization, the American Angus Association is committed to playing a key leadership role in the beef industry. The Association's mission statement reads:

"To provide programs, services and leadership to enhance the genetics of the Angus breed, broaden its influence within the beef industry, and expand the market for high-quality beef worldwide."

This statement, along with the 10 long-range goals set forth by the Association's Board of Directors in 1997, shows the commitment Angus breeders have to improving their business, their marketplace and ultimately their industry. More specifically, long-range goal No. 10 is to "keep the membership informed of outside influences that affect the well-being of the Angus industry."

While there are many influences of which producers should be aware, one of the most critical is consumer awareness of and, ultimately, consumer demand for beef. If not addressed by more industry groups and individual producers, the lack of consumer understanding of the beef business and beef products will continue to have a negative effect on demand — now and in the future.

In June the Association's Board of Directors approved a proposal presented by staff to launch the PACE Program. The purpose of PACE, which stands for Public Awareness/Consumer Education, is to encourage Angus breeders to increase their awareness of consumer issues and to make an effort in their states and local areas to educate consumers about the safety and wholesomeness of beef.

Because you are in the beef business, educating your customers — consumers — is your job. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB) spend millions of dollars every year administering programs and developing materials to spread the good word about beef. However, those efforts can be multiplied if producers across the United States pitch in for the cause. In short, it's time we start building demand for our product.

The PACE program will include several projects:

- **A monthly Angus Journal column.** Here producers will find ideas, information and inspiration to help become better spokesmen for the industry.
- **Producer information kits.** The Association will have kits available for both members and nonmembers who want the facts on current beef and consumer issues. Breeders can receive a kit to help them prepare a presentation or just to "beef up" their general knowledge of industry issues. To receive a kit, call the Public Relations Department at the Association at (816) 383-5100.
- **Angus Journal editorial.** More editorial in upcoming issues will feature Angus breeders who are committed to increasing public awareness of beef and the effect that commitment has had on their operations. Other features will keep you current on industry trends and issues that contribute to PACE efforts. Many of these stories will be available online at www.angusjournal.com.
- **Angus Beef Bulletin editorial.** Commercial producers play an equally important role in this industry when it comes to raising public awareness and educating consumers about beef. Editorial copy highlighting these efforts will be included in the Angus Beef Bulletin, as well, and online at www.angusbeefbulletin.com.
- **Angus Journal Land Stewardship Award.** The goal of this award is to recognize

conservation-minded Angus producers and to communicate to others that this industry does care about the land, water, natural resources and wildlife. Efforts will be made to publicize this program and its annual winners to all U.S. farm media, as well as to editors of nontraditional farm publications, increasing not only awareness of beef producers' efforts to preserve the land, but also awareness of the Angus breed.

- **NJAA and the Directions newsletter.** Educating our young people about the importance of communicating with consumers and raising public awareness of the positive things in our industry is a critical step toward developing spokespeople for beef. PACE programs that include junior activities and events, plus articles about juniors making a difference with PACE, will appear in the Directions newsletter.
- **PACE on the Internet.** Information of interest to consumers will be available on the American Angus Association's Internet home page at www.angus.org. Links will also be established to other Web sites that provide useful information for PACE activities.

First EPD report based on ultrasound data released

One highlight of the Association's September Board meeting was the presentation of the first preliminary research report containing ultrasound-based expected progeny differences (EPDs) on 2,153 sires.

The analysis considered in excess of 30,000 observations. An analysis of all qualifying dams and nonparent cattle will be conducted and made available to those breeders who participated in the program.

The results of this research are exciting and indicate we are measuring the same traits in yearling bulls as we are in their 16- to 18-month-old steer counterparts at harvest. Research will continue in an effort to refine these procedures.

Bull Listing Service premiers online

The Commercial Relations Department's Bull Listing Service (BLS) went online Sept. 1, 1999, without a hitch. The site is part of the Association's Angus Resource Clearinghouse Network (ARCNet), which appears on the Association's home page (www.angus.org). The site was accessed more than 1,000 times in its first two weeks online.

For more information on the BLS and other ARCNet programs, see pages 20-22 or call

the Commercial Relations Department at (816) 383-5109.

Board approves records service for commercial cattlemen

At the September meeting of the American Angus Association Board of Directors, Association staff was authorized to implement a newly proposed Angus Beef Records Service. This program is designed to provide commercial producers with management tools to increase and enhance reproduction, production and end-product merit. Implementation will begin immediately.

As this service unrolls, look to future issues of the Angus Beef Bulletin for more information.

Certified Angus Beef Program honors producers

The Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Program honored three producers with Commitment to Excellence awards during its annual conference in Minneapolis Aug. 26-29. The Supply Development Team recognized the producers for their dedication to and cooperation with the CAB Program and the American Angus Association's Sire Evaluation Program. Each category has its own criteria, and CAB Program staff members determine the winners.

The **Seedstock Producer of the Year Award** recognizes a producer for working with the Program to improve and to expand the Angus genetic database by testing bulls for their progeny carcass merit. The producer evaluates a large number of a sire's progeny to improve the accuracy of expected progeny differences (EPDs). Information exchange is of critical importance.

This year's winner: Van Dyke Angus Ranch, Clarence Van Dyke, Manhattan, Mont.

The **Commercial Producer of the Year Award** is based on the ranch's efforts to cooperate and communicate while evaluating

registered Angus bulls for carcass merit through the Sire Evaluation Program. The winner takes time to ensure proper identification of sire groups, maintaining in-depth records on calves for Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR) reports.

This year's winner: Fastje Ranch, Robert Fastje, Wilsall, Mont.

The **Cooperating Feedyard of the Year Award** is based on a feedyard's ability to keep cattle in contemporary groups and to properly tag and identify them. The feeder informs CAB Program staff of harvest dates and plant destinations but also keeps excellent feeding records and closeout data, making every effort to ensure the success of the Sire Evaluation Program.

This year's winner: Alesch Farms, Doug Alesch, Marcus, Iowa.

For features on these three winners, see the Angus Beef Bulletin's electronic supplement to the October issue. It can be found online at www.angusbeefbulletin.com.

Angus breeders to gather for Annual Meeting and Super ROV

Members of the American Angus Association and other Angus enthusiasts will gather at the 1999 North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) Nov. 14-16 in Louisville, Ky. Delegates from 45 states and Canada are expected to attend the 116th Annual Meeting of the American Angus Association and the 1999 Super Roll of Victory (ROV) Angus Show.

The junior Angus heifer show will kick off the three-day event at 8 a.m., Sunday, Nov. 14, in the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center Coliseum. Later that day a report of the Association's ultrasound research project will be presented, followed by an open meeting at 2 p.m. that will spotlight the candidates for the Association's Board of Directors.

The female portion of the 1999 Super ROV

Angus Show will begin at 8 a.m., Monday, Nov. 15, in the coliseum. Dean Janssen, Bartonville, Ill., along with associate judge Jack Ward, Lagrange, Ind., will evaluate the Angus entries. The 2000 Miss American Angus will be crowned before the selection of the grand champion female.

That afternoon the Annual Meeting of the American Angus Association will be at 2 p.m. in the south wing of the conference center. A total of 336 elected delegates will conduct the business of the Association, as well as elect a president, vice president, treasurer and five new members to its Board of Directors. The day will conclude with a social hour at 6 p.m., followed by the Annual Banquet at 7 p.m.

The Super ROV Angus Show will conclude with the bull show in the coliseum, which begins at 8 a.m., Tuesday, Nov. 16.

Start making plans for the National Western

It's time to begin thinking about the 2000 National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver. Activities start Wednesday, Jan. 12, with the Angus junior heifer show at 8 a.m., followed by the female portion of the Super Roll of Victory (ROV) Show.

Thursday, Jan. 13, the focus shifts to the sale bulls with judging at 8 a.m., followed by a viewing of all sale consignments. The National Western Angus Sale will begin at 2 p.m. in the Beef Palace Auction Arena. The auction of the 2000 Angus Foundation Heifer Package will kick off the event.

The ROV bull show will start at 8 a.m., Jan. 14. Later that day the Angus Foundation Female Sale will be held at 3 p.m.

On Saturday the carload and pen show takes front stage in the yards, with judging beginning at 9 a.m.

