

## Age of transparency



Allen Moczygamba, CEO  
allenm@angus.org

We live in an age of transparency. It's a trite phrase, but it's true. I might add it's a good thing, especially for the beef industry. Allow me to explain.

Like almost everyone in today's modern world, I'm unable to function effectively without my mobile phone. In fact, I'd argue that without my iPhone, I wouldn't be able to perform my duties properly. Yet other than knowing that it's manufactured by Apple, I know nothing else about it. I don't know where it was made, anything about the manufacturing process or the name of the various people who were involved in creating my phone. To be honest, I don't really care.

However, a lot of folks do care about the source of their food — where it was grown or raised, how it was raised and who raised it. In fact, they'd even like to know the name of the person who raised it.

That's a good thing. For starters, I'd much rather be involved in an industry that folks care about and are interested in, rather than one that's simply a commodity business. Second, the beef industry has nothing to hide. In fact, we've got a great story to tell and should relish sharing it with others.

That's why I'm excited about the Association's USDA-approved Process Verified Programs (PVP) for the beef industry. The AngusSource® program now offers five comprehensive programs and services that will allow cattlemen an array of programs to document their management practices on any breed of cattle. That's not only good locally, but it also allows U.S. cattle producers to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

**AngusSource.** The base AngusSource program verifies the group age and source of your calves. Animals must be traceable to the ranch of origin and have records documenting the first calf born on the operation. An AngusSource-compliant radio frequency identification (RFID) tag will be required for enrollment.

**NHTC.** Non-Hormone Treated Cattle requires that cattle never receive any type of added hormones for their entire life cycle, but it does not include regulations on antibiotics or animal byproducts. Age-and-source enrollment through AngusSource is a requirement, as well as passing an on-site review/audit prior to the calves leaving the ranch of origin.

**AngusSource NE3.** AngusSource NeverEver3 requires the age-and-source verification plan along with no use of antibiotics, no hormone growth promotants and no feeding of animal byproducts. Like NHTC, in order to participate in AngusSource NE3, passing an on-site review/audit prior to the calves leaving the ranch of origin is required.

**AngusSource Cattle Care & Handling.** This program raises consumer confidence by documenting proper management techniques and demonstrating a commitment to quality within the beef industry. Age and source verification through AngusSource is a requirement, and the initial enrollment in Cattle Care & Handling will require an on-site review/audit.

**AngusSource Calf Management.** This program improves the confidence of the buyers of your cattle as you'll provide the documentation noting the preventative animal health program prior to delivery. This is an optional certification and will not be offered as a stand-alone program. Age-and-source verification is a requirement, along with a basic vaccination program including a clostridial, viral five-way and either *Pasteurella haemolytica* or *P. multocida* protection.

The AngusSource PVPs will be priced very competitively, with the base age-and-source enrollment fee of \$80 waived for producers who are members of the Association. Best of all, cattlemen will have their value-added programs managed by one of the most trusted organizations in the beef industry — the American Angus Association. So, if you're excited about the story you have to tell about your operation and the practices you employ on it, let the Association help you tell your story with AngusSource.

To learn more about AngusSource, see program director Ginette Gottswiller's "The Source" column in this issue and go to [www.angussource.com](http://www.angussource.com). |

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## AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506-2997;  
phone: 816-383-5100; fax: 816-233-9703  
Office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Central);  
website: [www.angus.org](http://www.angus.org)

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(see page 130 for a complete listing)

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Kevin Yon, president and chairman of the Board, South Carolina; cell: 803-622-4140; [kevin@yonfamilyfarms.com](mailto:kevin@yonfamilyfarms.com)  
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• Don Schiefelbein, treasurer, Minnesota; cell: 303-324-5149; [dschiefel@meltel.net](mailto:dschiefel@meltel.net)

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• Mike McCravy, Georgia; cell: 770-328-2047; [mmcattle@yahoo.com](mailto:mmcattle@yahoo.com)  
• Don Schiefelbein, Minnesota; cell: 303-324-5149; [dschiefel@meltel.net](mailto:dschiefel@meltel.net)  
• Mick Varilek, South Dakota; cell: 605-680-2555; [varilekangus@midstatesd.net](mailto:varilekangus@midstatesd.net)

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Terms expiring in 2020 — Jerry Connealy, Nebraska; phone: 308-544-6552; [jconnealy@gmail.com](mailto:jconnealy@gmail.com)  
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• James W. Henderson, Texas; cell: 940-585-6171; [jwhenderson@bradley3ranch.com](mailto:jwhenderson@bradley3ranch.com)  
• Dave Nichols, Iowa; phone: 641-369-2829; [dave@nicholsfarms.biz](mailto:dave@nicholsfarms.biz)

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