

# 130 Years Strong, Angus Reports Progress in FY 2013

*Year-end data point to technology advancements and sustaining growth for the Angus breed.*

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The American Angus Association reports another solid year for those who raise and benefit from Angus cattle. During the organization's 130-year history, demand for high-quality beef has never been stronger, and genetic selection technology is more comprehensive than ever before.

Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) announced a seventh consecutive record sales year, with one of the largest gains since the program began in 1978, and

Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) reports more cattlemen are rapidly adopting high-density genomic trait tests.

Most importantly, optimism is rising as cattlemen begin rebuilding their herds.

"The cattle business has faced some challenging times during recent years, but the industry is poised for growth and our producers are equipped to rebuild the nation's herd with leading Angus genetics," says Bryce Schumann, Association CEO. "Our members' dedication to quality genetics and their ability to build the most reliable database in the cattle business has kept the Angus breed strong."

The Association's fiscal year (FY) 2013 ended Sept. 30, with members registering nearly 289,000 animals. Individual states

that topped the list for Angus registrations were Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas and Oklahoma, respectively.

Year-end data also show that Angus breeders grossed more than \$265 million in reported sales from Oct. 1, 2012, to Sept. 30, 2013. Angus bull sales averaged \$4,398 per head, while Angus female sales averaged \$3,589 per head in reported sales; a rise of about 6%.

## Incorporating new technology

Angus breeders submit thousands of records every day to the Association headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo. The information is added to the organization's growing database, which currently houses records on approximately 20 million

animals on its servers. That computing power comprises the largest single-breed beef cattle database in the world and allows for the weekly release of expected progeny differences (EPDs) — a capability that facilitates more rapid and accurate herd improvement.

Genomic information is quickly becoming a significant component of the Association's performance data. Thanks to its subsidiary AGI, record numbers of Angus cattle have been tested using high-density genomic trait tests. In fact, results are now included in evaluations for more than 40,000 animals.

The uptake in this technology provides Angus breeders the opportunity to better characterize herd genetics and make dependable breed improvements. AGI processes DNA samples used for parentage verification, genetic-condition testing and the development of genomic-enhanced EPDs. In FY 2013, AGI processed more than 100,000 DNA samples.

"The past year has been a monumental one in terms of strengthening genomic data for the Angus breed," says Bill Bowman, AGI president and Association COO. "Research collaboration, improved technology and a growing number of test results have allowed for a more streamlined approach to EPD computation and the information we are able to provide breeders."

Producers are using advanced technology to access that information through their smartphones or mobile devices. Angus Mobile, a free app available to anyone with an interest in Angus cattle, provides access to AAA Login and other important Association services.

With more than 16,000 downloads, the application allows producers to submit herd records at the touch of a button, right from their barn or pasture.

"We're always looking for ways to increase convenience for members," Schumann says. "We will continue to improve recordkeeping systems and available technology for producers."

## Promoting the breed

The increased use of technology also pertains to the Association's efforts to promote the business breed. The organization added another vehicle to its suite of communications tools in FY 2013 — Angus Talk radio. The 30-minute program airs on SiriusXM Satellite Radio at 11 a.m. EST (10 a.m. CST) every Saturday morning,

**Table 1: Registrations categorized by number of animals recorded per member**

13,438 members registered 288,307\* animals.

Animals registered per member	% of animals recorded by category	No. of members in category	% of membership in category
1-10	10.93	8,770	65.26
11-19	8.45	1,689	12.57
20-49	18.01	1,694	12.61
50-99	16.94	702	5.22
≥100	45.49	583	4.34

\*An additional 515 nonmember imports were registered for a total of 288,822 animals registered.

**Table 3: Registrations and transfers processed by animal type**

	No. of registrations*	% of registrations	No. of transfers	% of transfers
Cows	154,952	53.65	77,632	48.60
Bulls	132,802	45.98	81,335	50.91
Steers	1,068	0.37	784	0.49
Total	288,822		159,751	

\*Of 288,822 registrations, 111,286 (38.53%) were stored electronically.

Source: American Angus Association Record of Business, 2013.

**Table 4: Registrations by breeding method**

Total calves recorded	288,822	
Calves produced by natural breeding	137,119	(47.48%)
Cows	76,460	(55.76%)
Bulls	59,959	(48.73%)
Steers	700	(0.51%)
Calves produced by artificial insemination*	151,703	(52.52%)
Cows	78,492	(51.74%)
Bulls	72,843	(48.02%)
Steers	368	(0.24%)
Active sires	21,604	
Bulls used naturally	18,754	(86.81%)
Bulls used by artificial insemination	2,850	(13.19%)

\*Of the calves produced by AI, 128,292 were registered with AI certificates.

**Table 5: No. sires categorized by number of progeny registered**

No. of calves	No. of sires	% of total sires
1	5,102	23.6
2-5	7,794	36.1
6-10	3,905	18.1
11-100	4,547	21.0
101-500	202	0.9
501+	54	0.3

The 288,822 calves registered in FY 2013 were sired by 21,604 bulls.

exclusively on Rural Radio, Channel 80. Angus Talk is hosted by Doug Medlock, the voice of *I Am Angus*®, and features timely discussion and commentary on the issues that matter most to cattle producers.

Angus television programs *The Angus Report* and *I Am Angus* continue to reach a growing audience, to the tune of about 5 million this year, thanks to viewers on RFD-TV and YouTube.

*Angus Journal* expanded its efforts to provide the most comprehensive Angus industry news, launching *Angus Journal Digital* and allowing the full edition of the Association's flagship publication to reach electronic subscribers two weeks earlier.

True to tradition, printed publications remain a staple in the cattle business. In FY 2013, the *Angus Journal* produced nearly 400 sale books for producers throughout the country.

Capping off the fiscal year for the *Angus Journal*, the *Angus Beef Bulletin EXTRA* was deemed the livestock industry's No. 1 newsletter (print or electronic) in the Livestock Publications Council Critique Contest. Among other wins, the *Angus Journal's* event coverage site for the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) symposium was named the livestock industry's No. 1 website.

Meanwhile, producers also generated more funds for advancing the breed through the Angus Foundation, the Association's nonprofit affiliate dedicated to advancing education, youth and research initiatives important to the long-term viability of the cattle business. The organization reports a record year in revenues, which exceeded \$2 million for the first time.

Generous donors and allied industry friends are to thank for the funds that will go toward advancing the Angus Foundation's mission. In FY 2013 alone, the Angus Foundation awarded more than \$225,000 in undergraduate and graduate student scholarships.

Additional details on the Foundation's activities and recognition of its supporters are provided in the Angus Foundation annual report inserted in the December 2013 issue of the *Angus Journal*.

### Supplying the brand

Success for the Angus breed continued through the supply chain in FY 2013. CAB achieved its seventh consecutive sales record, totaling 865 million pounds (lb.). That's up 54 million lb. from last year, one of the largest year-to-year gains in the branded beef program's history. In August, nearing the close of FY 2013, the brand sold 83 million lb. of product in a single month — a first for the brand.

Also promising is the fact that a record number of black-hided cattle have been accepted into the CAB brand. During FY 2013, CAB reported a 24.2% acceptance rate for cattle entering the processing plant.

“We have never in the history

of this program seen an acceptance rate of 24.2%,” says CAB Senior Vice President Brent Eichar. “That's the result of producers using the tools and good genetics available to them to make breeding decisions.”

Eichar also notes resources such as the GeneMax™ DNA test that predicts marbling and gain, and AngusSource® Genetic that adds value to Angus-sired

calves, both aid in the pursuit of supplying more CAB-branded cattle.

With these market trends, Angus producers — especially those focused on quality — are positioned to benefit from growing interest in Angus genetics from commercial cattlemen and growing consumer interest in the brand.

“These are exciting times to be in the cattle business, specifically, the Angus

business.” Schumann says. “We're looking forward to seeing what 2014 brings.”

To learn more about the Association's year-end highlights, visit [www.angus.org](http://www.angus.org) to access the 2013 annual report or episodes of *The Angus Report*.



**Editor's Note:** *Carrie Heitman is communications coordinator for the American Angus Association.*