



# Up Front

by **JOHN CROUCH**, executive vice president, American Angus Association

## Don't overlook the fundamentals

So many things are happening in the cattle industry at the current time that we sometimes just have to stop and refocus on what we are all about. The highly publicized ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to lift the ban on the importation of Canadian cattle has set into motion the pens and word processors of every agricultural scribe and even a few others who possess opinions on the benefit and disaster that the results will have on the beef industry.

I, for one, am happy that we have industry groups and spokespeople who focus entirely on the issues and sort out the best solutions for our industry. In a business as diverse as ours, consensus is sometimes difficult to achieve simply because no one solution may be best for every segment.

A famous Missouri politician was rumored to have said, "The most ordinary person could go down in history as a great statesman if he always voted for issues that did the most good for the most people." I have

a deep and abiding faith that, at the end of the day, things will be okay. In 10 years many of the things we are in a scrap about today won't seem very important. So, let's refocus on what we can do from a breeding, feeding, management and marketing standpoint to make our situation better — now and 10 years from now.

### Education is key

Realizing that our membership is diverse, with a large majority of Angus breeders recording fewer than 20 animals annually and several new breeders added each year, we can resolve to do a more thorough job of offering educational materials on basic genetic principles and production techniques to enhance their success. Sometimes even the most common practices, which seem mundane to experienced ranchers, present major obstacles to new breeders.



To this end, educational modules, available at [www.angus.org/anguseducation.html](http://www.angus.org/anguseducation.html), have been and will continue to be developed by your

Association relating to many aspects of the purebred business. Additionally, the *Angus Beef Bulletin*, bursting with new and exciting editorial content and success stories, has been expanded to six issues per year.

Furthermore, the American Angus Association, Angus Foundation and Colorado State University (CSU), in concert, will sponsor a pilot project called the Cattlemen's Boot Camp Oct. 20-21 at the CSU Agricultural Research, Development and Education Center (ARDEC) in Fort Collins, Colo. This hands-on, educational seminar will feature a broad array of speakers and teachers who will address such issues as

creating value in a cow herd and interpreting and using genetic tools and dollar values (\$Values).

Management practices and genetics that influence quality and yield grades will be examined. Breeding value as related to food value in dollars and cents will be discussed in a setting that promotes learning.

Animal science students at CSU will be involved in planning the event and in food preparation and catering as well.

The Cattlemen's Boot Camp will be tailored to a broad spectrum of producers, including both seasoned ranchers and producers who are new to the business. See page 14 in this issue of the *Angus Beef Bulletin* and [www.angus.org](http://www.angus.org) for details. President

Minnie Lou Bradley and I hope to see you there.

