



# Up Front

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

## Focus on the positives

The bitter winds of February, especially in the Northland, are biting and leave cattlemen with the notion that winter will never end. At the same time, farmers in South Georgia are busy preparing seedbeds for corn and soybeans, and thinking that before very long Coastal Bermuda will be ready for the first cutting of hay.

When these stockmen and farmers gather in the country café for coffee, favorite topics for discussion will involve the weather, politics and economics. There will be too much rain in certain areas, and not enough rain in others. Fertilizer and seed companies will be blasted for the prices they are charging.

Also discussed will be the price of calves at the local market, the cost of machinery, and the effect ethanol production is having on the price of corn and other feedstuffs. Furthermore, corn farmers are looking forward to a great year. Meanwhile, Southwestern Kansas feeders are looking to clear their inventory in the feedyards and get started on the next set of cattle.

And so goes the cycle each six to eight years. The law of supply and demand has never been more dramatically illustrated.

It seems that even though we seem to gratify ourselves when we talk about negatives, consideration and equal time should be devoted to the positive aspects of facts and issues that prevail in the industry.

### Unprecedented success

Those of us engaged in the beef cattle business have enjoyed almost a decade of unprecedented success, perhaps the best in modern history.

The demand for Angus seedstock that fulfill the requirements of a demanding commercial industry has never been stronger.

The demand for high-quality beef exceeds supply. According to the National Beef Quality Audit (NBQA), the international benchmark for quality is now *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) and USDA Prime.

As economic conditions improve and the standard of living increases

throughout the world, the demand for high-quality protein sources also increases. Export markets never before accessible to U.S. products are now opening.

The American beef supply is of the highest quality and is the safest source of beef in the world.

American Angus Association members and their commercial affiliates have access to the most far-reaching cattle improvement programs and marketing options the industry has to offer.

The Angus breed is on the cutting edge of research, education and youth development through the excellent work of the Angus Foundation.

Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) and Angus Productions Inc. (API) are working

full-time in support of the Angus advance.

API, through the *Angus Journal* and the *Angus Beef Bulletin*, provides Angus breeders and Angus affiliates not only world-class advertising media, but these publications are also a source of advances in current technology, effective management practices and success stories.

And finally, we live in America and are free to choose our own destiny.

So, when all is said and done, the worst serving of blackberry cobbler and ice cream I ever tasted was still pretty good. Spring is just around the corner and with it comes a rebirth of all that is good for people of the land. Enjoy!



## AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

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