



The Angus Link

by **JIM SHIRLEY**, director of commercial programs and vice president of industry relations, American Angus Association

Use your resources

Last night I filled up my pickup and paid almost \$3 per gallon for gasoline. I felt like Redd Foxx in the old TV series *Sanford and Son* — I thought I was going to have the big one. I realize there are parts of the country where gas costs considerably more, but I was still shocked at the cost.

Not to sound like an old fogey, I do remember gas at 29¢ per gallon and the occasional gas wars when you could get it for 19¢ per gallon. So, \$3 per gallon sure does get your attention.

I don't want to get into the reasons why gasoline costs what it does, but you start to think about ways to conserve at these prices. I think we will all agree that there's only so much of any natural resource to go around, and the more we use, the harder it becomes to find and the more expensive that resource is.

Lack of funding

You know, trying to get information on beef cattle production is a little the same way. At one time cattlemen could get plenty of help from land-grant universities' Extension services at no

direct cost. However, the funding for agriculture Extension in most states is under pressure, and many have cut back on personnel and programs.

There are private firms that will help with nutrition, animal health and other problems that face cattlemen. However, cost is involved.

When it comes to selecting seedstock and help with understanding genetic selection tools and a host of other production problems, there are still some resources that are available to you at no cost. These resources include American Angus Association regional managers and the Association *Sire Evaluation Report*.

Available resources

The Association has 13 regional managers throughout the country that are available to help commercial cattlemen. You can find the names, phone numbers and areas traveled by these gentlemen on page 91 of this issue of the *Angus Beef Bulletin*.

Association regional managers have a wealth of knowledge about the Angus breed and seedstock in your area. They

are also well-versed in the use of genetic selection tools such as expected progeny differences (EPDs) and the Association dollar value (\$Value) indexes. They are available to you at no cost and can be an invaluable resource when selecting seedstock to match your operation's needs. So if you have questions contact your regional manager; he will be happy to assist you.

The Association *Sire Evaluation Report* is published twice each year and lists Angus sires that meet certain requirements. In the fall 2006 report, there are 2,462 main sire evaluation listings, and 3,907 in the young sire supplemental listings. There are 17 different EPDs and five \$Values for which a bull may be characterized.

In addition to the listings, the beginning of the report contains a very useful guide that explains how to read the report and interpret the information provided.

The *Sire Evaluation Report* is available online at the Association Web site www.angussiresearch.com, on CD-ROM for a nominal fee, or a hard copy is available by contacting the Performance Programs Department of the Association.

Another free resource that is available to commercial cattlemen who use registered Angus bulls is the EPD update listing that is mailed out yearly. This listing includes all the sires that are presently owned by a producer and lists the EPDs and \$Values for those sires. This allows the producer to look at all his sires and their updated EPDs and

\$Values. This performance information may help in determining selection criteria for future sires.

Still another great resource provided free of charge to Angus breeders is the *Angus Beef Bulletin*. This publication is printed five times per year and is filled with useful and educational information on a variety of timely topics. The articles in the *Angus Beef Bulletin* are archived and can be viewed online at www.angusbeefbulletin.com. The archive is searchable by month of publication and by keyword.

In addition to these resources, commercial cattlemen who use registered Angus bulls can use the AngusSource® program to capture true value for their Angus-sired feeder calves and replacement females. AngusSource is a USDA Process Verified Program (PVP) for Angus-sired calves that documents source, group age and a minimum of 50% Angus genetics. It is easy to use the program. However, a producer must keep records that prove the date of the first calf born, that the cattle are sired by a registered Angus bull, and are born and raised on the ranch of origin. If you would like more information, please contact the AngusSource program at (816) 383-5100 or angusource@angus.org.

The Association offers these resources to commercial producers at little or no cost to help them produce beef with more potential profit. Now, if I could only find someone to help me find gasoline at a price that wouldn't cause me to go into cardiac arrest.



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