



# The Angus Link

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

## Follow Through with AngusSource

I enjoy playing golf, and as summer is beginning to wind down, I look back on another disappointing year on the links. I never took up the game until I was in my 40s, and I use that as my excuse for being a mediocre golfer. The truth of the matter is that the only hand-eye coordination I ever mastered was getting a fork full of food to my mouth.

Unfortunately, as I get older I find that I am not even as accurate at that as I used to be. But don't worry; you can tell by my girth I still get plenty of nourishment, and the cleaners take care of most of those mistakes.

As I was saying, the lack of coordination has been a real handicap in my attempt to master the game. A former friend said that my follow-through looked like a pretzel that was off-kilter. I don't know what he meant by that, but I do know that I never end up in the same position twice after I am finished with my swing.

None of this has anything to do with the beef business, but I did want to visit with you about following through. All too often, those of us in the production side

of the beef industry tend to do a good job of everything — right up to the end. Then, we fail to follow through and, like my golf swing, are disappointed with the results.

### Golf and marketing sometimes go hand in hand.

Most producers in the commercial cow-calf segment of the business feel uncomfortable when trying to sell something. So we do what is comfortable and market our calves the same way we have in the past. As we all know, our industry has changed, and it is never going to be the way it was a few short years ago. If we are going to remain in the business and be profitable in the future, we are going to have to change.

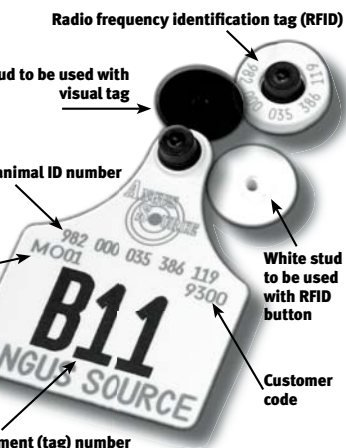
Marketing is one area that we must change, unless we want to sell commodity beef, and there is not a lot of profit potential doing that.

The American Angus Association has developed the AngusSource® program

to help you market your Angus-sired cattle and receive true value for them. This U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) process verified program (PVP) is an easy and effective way to verify age, source and Angus genetics and to pass that information on to the purchasers of your cattle. All you have to do is to follow through on a few simple steps.

### Simple steps

The requirements for the AngusSource program are quite simple. To be eligible for the program, cattle must be sired by a registered Angus bull that is properly transferred into the ownership of the farm or ranch that is enrolling the cattle, enrolled by the farm or ranch of origin and have known group age. The



producer must keep calving records that document the age of the oldest calf and have management practices that allow for the identification of cattle that are Angus-sired.

The important point here is that when you buy a registered Angus bull you must be sure to follow through and see that the seller transfers that bull into your ownership. It is the responsibility of the seller to do this and to pay for

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the transfer. There is no reason not to have your bulls transferred into your ownership. If you already own bulls that are not transferred to you, contact your seedstock supplier to have the bulls transferred.

Also, you need to follow through with simple recordkeeping to document the age of the oldest calf. Other records, such as bull turn-out dates and the number of cows with each bull or group of bulls, is helpful but not necessary.

The steps to enroll in AngusSource are as follows:

1. Become a producer participant.  
Download the AngusSource Producer Participant Enrollment form at [www.angussource.com](http://www.angussource.com) or request one by calling AngusSource at (816) 383-5100. These forms must be completed and returned via fax or mail to AngusSource.
2. Enroll calves/order tags. After returning the completed enrollment forms, enroll calves (either feeder calves or replacement females) by calling AngusSource. Provide enrollment information to AngusSource and submit any required records. Choose a tag option. For \$1 per head, receive a full-sized laser-ink printed visual ear tag with a customized in-herd management number. A radio frequency identification (RFID)-matched pair (visual tag and an electronic tag) is available for \$3.25 per head.  
Regardless of which option you order, the cost of the tag is the only cost of the program. Tags will be delivered 7-10 business days after enrollment is processed. Tag only those calves enrolled in AngusSource.
3. Print/customize documents.  
AngusSource documents are available for each set of enrolled cattle. Participants can access, customize and print documents online at [www.angussource.com](http://www.angussource.com) or by calling AngusSource at (816) 383-5100.

If marketing information is included when you customize your marketing document, the document will be activated on the AngusSource Web site for 90 days prior to sale date and will be e-mailed to more than 425 potential buyers. Participants can print the documents to present to potential buyers and give to livestock auction markets.

Buyers of cattle enrolled in AngusSource cattle may request documents by contacting the AngusSource program if they were not provided at the time of purchase.

### **Full marketing value**

I know at first this may seem like a complicated and difficult process, but it really isn't. Most producers already keep the required records and have the necessary management practices in place to qualify for the program. The AngusSource personnel in our office will work with you to get your cattle

enrolled and your marketing documents completed. So, in fact, all you have to do is decide that you want to receive true value for your cattle and then follow through with the program.

Unfortunately, many producers go through with the enrollment process and then fail to follow through and customize the marketing document, thus they do not get the full marketing value of the program.

I do want to mention that this is a marketing program and not a tagging program. Therefore, some producers will not qualify. However, for most producers who use Angus sires, this is the easiest and most cost-efficient way to pass on valuable information about your cattle to the purchaser. Because this is a marketing program, and some thought and time is required to complete the process, it is

advisable to start the program several weeks prior to actually needing the tags.

Well, there you have it — a program that will help you receive true value for your cattle. All you have to do is to give some thought to marketing of your feeder cattle or replacement females, and follow through. I only wish it was that easy to improve my golf game.

