

# Another Successful Session

*Producers attend Cattlemen's Boot Camp at OSU, Stillwater.*

*Story & photos by*  
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Nearly 80 progressive cattle producers attended a Cattlemen's Boot Camp Dec. 18-19, 2006, at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in Stillwater, Okla. The American Angus Association and Angus Foundation sponsored the Boot Camp in partnership with OSU. This was the fourth Boot Camp sponsored by the Association and Foundation. Global markets, reproductive efficiency, consumer expectations, herd nutrition and end products were just some of the topics covered during the two-day session that included a session comparing carcass differences.

## **Slate of speakers**

Twig Marston, Kansas State University (K-State) Extension beef

**Right:** Mark Johnson, OSU livestock judging coach (right) explains phenotypic differences in a group of bulls during the Angus Skills Lab. One workshop focused on visual appraisal, while participants later learned about evaluating animals using genetic selection tools.

specialist, kicked off the program, talking to the producers about how to produce the end product with increased efficiencies. He stressed that calf survivability and growth, reproduction, and cow maintenance costs were the traits that producers should emphasize.

Marston encouraged producers to use selection tools provided by the Association to make advancements in their herds. "You have to have faith in the data. The data does not lie," he told the producers.

Brad Morgan, OSU meat scientist, discussed consumer expectations and the most recently released National Beef Quality Audit (NBQA). According to the

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2005 NBQA, lack of consistency and uniformity is the biggest concern of the consumer. Other areas of concern include oversized portions and excess fat. Morgan urged producers to keep consumer preferences in mind when producing beef.

Deb VanOverbeke, OSU meat scientist, addressed quality grade, yield grade and economic differences between carcasses during two different sessions. She told the group that grading is a determinant for

value, and she demonstrated the differences in grades. Attendees had the opportunity to see two different carcasses and realize the economic differences between a low-yielding carcass vs. a high-yielding carcass.

Mark McCully, Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) director of supply development, discussed brands and the importance branded beef programs have played in the industry.

Body condition score (BCS) and its effects on productivity were topics covered by Glenn Selk, OSU animal scientist. BCS is the major factor in rebreeding cows, Selk says, and an optimal BCS of 5 or 6 at calving will help promote rebreeding.



**ANGUS**  
**SKILLS LAB**



Dan Stein, OSU graduate student, demonstrates how to load a breeding syringe (above) and how semen travels through the reproductive tract. The demonstration was part of the Angus Skills lab, an interactive session preceding the Boot Camp.



# Cattlemen's BOOT CAMP

OSU Extension beef cattle specialist David Lalman presented four steps to an effective cow nutrition program: 1) determine nutrient requirements, 2) determine nutrients available from forage, 3) determine supplemental needs, and 4) evaluate nutrient sources.

Derrell Peel, OSU ag economist, presented an economic outlook on live cattle and boxed beef, noting a higher-than-usual Choice-Select price spread.

Ty Groshans, Association assistant director of commercial programs, discussed creating value in the beef industry. He offered the AngusSource® program as one way seedstock producers can create value for their commercial bull buyers.

AngusSource, a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Process Verified Program (PVP) that documents age, source and genetics, requires calves be sired by registered Angus bulls.

Prior to the Boot Camp, an Angus Skills Lab was conducted for Association members. Basic information was presented about registering and transferring cattle, submitting performance information, phenotypic evaluation, artificial insemination (AI), identification (ID) systems and chute handling systems.



**Above:** Boot Camp participants met in the OSU Food & Ag Products Center (FAPC) meats lab where Bob Kropp (left) and Deb VanOverbeke discussed the economic differences between two carcasses. The two carcasses were split, with one half fabricated to show the various cuts and waste trim.



**Left:** VanOverbeke explains the economic differences between cuts from a premium-Choice and Select carcass, showing why there is a \$181.50 premium for the strip loin from the premium-Choice carcass.



David Lalman, OSU Extension beef specialist, discusses nutritional needs of the cow herd.



At the end of the first day of Boot Camp, participants were split into groups to form fictitious ranches and to select bulls after learning about genetic selection tools such as expected progeny differences (EPDs) and dollar value indexes (SValues). Here, Mike Switzer, Leedey, Okla., and Pat Hooks, Texhoma, Okla., study a battery of 10 bulls before selecting their top choices.



