

Association Link

compiled by

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Cattlemen's Boot Camp

The Events & Education Department will host two boot camps this fall — one in September in Florida and one in October in Oklahoma.

Sponsored in part by the Angus Foundation, Cattlemen's Boot Camp is a day-and-a-half event in which the American Angus Association partners with a university to provide knowledge on aspects of the beef industry, from production to marketing.

Open to all beef producers, the boot camps will be Sept. 21-22 with the University of Florida in Marianna and Oct. 15-16 with Oklahoma State University at Stillwater. Registration deadlines are Aug. 25 for the Florida boot camp and Sept. 30 for the Oklahoma boot camp. Registration is \$75 per person and covers meals and materials. Registration will be available online at www.angus.org/EventRegistration/default.aspx or by contacting the Events and Education Department at 816-383-5100.

Register now for the Nebraska Angus Tour

The 2015 Nebraska Angus Tour will be Aug. 20-22. This year's tour will feature southeast Nebraska, with visits to several Angus ranches, local ag companies and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The tour, entitled "Explore Nebraska ... Angus Country," will showcase a large number of Angus enterprises that encompass the state. To learn more about the tour, find hotel information and to register for the event, visit www.nebraskaangus.org.

Association seeks CEO

The American Angus Association Board of Directors announced that it will work with Witt/Kieffer, an executive search firm out of Oakbrook, Ill., to identify candidates for the organization's CEO position. The company specializes in executive-level recruitment for a wide array of industries and organizations.

More specific information regarding the application process will be made available in coming days. Visit the Newsroom at www.angus.org for the most current information.

Angus Association announces updates to \$Values

The American Angus Association, through Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI), updated the economic assumptions for its suite of dollar value indexes (\$Values) in July, rather than the traditional December period, to avoid disruptions or significant changes during seasonal selection and marketing activities.

"Our selection indexes are a very useful tool for our members to help weigh traits most important to their commercial customers, and those indexes depend on certain economic assumptions," explained Dan Moser, AGI president and Association director of performance programs. Cattlemen may have noticed changes in \$W, \$F and \$B of their bulls when those assumptions were updated July 10 to more accurately reflect market conditions.

Selection indexes allow cattlemen to make directional change in several traits at the same time, explains Tonya Amen, AGI director of genetic services. "An index may be challenging to develop, but the end result is easy to use in a multi-trait approach."

\$Values are estimates of how future progeny of each sire are expected to perform, on average, compared to progeny of other sires in the database if the sires were randomly mated to cows and if calves were exposed to the same environment.

Currently, the Association's suite of \$Values includes weaned calf value (\$W), feedlot value (\$F), grid value (\$G), beef value (\$B) and cow energy value (\$EN).

"What are the feed and other input costs? What are the revenue streams from the sale of fed cattle or weaned calves? The prices on those things are all dynamic," Moser says. "Updating the economic assumptions allows us to more accurately describe the potential profitability differences between animals and improve how producers identify the genetics that best fit their operations."

\$Values on individual animals may be viewed at www.angus.org. Members and affiliates can also access \$Values through the organization's online management system, AAA Login.

Initiative to engage future cattle producers

Applications are available online (www.angus.org/Performance/Documents/FASEnrollmentForm.pdf) to enroll in Future Angus Stockmen, a program launched by the Association to embrace the next generation of cattlemen through learning opportunities, while building a bond with the Angus breed and its member-driven organization.

Geared toward college-age or recent graduates who want to raise high-quality

Angus-based cattle, the program will offer educational opportunities that teach participants how to thrive in the cattle industry, social networking to connect them with fellow producers, and leadership development to instill an entrepreneurial spirit and drive to improve their businesses. Young people who enroll in the program will have the chance to apply for scholarships.

For more information, contact Ginette Gottswiller, director of commercial programs, at 816-383-5100 or ggottswiller@angus.org.



Annual meeting, convention Nov. 3-5

The 2015 Angus Means Business National Convention & Trade Show will be Nov. 3-5 at the Overland Park Convention Center in Overland Park, Kan. The three-day event will feature thought leaders from across the industry, including representatives from the seedstock, commercial and feeding sectors. Attend educational seminars, conduct Association business, listen to top-notch speakers and make connections at the conference.

Now in its second year, the event will feature expanded workshops that cover a variety of topics, including genomics, recordkeeping, herd management and performance tools. Industry-leading speakers, American Angus Association staff and other experts will be among the presenters.

A three-day trade show featuring allied industry partners will offer cattlemen a chance to browse through the latest in products and services available to the beef industry and to visit with Angus breeders from throughout the country.

Convention highlights will also include a pre-convention Kansas regional cattle tour hosted by the Kansas Angus Association Nov. 2, an international genomics symposium and nationally known entertainment.

For more information, see page 16 of this issue. Online registration, hotel and travel information, an updated schedule, and exhibitor information are available at www.angusconvention.com.

Century Award applications due Sept. 1

The American Angus Association initiated the Century Award to recognize its members and their families who

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AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION®

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Industry appointments — **CAB Board**, **Dwight 'Kip' Palmer**, Palmer Food Services, 900 Jefferson Rd., Rochester, NY 14623; office: 585-424-3210; kpalmers@palmerfoods.com • **AGI Board liaison**, **Dr. Larry Kuehn**, U.S. Meat Animal Research Center, P.O. Box 166, Clay Center, NE 68933; office: 402-762-4352; larry.kuehn@ars.usda.gov • **Foundation Board**, **Curtis Long**, 2110 NW State Route 52, Butler, MO 64730; cell: 660-200-5945; vepperson@butlerdoctor.com

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have been in continuous production of registered-Angus cattle for at least 100 years. Award recipients will be recognized at the Association's Annual Awards Banquet.

Visit www.angus.org to apply before the Sept. 1 deadline or for more information.

Low-density genomic tests available

In addition to the previously available high-density genomic tests (HD50K for Angus from Zoetis and GGP-HD for Angus from GeneSeek), low-density options are now available. These new tests allow animals to have genomically enhanced

EPDs at a lower cost, with nearly identical accuracy. The i50K for Angus from Zoetis and GGP-LD for Angus from GeneSeek can be ordered from your AAA Login account. For more information, see "By The Numbers" on page 68 of the July *Angus Journal*, available by Back Issue Search at www.angusjournal.com.

AGI blog

AGI staff have established a blog page to share information on timely topics. Short, informative articles on performance programs, genomic testing and other subjects are posted at angusgenetics.wordpress.com. If you have ideas for a blog post topic, send your suggestion to Tonya Amen at tamen@angus.org.

Mexico hosts World Angus Secretariat

The Mexican Angus Association is hosting the World Angus Secretariat Oct. 12-25, with activities in Chihuahua, Durango and Sinaloa. The event will feature the Secretariat's biennial meeting, which will include the latest breed information and technological advances. Participants will also have opportunity to tour the region's locales and prized breeding stock. For more information, visit <http://worldangussecretariat.com.mx/homeing.html>.

Custom Cattle Tags offers affordable ID

Cattle producers looking for affordable ways to identify their herd should visit www.customcattletags.com, a service provided by the American Angus Association. Anyone can order ear tags, applicators, syringes and accessories.

Custom Cattle Tags provides high-quality, low-cost, customized ear tags, blank tags and prenumbered tags for cattle producers across the United States.

BIF wraps up in Biloxi

Mississippi State University and the Mississippi Extension Service hosted the 47th Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Convention June 9-12 at the Beau Rivage Casino and Hotel in Biloxi, Miss. The event draws a wide audience each year, ranging from breed association professionals and cattle producers to researchers and industry representatives.

Industry-leading education and discussions on the latest scientific advancements in the beef industry were at the forefront of the three-day event.

Angus Media provides complete online coverage of BIF meetings and events at its event coverage website www.bifconference.com. There you'll find summary articles from each session, audio recordings, proceedings papers, and PowerPoint presentations given by speakers, as well as video interviews conducted at the convention and announcements of award winners. Topics covered at this year's convention include rebuilding the nation's cow herd, sustainability in the beef business and the latest genomic tools to aid cattle producers in selection decisions.

Throughout the conference, BIF honors cattle producers who exemplify

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its mission to improve the efficiency, profitability and sustainability of beef production. This year, Angus producers topped the coveted Seedstock and Commercial producer of the year categories.

Woodbury Farms, Quenemo, Kan., was honored with the 2015 BIF

Commercial Producer of the Year award. McCurry Angus Ranch, Burrton, Kan., was recognized as the 2015 Seedstock Producer of the Year.

For more information on these ranches and other award winners, including those presented the BIF Pioneer Award, Continuing Service Award and Ambassador

Award, as well as students recognized with the Roy A. Wallace and Frank Baker memorial scholarships, see the Awards page at www.BIFconference.com.

Keeping it current

What's in a data report? Years of historical feedback will say a lot. Mark

McCully will agree. As vice president of production for the brand, he often takes time to analyze spreadsheets that show where CAB has been, where it is and where it's projected to go.

With the brand established in its 37th year, it could seem there is little to report. On the contrary, McCully regularly fields questions about CAB sales and points out that sometimes a rancher may not be aware of how much has changed since they last asked.

McCully's major take-home message when discussing the brand with cattlemen is this: In spite of fed-cattle numbers being down, the brand is holding its own when it comes to certified numbers. The explanation is in the quality.

"We've got acceptance rates 1.2 percentage points over last year," he shares. "We're at 26.6% for the fiscal year. That's what's keeping us in the game."

A shortage in beef supply (mostly still due to lingering effects of drought) can mean loyal customers not receiving what they demand from the market. Instead, cattle grading at high levels of USDA Premium-Choice and Prime leave consumers with the taste they want.

"When we look at the federally-inspected harvest and then the total steer and heifer harvest, seeing that they're down 7% and 6.5%, respectively, those are big numbers, so even folks that maybe do know beef supplies are tight are maybe surprised at how much we are off," he says.

On a fiscal year basis, the brand faced approximately a million fewer fed cattle than a year ago. Because of high grading, the CAB certified head count is only down 100,000 head, or 3.5%.

"Then you have to ask, 'How far off are we in terms of CAB sales (commissioned sales)?' and you see that through May, we are only off 0.8%, or an overall 4 million pounds, roughly," he says. "I think that is pretty amazing."

As an industry, perhaps there was a waiting period. The signals were there, but the reality of reinventing genetics in a cow herd can be a slow boat to turn.

The good news is we're here, McCully says. "So much has changed in the last two to four years that if your perspective is that of 10 years ago, even five, you can be pretty surprised at the quality level that's out there now."

As the waters continue to shift, McCully says cattlemen have reason to take stock in where the industry is headed.

"It's exciting for when cattle inventories rebound," he says. Emphasizing where data sits now and is projected, "I don't expect our acceptance rates to go the other way."