



Movin' Forward

by **BRYCE SCHUMANN**, CEO, American Angus Association

How far we've come

A couple of years ago, following nearly six months of meetings and input from our members, the American Angus Association Board of Directors approved the 2011 Long-Range Strategic Plan. This month I wanted to give you a progress report.

Member success

The strategic intent of the plan had the singular goal of increasing member success and profitability by:

- growing registered-Angus demand;
- increasing marketing and education efforts;
- fostering development and use of technology;
- leveraging entity resources and expertise; and
- growing industry leadership role of the Association and its entities.

I am happy to report that this intent led to the creation of four strategic initiatives now well-established within the Angus business — and they are

playing a central role in expanding demand for Angus genetics.

Reproductive trait data and inventory-based reporting. A key area outlined in the Association's Long-Range Strategic Plan focused on advancements in reproductive trait data and an inventory-based reporting system. Since the plan was introduced in 2011, the Association has released the heifer pregnancy expected progeny difference (HP EPD). This selection tool helps Angus breeders and their customers measure the chance of a sire's daughters becoming pregnant during a normal breeding season. Selection tools like the HP EPD can better identify animals with desirable reproductive ability and, thus, improve profitability.

This EPD now appears weekly alongside other maternal-trait EPDs and is developed using breeding records, pregnancy-check and calving data, and other measures.

As part of the Association's push to advance the breeding database, the Association introduced the

MaternalPlus™ program — a voluntary, inventory-based reporting system that allows breeders to track more reproductive trait data on their herd while boosting the Association's ability to create additional reproductive selection tools. Breeders submitting records through MaternalPlus also receive additional information at weaning time and can accurately record why a cow was culled, ensuring continued improvements within the cow herd.

Meanwhile, the Angus Foundation has continued its efforts to fund research that explores reproductive efficiency, as well as lifetime productivity. Ongoing efforts in this area will continue to foster the development of exciting and helpful new selection tools well into the future.

Education & Culinary Center. Certified Angus Beef LLC's (CAB's) Education & Culinary Center formally opened its doors in February 2012. Since that time, the 7,000-square-foot facility has played host to dozens of educational seminars and workshops for CAB licensees and industry organizations. The facility offers an economy-scale kitchen and meat-fabrication area, as well as classrooms and meeting space. It now plays a central role in bolstering our capabilities to promote our product and advance the interests of the brand.

Angus TV. Since the official launch of Angus Television in October 2011, Angus TV programming has reached more than 4 million viewers, enabling our organization unmatched capabilities

in communicating with the industry and sharing the good news of Angus.

Our online viewership of Angus TV channels on YouTube and Vimeo will surpass 2 million lifetime views this year, ranking our content among the most-watched in the cattle business.

Commercial DNA tools. The GeneMax™ test, which was developed as a direct result of the Long-Range Strategic Plan, equips producers of commercial Angus cattle with the ability to make precise keep/cull decisions when it comes to managing and marketing their cattle.

The test, which evaluates marbling and postweaning performance in high-percentage Angus cattle, enables producers to identify the highest-value replacement females before they invest unnecessary time and money in the wrong heifers; make better breeding decisions; and leverage GeneMax results as a proven mark of quality when they're marketing their cattle.

In addition, the test helps feedyards manage risk by feeding cattle with more predictable gain and grade potential.

GeneMax also enables producers to assign specific sires to tested animals — at no additional cost. To enable sire match, potential sires must be tested using the Zoetis HD 50K genomic test and be registered with the American Angus Association.

We're proud of the progress we've made in the last two years but recognize that much more work remains to ensure the growth of demand for Angus cattle.



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