

The Source

by **GINETTE KURTZ**, *American Angus Association*

What a difference a year makes!

Technology, weather, kids and our operations all continue to change and move forward much faster than we do sometimes.

My dad and brother decided they needed to get on board with technology, so they purchased a guidance system for their operation. If you can't turn on a computer, **why** do you think you can just pop a guidance system in a tractor and it will drive itself around? You need some guidance to know what to purchase, how to set it up and, most of all, how to run the thing.

AngusSource® offers guidance every step of the way when you decide to enroll your calves in our age- and source-verification program. You begin by filling out our two-page enrollment form and sending in copies of your calving records for the group of calves you want to enroll. After you complete your phone training and enrollment, we order one tag for every calf enrolled. Sometimes we must do an onsite visit prior to issuing your tags, so always plan ahead and start your enrollment early.

Once you receive the program-

compliant AngusSource or Gateway tag, you must tag the calves before they leave your operation. Don't send the tags along to the sale barn or the feedyard and expect them to tag your calves. When you place the tag in the ear of the calf, the enrollment is complete.

We issue you a Verification Certificate that has at minimum source and group age listed along with the lot code that is printed on each program-compliant tag we issue for the enrollment group. This means you can literally sell one calf at a time, or 10 calves today and 20 calves next week.

You choose when and where you will market your calves.

We provide marketing assistance by posting a marketing document online that gives additional information about your calves that you provide — like what date and sale facility you will use or if you want to sell the calves directly from your operation. Buyers like to know how many steers or heifers you will be selling along with their weight, weaning date, vaccinations and feed rations, in addition to whether the calves will

qualify for natural or if you have any past carcass history.

AngusSource provides buyers with the sires' individual expected progeny differences (EPDs) on the unofficial verification certificate or an average of all the sires' EPDs on the official certificate. The marketing document is emailed to more than 600 people who have signed up to know when and where AngusSource calves are selling.

If you would rather feed out your own calves and market them directly to a packer, we offer a feedyard program. It is another enrollment and not part of your ranch enrollment that was described above. Just because you enroll your calves in AngusSource and feed them

out does not mean you can show up at the packing plant and expect the age-verified premium that is offered.

Sometimes a little guidance is all you need to travel a new road. Explore what AngusSource can do for your calf-marketing program.

Editor's Note: *Ginette Kurtz is quality manager of AngusSource for the American Angus Association.*



