



The Source

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Your questions answered

Spring is almost here. In addition to the warmer weather, for many of you spring means the beginning of calving season. For AngusSource[®] spring means a flurry of activity as producers call to ask questions about program requirements or begin the enrollment process for their new calf crop.

I'd like to take this opportunity to give you answers to the top five questions the AngusSource Department receives this time of year. Hopefully, this information will answer some of the questions you have been asking yourself.

If you have questions that aren't answered below, please feel free to give us a call. Information about the program can also be found online at www.angussource.com. We look forward to working with you in the coming year and wish you a warm and rewarding calving season!

Q: Can I enroll online?

A: No. You can download the *AngusSource Producer Participant Manual* and enrollment forms from our web site at

www.angussource.com. These forms must be completed and sent to AngusSource before we can begin calf enrollment.

We will enroll your calves through a phone interview. You will also need to submit copies of your calving records, as well as semen receipts, bull lease agreements and bred-female receipts if that applies to your operation.

In many cases, your enrollment can be processed following these two steps.

Some producers will require an on-site review prior to their enrollment being completed. An on-site review is basically a herd visit. AngusSource pays the cost of the reviewer, who will set up a time to visit you at your ranch to review your management practices and records.

We encourage you to enroll at least three months prior to marketing to ensure that if an on-site review is required it can be scheduled and completed in time for you to receive your tags.

Q: How much does it cost to enroll?

A: The cost to enroll in AngusSource is \$50 per group of calves you wish to

enroll. If you would like to divide your spring calves into two enrollment groups, there is a \$50 fee for each group.

In addition, you must pay for the tags. We currently have four different tag options. Our visual identification (ID) program tag (required) is \$1 per head. Our radio frequency ID (RFID) matched-pair set is \$3.25 per head. The visual "840" numbered tag is \$1 per head, and the "840" RFID matched-pair set is \$3.25 per head. "840" tags are assessed a \$10 processing fee.

If you enroll fewer than 10 head there are additional charges. AngusSource pays for standard shipping of your tags, and tags are custom-printed free of charge.

Q: Can I enroll my calves before they are born?

A: The answer to this question is yes, and no. You cannot enroll your calves in the program until the first calf is on the ground. However, after the first calf is born you can enroll the remaining calves prior to their birth.

At minimum, the first calf must be born so that we have a record and a "group age" (date first calf was born) for the enrollment group. All calves enrolled together in the program then share that group age.

If you enroll your calves prior to the completion of calving season, we will use the number of cows exposed and other management records to determine how many tags can be issued and how many calves can be enrolled. We issue one tag per cow exposed.

Producers who want to use the AngusSource tag as their ranch tag often enroll after the first calf is born. Keep in mind that it takes 8-10 business days for you to receive your tags once the enrollment is complete, so you may need to use an alternative form of ID for a few weeks.

Enrolling prior to the completion of calving does pose some challenges. Often, producers will estimate a percentage of death loss. If you end up with more calves than you originally enrolled, they will have to be enrolled as another lot. Another \$50 enrollment fee would be assessed.

Using AngusSource tags as a ranch tag means increasing the chance calves will lose the tag prior to shipment. Remember, if a calf loses the tag it is no longer in AngusSource unless a replacement is issued. Replacement tags are issued on a case-by-case basis, and there are additional fees.

If you pasture your bull with the cows for longer than six months, there are additional requirements. All calves that you want to enroll must be on

the ground before enrollment. You need to keep a record of individual birth dates, and calves must have individual identification to be eligible for AngusSource.

So to recap, the answer is yes and no. With a defined calving season you are able to enroll prior to completion of calving season, but we strongly suggest you wait until all calves are born. This ensures an accurate head count and reduces the chances of a calf losing its AngusSource tag.

Q: Will I get a premium for my calves?

A: We try to be honest with producers about their opportunity to add value to their calves through enrollment in AngusSource. Currently some packers are paying as much as \$35 per head for calves that are age-verified through a program like AngusSource.

This premium paid to feeders has increased their demand for age-verified feeder calves. The Superior Livestock Auction data that I shared with you in the January *Angus Beef Bulletin* showed that calves enrolled in AngusSource brought \$3.37 per hundredweight (cwt.) more than non-verified calves.

Bottom line, the number of calves you market and the quality of those calves will still play a large role in determining their value. AngusSource alone cannot guarantee you a premium.

Q: My cattle are Angus. Will they qualify?

A: AngusSource requires that all calves enrolled in the program be sired by a registered and properly transferred Angus bull. Calves out of AI sires, leased bulls, and purchased bred females can qualify for the program, but additional records are needed.

If you use commercial Angus bulls, their calves do not qualify. If you have other breeds of bulls on your operation, their calves will not qualify.

In order to be eligible, your cows must only be exposed to registered Angus bulls. The cows themselves do not need to be registered or Angus.

Remember, keeping that bull calf out of your favorite commercial cow to use for breeding will affect your eligibility for AngusSource.

If your bulls have not been transferred, we can work with you and your seedstock supplier to try to get that done. Keep in mind it may take time, and there is a cost for transfers.

So, plan ahead and begin your enrollment at least 90 days prior to when you would like to market your calves.