



# Up Front

by **JOHN CROUCH**, executive vice president, American Angus Association

## A bright future

The beginning of the new year is a time for renewal, a time for redirection and a time to anticipate new growth that always comes in the early spring. We have before us the birth of a bright, new year.

### Make an impact

In consideration of this change of atmosphere, it behooves us all to meditate and reflect on our lot in life and attitude toward the future. It is a time to determine what's important and what's not important in the grand scheme of things. Or, in the words of a popular commercial advertisement, it's time to determine what spice we will finally contribute to the knockwurst of life. Believe me, as one approaches maturity, some of the things that seemed to be of utmost importance earlier in life now seem only to be fleeting, trivial thoughts.

Those who were fortunate enough to attend the 121st Annual Meeting of the American Angus Association in Louisville, Ky., in November were treated to one of the most dynamic and

inspirational presentations in the storied history of the Association as Rick Rigsby, special assistant to the Texas A&M University head football coach and faculty member in the department of speech communication, addressed the audience at the Annual Banquet. His message was simple and profound.

It professed extending help and kindness to those in need as a matter of habit.

It proclaimed that no matter how tough things get, just have faith and they will get better.

Self worth is measured by how one deals with adversity.

The worth of our lives is not determined by society, but rather by effort put forth and by pride taken in a job well done.

Rigsby talked of values, of dedication, of work ethic, of honesty and of integrity. Many virtues that are disappearing from today's society are alive and well in agriculture. People of the land hold tightly to the values and ideals on which America was founded,

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**“Good is not good enough  
if it can be better.**

**Better is not good enough  
if it can be best.”**

*—Rick Rigsby*

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and for that we can be eternally thankful.

He went on to express that we should be more concerned with making an impact rather than with just making an impression. There is no substitute for the impact made by hard work and dedication. Rigsby said, “Good is not good enough if it can be better. Better is not good enough if it can be best.” What a simple and profound statement!

So, as my wife, Judy, and I journeyed through the beautiful hills and fertile valleys of Indiana, Illinois and our home state of Missouri, it was a wonderful

time to reflect on our current position in the cattle industry.

### Making the best better

Beef production is certainly a vast industry with many beliefs and issues challenging its future, regardless of organizational ties or differing views. But the key character marking those involved in providing protein to the world is the solid values that run through the veins of the trade. Those values of being honest, being helpful and having faith must come from a unified industry.

So, instead of being concerned over minor differences that will seem relatively unimportant in due time, let us enjoy the peace that comes from the realization of just how fortunate we are to be where we are. Let us unite in a common cause, express our gratitude for our good fortune, and pull together like a well-matched, six-horse team of Percherons in the pursuit of excellence. We *can* make the best better. We *can* make a difference.

