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Association Commentary

by Dr. Bob Hough, Executive Secretary

This year's bull selling season has been nothing short of phenomenal! The trust commercial producers have put in our genetics is most gratifying, and we can not thank them enough.

We do, however, think we have done some things to earn their business. The breed has not followed fads, but has remained science based. Being the original performance breed, Red Angus literally invented the submission of weaning weights on through Total Herd Reporting. Red Angus is not a flash in the pan, but a success story built on the conviction of 51 years of objective innovation and commercial orientation.

The lucky thing for commercial producers is the services just start with the purchase of Red Angus genetics. One of the first benefits is a complimentary one-year subscription to this magazine. We take special pride in the ARA Magazine in making it a useful tool to the commercial customers who receive it. That is why we focus on technical, management and marketing subjects instead of the breeder profiles found in typical breed journals. We get many compliments from commercial producers on how much they enjoy the magazine, and our response is just keep buying bulls and we'll keep sending it to you!

Of course the major service available to commercial customers is Red Angus' Commercial Marketing Program. This multi-faceted program is built around the USDA Processed Verified Feeder Calf Certification Program (FCCP). The FCCP allows cattle to enter into approved Angus branded beef programs and ensures eligibility for exclusive value-based grids.

Our primary packer partners are Excel and Meyer Natural Angus. Cattle can go to Excel live or "in the meat" or sell on a grid through Angus America. We have been with Excel for many years and have found them to be a great partner. Getting very aggressive for FCCP cattle is Meyer; anyone capable of meeting natural standards needs to check them out.

Other major programs include feeder calf marketing which encompasses the Feeder Fax and sponsored lots on national video auctions. Annually, the Red Angus Association spends \$25,000 in advertising to promote the sale of Red Angus influenced feeder cattle and commercial replacement females. For commercial replacement females, Red Angus offers the ProCow listing service. This has been hugely successful.

On the genetics side, each commercial producer can get the updated EPDs on his or her herd sires after each National Cattle Evaluation at no charge by contacting the National Headquarters. Sire summaries are also available at no charge.

Here at Red Angus we do not take customers for granted. We feel privileged when commercial producers decide to put their trust in our genetics and programs. That is why the entire Red Angus Association is designed to serve two missions: 1) to have the best objectively described cattle in the industry; and 2) to provide the best service to our commercial customers. We take this seriously, and you can be assured that your bulls are backed by the most commercially minded Association and breeders in the industry. ■