

RAAA Founders Endorsed Crossbreeding

Excerpts taken from The History of Red Angus

Chapter Six, Fundamental Decisions

Crossbreeding

Although not as well publicized, the Red Angus Association's very early endorsement of crossbreeding as a valuable production tool for commercial cow-calf producers might be considered every bit as ground breaking as RAAA policies on performance testing. At the time of the formation of the Red Angus Association, most commercial cattle were straight bred. Herefords dominated the western United States, Aberdeen-Angus were making inroads, Angus, Polled Herefords and Shorthorns

competed for market share in the mid-west and east. Many producers considered crossbred cattle little more than low quality "mongrels." It was not until Dr. Don Good of Kansas State University had the fortitude to make a larger, heavier muscled Charolais/Angus crossbred steer the champion steer at the 1969 International in Chicago that crossbreeding started to become a practice for consideration.

Many Red Angus breeders thought that the "red baldy" (Hereford/Red Angus cross) was a particularly complementary cross, and heavily promoted this system. At the forefront of these early efforts was Sally Forbes. Beckton included crossbreeding in their advertisements as

a viable tool for commercial cow-calf producers, and widely exhibited red baldy steers produced from their ranch. In fact, Beckton trademarked the name "Regus" for this early Red Angus/Hereford composite, also thinking that it would be a good name for their Red Angus in

first brochure, which contained a section on the merits of crossbreeding with Red Angus. During the 1961 annual meeting, the Commercial Cross Committee did meet, and the Board approved production of a pamphlet dealing strictly with crossbreeding.

**CAN YOU AFFORD NOT TO CROSSBREED
IN YOUR COMMERCIAL HERD?**

BECKTON SCIPPION 243, grandson of Serenade, \$3700 top of our 1960 sale, goes to the LK RANCH LTD., CALGARY, CANADA. Chosen for himself and because he was registered with Performance Registry International!

First PRI reg. bull to be imported into Canada.

For use in the well-known, large LK Hereford commercial herd!

We thank you, LK Ranch, and wish you all the fine demand we have for our crossbreds by performance selected Red Angus bulls. Which make profit for breeder + feeder + packer, as well as compliments of the housewife.

LIMITED NUMBER REG. BREEDING STOCK — TOP RANGE BULLS — CROSSBRED COWS AVAILABLE.

BECKTON STOCK FARM
SHERIDAN, WYOMING

MRS. WALDO FORBES, Owner
Red Angus Association of America
WESTERN LIVESTOCK JOURNAL 4, 308, 1960

AL MIDDLETON, Foreman & Purebreds
Performance Registry International
Page 21

THE PROOF:
30c for Beckton 1960 steer calves, avg. 401 lbs.; 25c for the heifers, avg. 398 lbs. — priced at home — to the same feeder for the 7th year who is also adding breeding heifers at 33c.
Tilden Burg's Beckton crossbred yearlings, weight at home, 924 lbs., final weight, Chicago, Aug. 1, 1460 lbs. Topped Chicago market for weight, \$26.50, within 25c of top for 1,100-1,200 lb. weights! Gain 2.44 lbs. per day.
Packer's compliment — a real one — "BIG BUT NOT WASTELY."

1960 Beckton Stock Farm ad published in the *Western Livestock Journal*.

case "the Red Angus Association didn't work out." Thankfully, the Forbeses never needed to use the name for that purpose, but the Regus name can still be seen on the dam side of many of their Category 1-B cattle. The 1-B category was from the system adopted in 1980 (see Chapter 14) allowing cattle to be bred up to purebred status (87 to 99% Red Angus).

At the 1960 RAAA Annual Meeting in Brownsville, Texas, Walter Kruse of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station made a presentation on crossbreeding. The Association decided that a standing committee for Commercial Crosses be formed and meet during the next annual meeting. In addition, in 1960, the Association released its

The Red Angus Association's commitment to the science of crossbreeding was demonstrated by adding the Commercial Cross Committee to the Association's Constitution and Bylaws. For the time, this ground breaking move on the part of the Red Angus Association was every bit as innovative as the Association's performance policies. And, in the coming years, the Association's progressive stance on crossbreeding would continue to help differentiate Red Angus from the more traditional breed associations.



Conoco - Champion Steer at the 1969 International in Chicago. Dr. Don Good is pictured directly above the hip of Conoco.

RAAA Founders Endorsed Crossbreeding

Chapter Eight, A Home For Red Angus

In 1966, at the Thirteenth Annual Membership meeting, the Commercial Cross Committee recommendations would foreshadow the commercial marketing services that the Association would adopt over the coming years:

RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMERCIAL CROSSES COMMITTEE

1. *Production of a combination brochure of registered Red Angus and Red Angus crosses. This brochure is to be distributed from the office to recent and potential buyers of Red Angus. Production of the brochure is to be a joint effort of the office and the Commercial Crosses Committee with aid from the membership. The estimated cost of the production is \$1,500.00.*



"Regus" Steers: Produced by Hereford cows and Red Angus bulls.

RAAA Founders Endorsed Crossbreeding

2. Establishment of a Red Angus Crosses listing service at the Red Angus Association office to assist the feeder-buyers in locating available crosses that they might desire. This listing service to be mentioned in the brochure to indicate to potential bull buyers that an effort is being made to market crossbreds.

3. The committee encourages Red Angus breeders to assist commercial breeders in any way possible to secure a market for his crossbred or commercial calves, and also assume a responsibility to see that the breeder is satisfied with the product of the Red Angus bulls he has purchased.

The 1967 brochure produced as a result of the above recommendation was an excellent full color 12-page piece covering all aspects of Red Angus. One of the features was a page of photos showing examples of calves when Red Angus were crossed on various biological types

WHY YOU NEED A RED ANGUS BULL FOR CROSSBREEDING

There's no doubt about it. Crossbreeding is creating line of excitement among commercial cattlemen and breeders—and for a trackload of reasons, too. Almost every farm paper or magazine you pick up today focuses your attention on another facet of this idea. And you can't help remembering that almost every head of meat and grain southeast planted today is a hybrid. Also, there are rumors that hybrid alfalfa and wheat are almost ready for your use.

Most of the commercial legs, lambs, turkeys, broilers, and laying hens are crossbred, too.

The beef industry seems to be next on the list to wake up to the vast potential made available by crossing two separate genetic lines or breeds. Red Angus bulls can help you "breed up" your present herd. Laying the foundation for this are the many sound breeding researchers who have compared crossbreds and straightbreds.

One recent report summarized the many crossbreeding experiments conducted in California, Ohio, Nebraska, Montana, Virginia, and Canada in which Angus was one of the breeds used.

Compared with straightbreds, crossbreds averaged 6.4% better at weaning, had a 6.7% advantage in percentage of calf crop born, a 7.8% advantage in percentage of calves living to weaning, and a 12% gain in the percentage of calf crop weaned.

This means the crossbred calves were healthier, more vigorous, retained stress better, and gained more. The researchers concluded that for every 100 pounds of straightbred calf produced at weaning, a crossbred would have given you 12.5 pounds.

With calves selling at \$30 this "bonus" of 12.5 pounds per hundred pounds of calf would be worth \$3.75. For each 100 calves weaning, 600 pounds that add, you'd have been able to bank an extra \$1,652 from the effects of crossbreeding!

And that's not counting the advantages crossbred replacement heifers would have given you, and the better calves if you'd finished them out yourself.

According to another study, crossbred heifers reared out early 28 days earlier than straightbreds, weighed 19% more, and weaned 27% more calves. After straightbreds, crossbreds thereby averaged \$8.81 more than straightbreds in net return above feed costs, not counting the lower mortality of the crossbreds.

Red Angus can contribute more to your crossbreeding program than any other breed.

That's a hot-lined statement—but one that's easy to illustrate. Besides the "back-in" program Red Angus give you, here's how they can specifically pump up the quality of commercial crossbreds when used in crossbreeding programs.

Hereford: All polled calves, no stress on eyes, big jankys and knobbed skulls; more ruggedness; greater

improving more hair tolerance; earlier to market; better milking cows; and less fat cover on a carcass which means a higher suitability score.

Charolais: Early stock finish at lighter weight; easily grade Choice; improved marketing; more super characteristics; more regular production; sturdy; better disposition; and a better firmness, texture, color, and eye in the meat.

Hallston and other dairy breeds: Many do breed it less work and more profitable to big cows to Red Angus bulls! Polled; super acceptance; beef conformation of more meat in the region of high-quality marketing; and the ability to grade Choice.

Santa Gertrudis, Brangus, Shorthorn: Fast better disposition; better grades; improved milking ability; higher percentage of all-round better carcass merit and uniformity.

Some comments by cattlemen who have crossed with Red Angus bulls:

"Forty-four Red Angus-Hereford's in pounds daily for 150 days and 1,100 pounds."—Nebraska.

"Started at 924 pounds, the crossbreds 3,144 pounds per day. Facker's comment is not sorry, with a good amount of red meat."—California.

"My first year with Red Angus bulls them with Hereford bulls on my Hereford calves were given the same treatment. The crosses gave less calving trouble and we straightbreds by 89 pounds. They also set in the feedlot and had a 1.2% higher drop rate. Because I'll had to cut 4% of my straightbreds due to stress eyes, I wouldn't have this problem and would've had. The Red Angus crossbreds have all."—California.

"A Canadian pregnancy test company from performance-selected bulls of five of our Red Angus calves were first and second to weaning, and one bull for full weight per day of age. Cost you found our Red Angus crosses were 18%. It is Charolais crosses and 20% for Black Angus."—Wyoming.

"These Red Angus-sired commercial calves make me feel good and get me out of my own back yard."

A—This genotype calf with his Santa Gertrudis dam was sired by a Red Angus bull.

B—While not a crossbred, this calf and the others in the herd were produced by a breeder wanting to take advantage of the results of Red Angus bulls on Black Angus cows.

C—A double family pattern illustrates the improvement a Red Angus bull can make in a Shorthorn cowherd.

D—Typical of the cross between a Red Angus bull and Hereford cows, these calves possess the red color—and extend it into the eye area. The feature lowers the incidence of stress eye and gill rot.

E—Swamp on her dam's side, this backy backy had a Red Angus sire. She's highly resistant to heat and insects—and has the gamability and malleability a Red Angus bull demonstrably transmits to his offspring.

F—Here's a visual demonstration of the improvement a Red Angus bull adds when mated with a Charolais cow. Even though the calf is still early weaning, it follows its sire's superior lead type.

1967 Red Angus Brochure

including Santa Gertrudis, Shorthorn, Hereford, Brangus, and Charolais as well as the outstanding results of straight breeding Red

Angus bulls on black Angus cows. Editor's Note: Picture C in the 1967 Crossbreeding Brochure was also used in the 2006 Crossbreeding Brochure