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Board Commentary

by Joe Mushrush, 1st Vice President/District 6 Director - Midwest

Our hats go off to the number one customer at the Red Angus Association of America, the hard working cattlemen and women that make up the commercial cattle industry. We dedicate this annual Commercial Marketing issue of ARA to those progressive producers who are using Red Angus genetics to improve their bottom line.

For this marketing issue we will ignore the economically relevant and convenience traits that are reason enough to use Red Angus genetics. Things like cow efficiency, calving ease, conception rate, longevity, heat tolerance, and the ability to measure and compare many of these traits. Instead we will focus on something else that by itself would be convincing enough to use Red Angus genetics. Marketability - the ability to put more dollars in the pockets of producers at sale time.

Indeed at the big summer video sales just completed, Red Angus yellow tagged age and source verified cattle again outsold their black hided counterparts, to top the sales in many weight categories. Several packers are paying up to \$25 per head age and source premiums to feeders with Red Angus tagged cattle. This means your calves are in demand as feeders search for more age and source verified Red Angus.

Not only have we dedicated this magazine issue to the commercial cattle industry, we've dedicated the entire 2007 Red Angus Convention, September 27-29 in Dodge City, Kansas, to the commercial cattle industry too. Beef business is big business in Kansas, and we'd like to show you what goes on after those sale topping calves leave your ranch gate.

Come a little early on Wednesday, September 26 and take in part of the weekly sale at Winter Livestock. Not only is Winter Livestock the largest livestock sale in Kansas, but one of the largest in the nation. Wednesday evening the Kansas Red Angus Association will give a big Western Kansas welcome with a hospitality reception that includes plenty to eat and drink. A special feature will be a live concert by Branson musician Eli Barsi at 7:00 p.m. This Canadian cow girl has been nominated for and won numerous awards from the American Academy of Western Artists, including the Will Rogers Female Vocalist award in 2006.

Thursday we get down to the nuts and

bolts of the convention with our annual Red Angus business sessions. Attendance is a way to be informed and involved with the forming of Red Angus policy. That evening we'll wind down with a visit to the famous Boot Hill Museum and Front Street. Learn about the early cattle drives and what shaped Dodge City. Have a cold one at the Long Branch Saloon and maybe get your picture taken with one of the CanCan girls. Don't worry, US Marshall Wyatt Earp and his deputies will be patrolling the grounds ready to dispatch any rowdy cowboys that get out of hand.

Friday we'll finish business, elect our RAAA president and new board members. Then it is off to Cargill Meat Solutions, one of two mega beef packing plants in town. Cargill processes more than 4000 head of cattle daily. This is a rare opportunity for the first 50 attendees who sign up. The rest of us will still have plenty to learn and do. Brett Spader, Kansas Stockman magazine will show us how to take good livestock photos. Get ideas for passing the ranch to the next generation. You have started this important task, haven't you? Learn how to promote your business with a web site and ads, or find out how Cow Sense computer software can make your ranch record keeping easier. Friday night is the annual awards banquet followed by a Night Cap social for those who want to hang around and visit.

Saturday is all education and fun as we head for an ethanol plant tour. The ethanol industry has had a huge impact on the cattle business due to higher corn prices and by-product feeds. See first hand what goes on as 19 million bushels of corn is turned into 55 million gallons of fuel. Then it's off to Cargill Cattle Feeders. If you've never seen 125,000 cattle on feed in one location, you will be amazed at the coordination it takes to keep this model of efficiency and productivity operating.

Frank and Susan Wedel, Wedel Red Angus, will be our hosts Saturday evening at their ranch. Relax, unwind, view good Red Angus cattle and enjoy a meal of beef kabobs, fries, and homemade ice cream before returning to the hotel.

We invite you our number one customer to breed'em red, tag'em yellow and join us at the 2007 National Red Angus Convention celebrating the Commercial cattle industry. ■