

# Cattlemen Being Paid for Quality

"If you have top quality cattle you are in the driver's seat today," says Lloyd D. Miller, executive secretary of the American Angus Association. "Premiums are being paid for high quality all down the line from the registered cattle producer through the dressed beef market. Rewarding those who have stuck to quality

cattle production through a period when much of the emphasis was in the opposite direction."

"Economic conditions change," Miller pointed out, "and the rapid price increases that brought us \$51 finished cattle the first week in May were definitely stimulated by a shortage of finished beef. But we can't

overlook the fact that during this same period it wasn't just well finished British breed (mostly Angus and Angus cross) steers that were bringing top prices. Choice and Prime feeder steers commanded strong premiums over Good grade feeders, and registered Angus breeders who have size, quality and growth rate bred into their herds, were also selling bulls and replacement heifers at excellent prices," Miller emphasized.

At the close of trading the first week in May, Choice 600 to 700 pound carcasses in New York brought \$80 to \$81.50 per cwt., while Good grade carcasses weighing from 500-to 800 pounds were quoted on the USDA wire at \$67 to \$76 per cwt. On the Midwest market Choice 500-to 600 pound yield grade 3 carcasses were quoted at \$79, while Good 500-to 600 pound carcasses yield grade 3 were selling to \$70.75.

In the live trade, Choice 900-1,100-pound slaughter steers were selling from \$47 to \$50 in Kansas City, while Good 900 to 1,100-pound steers went in a range from \$41 to \$46.50. This demand for quality was also reflected in the feeder cattle market. Choice 600 to 700-pound feeder steers sold in \$35 to \$39 range, while Good grade feeder steers of the same weight were bringing from \$26 to \$35.

The registered Angus business has yet to fully respond to these price upturns.

Although as one person pointed out, "Some registered Angus breeders have hardly been aware that there is a recession in the cattle business." For example in March, the last full month when figures were available on Angus auction sales around the country, the average of all bulls sold in production sales was \$887. Several sales this spring are averaging well over \$1,000

per head on bulls. Production tested bulls seem to be in particularly good demand. At the Missouri all-breeds production tested sale, for example, 49 Angus bulls averaged \$1,033.

"So the demand for top quality registered Angus bulls is growing at a time when many of the exotic cattle are simply not drawing bids above commercial feeder prices," Lloyd Miller points out. "Angus breeders should reach out and grab this opportunity to sell harder than they ever have before. Now is the time to switch many commercial cattlemen back to Angus bulls, and develop a nucleus of long

range customers," he emphasized.

Miller also pointed out that 1975 is a good time to improve the quality of individual registered herds.

"With utility and commercial cows selling for a high of \$25 per cwt., the cost of culling animals from the herd and replacing them with heifers from top producing cows, or cows from another herd, is not nearly so high as it was a year or two ago. And prices of registered cattle may bottom out in 1975, offering bargains that will not be available again for a number of years."

"The important thing we should remember is that quality pays. There are certainly times, like the past few years, when price spread between high and low quality cattle is narrow indeed. But in the long run,

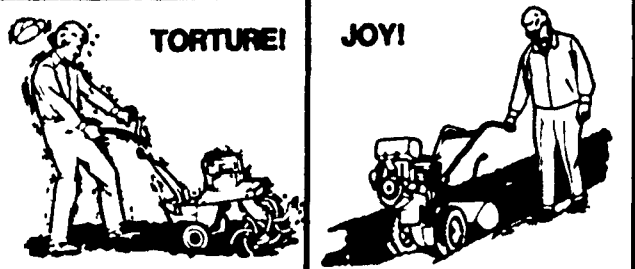
as we are seeing today, a cattleman can count on being compensated for quality production," Miller concluded.

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### Remove Bulb Tops

Tops of narcissi, tulips and other spring flowering bulbs should not be removed until they have matured or turned yellow. Removing them earlier prevents the bulbs from storing up food for next year's flowers, reminds J. Robert Nuss, Extension ornamental horticulturist at The Pennsylvania State University. As soon as the bulb leaves dry down, remove them and plant annuals over the top of the bulbs. Petunias, marigolds and similar bedding plants can be used to continue having color in your garden.

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