

# 'Better Beef' Program Outlined At Md. Angus Field Day

BY SHARON SCHUSTER  
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WEST FRIENDSHIP, Md. — Approximately 100 Angus enthusiasts gathered at the Moxleys' Dawn Acres Angus farm here for the Maryland Angus Association's annual field day on Sunday, July 27.

After a tour of the farm and inspection of the prize-winning Dawn Acres herd, the crowd heard a few brief remarks from Dr. Arthur Bartenslager, president of the American Angus Association. He stressed the importance of one of the association's goals, which is to increase membership nationwide. His plan involves a simple but effective strategy for growth; "everyone get one new member for the national membership."

Bartenslager spent most of the day talking to the guests on a one-to-one basis. The doctor of veterinary medicine said that he has a purebred Angus herd of 300 for commercial use. "We produce bulls that commercial breeders can use," he explained. His 615 acre farm is located in Churchville, Virginia. Originally from Pennsylvania, Bartenslager said his family fed for the Lancaster market.

Chief Operating Executive Officer for the AAA, Dick Spader, expounded on the comments of the president. "There are some positive things going on in the Angus industry," he began. "About one-third of the new people who come into the Angus industry say they have gotten started because of attending an organizational activity." Spader said that promotion is a big part of the industry's success. "We spend about \$2 on every registration on national advertising," he explained.

Referring to the Angus Herd Improvement Records program, Spader said that the organization

plans to revive the National Sire Evaluation program and place more emphasis on their findings. "We know a great deal about this breed, particularly the carcass. But, that's just a drop in the bucket. We want to develop the best programs we can to identify where superior genetics are." Communicating information to breeders will soon take new form in a computer that Spader said will be able to interface with home computers.

Commenting on the eight-year-old Certified Angus Beef program, he reported that the CAB program doubled sales in 1984-85 and is expected to do so again. Spader said that a Certified Angus feeder program is also in the works. "It is a long-range program to bring value back to the producer," he explained.

The featured speaker for the field day was a Hereford breeder from Mississippi, Fred Stokes. He explained the Better Beef Marketing program that is soon to be instituted in the Midwest. "It started about a year ago in Wisconsin," he explained. A committee was formed to investigate the question, "Is it possible to market beef at a profit, and if so, how?" The study, completed in May, "felt that a co-op was proper organization."

"Our thinking is sort of upside down," he continued. "We don't pay much attention to the bottom line. The USDA indicated that the average producer loses \$208 per head, and the average retailer makes \$1.02 per pound with the average carcass yielding 407 pounds of retail cuts." Stokes said, "We need to avoid the swinging sledge hammer of the supermarket chains. It's hard to believe that the guy who is slicing the pie is going to give you a bigger piece."

The plan developed by the Better Beef Marketing committee in-

volves beef producers selling their fed animals to a centrally located co-op, which will in turn sell the beef to specialized markets, avoiding competition with the retail chains. The profits would then be returned to the coop and divided among those who sold cattle to it.

Selling cattle to the coop would involve a fee of about \$5 per head that the producer intends to market through the co-op. After the program has become established, the prevailing market price would determine the fee. At the coop drop point, the animals would be made trade ready, sold, expenses subtracted, and profits divided among those who sold.

"We're going to determine what our customers want," explained Stokes. He said that the co-op would deal with "niches in the marketplace," such as the hotel, restaurant and institutional trade. "These consumers welcome the opportunity to buy a quality product from an organization such as this."

Referring to the plan as making use of "strategic alliances," Stokes said "we're not going to have a top-heavy corporate structure." With the packing industry overbuilt, he said that only 40 percent of the existing facilities are being used. The marketing plan calls for use of these existing facilities rather than heavy capitol expenditures, such as building packing plants and office buildings.

Some concern was expressed by those in attendance concerning competition with the already established Certified Angus Beef



Fresh from his win at the Maryland Angus Breeders Show only the day before, Mark Moxley displays his calf champion, DA Nightingale, at Angus Field Day. Moxley also campaigned the event's grand champion female and was named premier exhibitor.

Program. "I would like to think the programs will be compatible," commented Stokes. "We will have a product that is very similar." Stokes said that while 3.2 million pounds of beef were sold through the project at \$10 million, at \$288 per head premium over other retail brands of beef, the problem with the CAB program is that the producer doesn't get the premium. "Therein lies the biggest difference

in the two beef marketing programs. Stokes said that "the prime beneficiary" in the new program will be the producer.

The Better Beef Marketing program will start in the Midwest. The organization is trying to raise \$3.5 million to build this first system. "I believe that there is room for the producer and the retailer to make a profit; we feel this is the way to go," said Stokes.



Mississippi Hereford breeder, Fred Stokes, outlined an innovative program called Better Beef Marketing at the Maryland Angus Assoc. Field Day.

## 12 Sheep Breeds To Show at ENLS

WEST FRIENDSHIP, Md. — The Eastern National Livestock Show has upgraded the Open Class Sheep Show for 1986. Under the direction of the new superintendent, Jack Price of Westminster, Maryland, 12 breeds will be exhibited. In the wool breeds shown will include Corriedale, Columbia, Merino, Rambouillet, and Romney. Cheviot, Dorset, Hampshire, Montadale, Shropshire, Southdown, and Suffolk represent the meat-type breeds. Superintendent Price has

secured the nationally recognized judge, Mr. Max Woolever from Greenup, Illinois, to place the entire Open Show. Approximately 500-600 head of sheep are expected to be entered by the closing date, September 2, 1986.

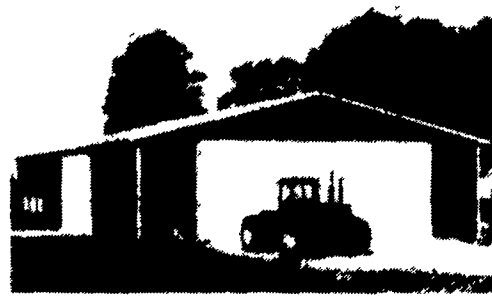
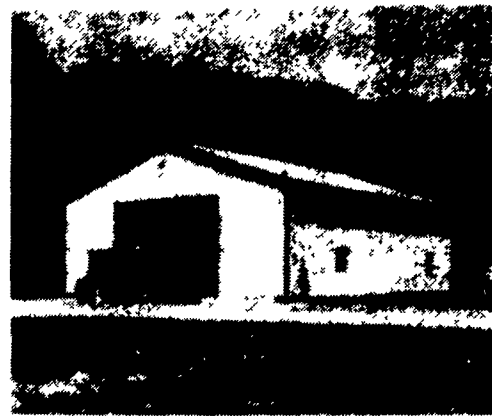
The shows are scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, September 29-30, at the State Fair Grounds at Timonium, Maryland. At 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 30, 1986, the second Bred, Exposed, and Open Ewe Sale will be held with Dorsets, Hampshires, and Suffolks offered.

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