

American Angus Association Launches Record-Keeping Program For Commercial Cattle

ST. JOSEPH, Mo. — The American Angus Association continues to make strides toward leading the beef industry in record-keeping systems and collecting performance data.

The Association's newest development is the Angus Beef Record Service (BRS), a system for keeping valuable records that are useful in decision making.

The Angus BRS is a complement to the Angus Herd Improvement Record (AHIR) program, and provides a mechanism for commercial producers to summarize their cattle performance records, which in turn can serve as a valuable tool to enhance profitability.

The Angus BRS will compile information on a producer's cowherd, including breed composition, sire information, breeding information, calving data and any additional performance or carcass data collected on a calf.

The Association will analyze the production data and report the information back to the individual producer. A genetic value will be developed for the cattle in terms of reproduction, growth, and end product merit, using the actual data submitted in addition to tying to the Angus database where possible.

"Keeping performance records is a necessity in today's beef industry," said Bill Bowman, director of commercial relations for the American Angus Association. "The data will help characterize the commercial cowherds using Angus genetics by providing information and analysis on individual cows, cow groups within a herd, and the entire herd."

Collecting data and tying the information back to an individual cow or to a group of a particular sire's daughters will make it possible for producers to make breeding and culling decisions based on fact rather than assumption. Other examples of the results of the Angus BRS include calving percentage, weaning percentage pounds of calf weaned per cow exposed at breeding, which helps the producer monitor productivity and potentially enhance profits in the cowherd.

In addition to collecting and processing data, the Angus BRS will provide producers a tool for source verification as well as national and electronic identification. These identification systems provide an information flow to improve quality management, facilitate domestic value-based marketing, and enhance access to export markets.

"In our opinion, future identification programs such as voluntary certification, genetic evaluation, replacement female development, and feeder calf quality assurance could be voluntary systems that are necessary for market access," Bowman said.

Another exciting aspect of the Angus BRS is the potential to identify Angus sires, previously "lost" that can make a significant contribution to the breed. For example, in fiscal year 1999, more than 40,000 Angus bulls were transferred to non-member buyers. These bulls may represent some of the top genetics of the breed, but because little progeny data is collected and processed on these bulls, they go undetected in the beef industry. The Angus BRS has the potential to build and enhance working relationships among breeders and bull buyers by tracking the success of the sires in commercial herds.

For more information about Angus BRS or to request enrollment forms, contact the American Angus Association at brs@angus.org or (816) 383-5100.

Bureau Recognizes Forest Steward



Robert Bonitz Jr.
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Robert Bonitz Jr., Harrisburg, was recognized recently as a Forest Steward.

Paul Troutman, service forester for the Bureau of Forestry, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, presented the

award at the Bonitz property.

Being designated as a Forest Steward is an honor reserved for forest landowners who have made a commitment to managing their forest resources to ensure their health and productivity for years to come.

Donald P. Oaks, district forester for the Weiser Forest District of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry, said Bonitz started the process of becoming a Forest Steward by having a forest stewardship plan prepared by Jeff Eason, a forestry consultant from Dauphin. The Weiser Forest District covers Carbon, Dauphin, Lebanon, Lehigh, and Schuylkill counties.

Troutman said Bonitz has been managing his 196-acre forest for timber, wildlife, and recreation.

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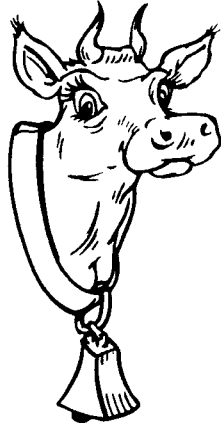
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