

RAAA National Office

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Association Commentary

by Dr. Bob Hough, Executive Secretary

Comings and Goings

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Blake Angell for his seven years of hard work for the Red Angus Association, and at the same time congratulate him on his new position at Meyer Natural Angus. Serving as the Commercial Marketing Director, Blake has been a tremendous asset to the breed, breeders and breeders' customers. He did much to value-add Red Angus feeder cattle and did more than anyone in the history of the Feeder Calf Certification Program to increase the brand equity to the yellow tag. Blake was a tireless traveler and tremendous spokesman for the breed. He also became known as the "voice of Red Angus" moderating events, gathering crowds and serving as MC of our 50th Anniversary Convention. I shall miss him, but I think he will be an equal asset to the breed at Meyer Natural Angus in his new role in feeder calf procurement.

I am very pleased to announce that we have hired a seasoned, industry wide respected leader to fill Blake's large shoes. Dr. Ron Bolze will be joining the Red Angus Association as our new Commercial Marketing Director on November 1st. Currently, Ron is the Executive Secretary / Treasurer of the American Shorthorn Association where he has done much to add a commercial focus to that breed. He also currently sits on the Board of Directors of the Beef Improvement Federation and National Pedigree Livestock Council. Ron is no stranger to the commercial cow / calf and feedlot industries having spent 25 years in production agriculture, Extension in Ohio and Kansas, Certified Angus Beef carcass progeny and genomic testing, and Future Beef; all prior to joining Shorthorn. We are very pleased to have attracted someone of Ron's caliber. I have known Ron for

many years, and have tried to hire him in the past as his philosophy of the beef industry is perfectly in sync with Red Angus Core Policies.

Crossbreeding

This issue of the ARA Magazine features crossbreeding, which has been endorsed by RAAA practically from the beginning of the Association. In 1960, the RAAA Constitution and Bylaws included a commercial crosses committee; such was the importance placed on this management practice by our founding members. Red Angus endorses crossbreeding because it works when used in a well planned system. And the Red Angus breed can serve as the common denominator to anchor virtually all crossbreeding systems. This magazine contains an informational brochure that explains the advantages of crossbreeding and different systems that can be used to obtain breed complementarity and heterosis.

Feeder Calf Certification Program

Also in this issue of the ARA Magazine is a brochure explaining the changes in the USDA Processed Verified Program (PVP) FCCP. We have added group age to our list of claims along with genetics and source to ranch of origin. Even without the new group age verification, the FCCP was highly modified to conform to new USDA PVP requirements. This will mean a few more steps when getting tags, but also a much more robust system. We are required to increase the number of ranch audits the marketing staff conducts, and USDA will increase the number of times they audit the National Office. All in all, the new system will have unmatched integrity, and we look forward to the premiums the age verification should make available. ■