

RAAA National Office

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Association Commentary

by Bob Hough, RAAA Executive Secretary

Wrapping-Up Another Year

The Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) has closed the books on another successful, although unspectacular, year. Registrations were flat at 47,011, while animals enrolled in Total Herd Reporting increased. Transfers declined slightly to 20,381. I am quite pleased with these numbers expecting them to be far worse given the severe drought that was experienced last year in the heart of Red Angus cow country. It was so severe that many herds were contemplating cutting back on cow numbers. These statistics seem to indicate that they held in there with their herds intact.

By the same token, our records show people decided to sell more bulls this year based on the previous year's record prices. According to sale reports, Red Angus breeders did sell an additional seven percent more bulls, but at a lower average. Increasing bull numbers during a drought is not ideal, but the strength of the Red Angus breed pulled through. The demographics of our bull sales is extremely encouraging. Red Angus bull sales continue to run strong and grow in traditional Red Angus country west of the Mississippi. Our strength east of the Mississippi is very exciting, with sales increasing or remaining steady in every major state but one. Over ten percent growth in bull sales was seen over the last three years in Wisconsin, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana. Strong growth was also seen in Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri and Florida.

Increased membership was our bright spot with a record 312 people joining the Association this year eclipsing our previous record of 269 set in 04/05. Texas led the way with 44 new members followed by Missouri with 21. When reviewing where these new members are located some surprising states

popped-up on the radar screen. Pennsylvania gained 12 new members, North Carolina-11, and Wisconsin-9. Red Angus is definitely becoming a national phenomenon instead of the Western and Southeastern regional breed it has traditionally been. Counting normal turnover, Red Angus membership ended the year at a record 2,286.

RAAA - IBBA Partnership

Over the last several months the Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) and the International Brangus Breeders Association (IBBA) have been working together to form a company for data management. The Board has unanimously approved the formation of such a company and final contract negotiations are currently taking place. The company will produce EPDs, clean data and serve as a data base warehouse, and lease registration software. RAAA will not be using the company's registration software, and will continue doing registration in-house on RAAA software. RAAA will also maintain its IT staff and keep a copy of its database on-site at all times.

We have been told that all EPD production is moving to University of Georgia and that University of Georgia's last EPD production run will be in August 2008. The need for this new company, Genetic Performance Solutions (GPS), is evident. GPS will lease the Georgia EPD software and start to produce its own EPDs. This is a prudent, necessary business move given the circumstances with the Universities. Frank Wedel and Kelli Brown will represent RAAA on the Board of Directors of GPS. In addition, Ed Lloyd, Lee Leachman and John Eklund served on the negotiation committee, and Steve Andras was involved in all aspects of the process. Please feel free to give them or me a call for further information. ■