



Marketing Update



CERTIFIED RED ANGUS

Pro-Cow

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Pro-Cow Red Angus Replacements for Professional Cattlemen

"It takes more than just milk to make a great beef cow". This is the tag line behind one of the most successful replacement female marketing tools in the beef industry. Created in 2003, Pro-Cow has assisted in marketing more than 50,000 commercial beef replacement females, including Red Angus influenced, commercial open heifers, bred heifers, bred cows and cow/calf pairs. Some producers have come to use ProCow as their sole marketing vehicle, while others have used ProCow to supplement existing vehicles such as bred cow sales at the local livestock market, added consignments to ranch production sales, or load lots on video auctions. Ranchers have come to count on this FREE web-based service to aid in locating and/or marketing quality Red Angus influenced females which excel in maternal efficiency, fertility, longevity (convenience traits for greater functionality), lower maintenance costs, calving ease, carcass traits and heat tolerant red hides.

However, capturing full value for commercial females is accomplished only if you do your homework. In others words, literally thousands of females are available every year. What will set yours apart, resulting in significant premiums and repeat buyers year after year?

Complete information

A quick review of the any commercial female listing often will reveal some holes in the information provided. A little extra time and effort always pays dividends when describing your offering to potential buyers. Put yourself in their shoes...what information would you require?

For starters, provide complete contact information including home/office/cell phone numbers, e-mail address and website if available. If you have a website, pictures of the females could be accessed by interested parties. Complete health history is a must to attract professional cattlemen that understand the importance of a strategically applied herd health program. Vaccination and parasite control history, including the dates and products used is an important facet of adding value to females that someone will turn out on their ranch. Genetic information enhances value to producers with better understanding of Red Angus bloodlines and genetic predictions. At minimum, provide the seedstock source(s) of

females' sires and service sires. When possible, provide a listing of these sires' registration numbers. Recently, Pro-Cow listings have become more automated though the RAAA website "Stockyards" tab, making it more user friendly. The numerous information "cells" are included on a Pro-Cow listing for a reason. A little extra effort to provide complete information will pay big dividends.

Quality & Uniformity

A well earned reputation for high quality replacements achieved over the long haul can disappear overnight with an inferior set of females. Likewise, a few head that don't fit the group based on quality, condition or size will deter from the appeal of the entire load. When buyers invest in a group of females they tend to take a more holistic view of the production package being offered. Uniformity means more than like hide color. Maturity, body condition score, anticipated nutritional requirements, age at first calving, duration of calving season, etc. are all components of a potential buyer's operation and his decision. Females sold as a group should "fit" together as a production unit, and not require any variation in reproductive or nutritional management.

Reproductive Pressure

Value typically increases as the expected calving window is tightened. Expose the females to a relatively short breeding season (60 days?), pregnancy test and cull the opens. This is an indirect selection for fertility which can enhance fertility of the cowherd. Remember, first calf heifers that calve later represent a reproductive liability over time. If a set of bred heifers have been exposed for a longer time period, consider aging the pregnancies and sorting based on expected calving dates. Always provide anticipated calving dates, and provide both artificial and natural service dates where applicable as well as specific sires used for either.

Breed Heifers to Calving Ease Sires

This may seem like a no-brainer. However, sometimes less attention is given to service sires if the original owner knows that the heifers will be sold prior to calving. The Red Angus breed is blessed with the most complete genetic predictions to allow for selection of sires whose daughters will

excel in those traits which build profitable cow herds. BW EPD and both direct and maternal calving ease EPDs are part of this equation. They are particularly useful when compiling elite packages of bred heifers that can be characterized as sired by high accuracy AI sires themselves and are offered bred to high accuracy AI calving ease sires. Though few Pro-Cow females are represented by this level of genetic input, EPD profiles of the bloodlines involved can still be of great value in genetically describing a set of heifers. Obviously, numerous traits need to be genetically evaluated beyond just calving ease.

Sex the Fetus

Ultrasound technology has now made it possible to actually sex the developing fetus with a relatively high degree of accuracy. Potential bred heifer buyers may be willing to pay a significant premium for females that are carrying either female or male calves.

Stand Behind Your Product

Merchandising Red Angus influence females for significant premiums is not accomplished overnight through one set of heifers. In reality, like most things in life, one must earn the reputation. It may take years of presenting the right product before your operation "arrives". A big part of that reputation is standing behind your product. If a set of females is misrepresented through honest error and/or fails to live up to expectations for whatever reason, it is in the best interest of the seller to "make it right" to build a demand for females over the long haul. In other words, the buyer is always right.

Literally thousands of beef females change hands every year. The Red Angus influence commercial female has "earned her stripes" in a competitive marketplace because astute commercial producers have grown to appreciate what she can do, sometimes under adverse environmental conditions. Why not use a marketing service that has also earned its stripes - the RAAA Pro-Cow listing service. Just pick up the phone and call any member of the RAAA marketing team, or better yet go to www.redangus.org and select Red Angus Stockyards... ProCow commercial replacement females are awaiting your inspection. ■