



The 16th annual Junior Red Angus (JRA) Round - Up was held in Tennessee, with stops in Kentucky and Alabama as well, June 24 - June 28, 2008.

The Red Angus Association of America (RAAA) established the JRA Round - Up as a leadership and development program for the youth of the breed. Round - Up is uniquely designed to expose Juniors to Red Angus cattle and breeders, encourage interest in agriculture, inspire and develop future leaders in the industry and provide an avenue to build lasting relationships with others who have similar passions. 38 JRA members from California to Georgia and Canada to Texas gathered in Nashville, Tenn., to take part in the week long event.

Tuesday - June 24th

Round - Up attendees boarded a motor coach and headed north to CPC Commodities, LLC in Fountain Run, Ky. CPC is one of the largest stocker cattle operations east of the Mississippi River. CPC targets a specific market by purchasing cattle from throughout the South and Southeast, in nine states and out of nearly 50 barns. The cattle purchased from this region typically have not been weaned and arrive with undocumented vaccination histories. After receiving the cattle, CPC starts them on a complete vaccination protocol and begins preconditioning the calves to feed. The calves are back-grounded on large pastures and fed a ration based primarily of commodity feeds. Once target weights are reached,

the calves are sold to customers who place the cattle on feed or utilize the heifers as replacements. CPC has developed a reputation of supplying quality cattle that perform well and have a great health record. To help control the costs of their own feed supply, CPC has developed a complete commodity feeds' business, including animal health products and cattle handling equipment.

Next stop for Round - Up was Red Hill Farms in LaFayette, Tenn. Home of the Jones', Red Hill Farms is a diversified family farming operation, featuring Red Angus seedstock, purebred swine genetics and tobacco farming. The Juniors were shown a tobacco curing barn, saw seedling plants grown in green houses on floating Styrofoam and were shown seedlings being transplanted into acreage. The group toured a farrowing house and weaning house in the Jones' purebred hog operation before touring the pastures to view cattle. Following the cattle tours, the Juniors were lead through icebreaker activities by Chelsea Doss of Eagleville, Tenn. Chelsea is the past State FFA President of Tenn., and is currently in the running as a National FFA Officer. After dinner, host Dr. Gordon Jones lead a discussion on genetic defects and fielded questions from the group.

Wednesday - June 25th

The Juniors kicked the day off at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville, Tenn. The university's farm manager, Jim Ligon, spoke to the group about the importance of using ultrasound in selecting superior carcass genetics and how producers can realize premiums for those genetics. An ultrasound demonstration was performed to exhibit the process and show the differences in carcass quality of cattle. The Juniors took part in an animal health product pricing contest and the annual Barnyard Olympics, where they competed in several events including blind wheelbarrow racing, team egg tossing and water bucket racing.

Round - Up's next stop was at Mont-Vue Farms in Lenoir City, Tenn., the home of the Montgomery's. The group toured cattle at the largest Red



Angus operation in the Southeast, joined in a cattle judging contest on several sets of cattle including heifers and bulls lead by representatives from the University of Tennessee and an equipment identification contest. The rest of the afternoon was spent enjoying a Bar-B-Que and relaxing around the pool, giving the group time for conversation and fellowship.

Thursday - June 26th

The Juniors started the day off with a tour of the University of Tennessee's Veterinary School. Dr. Dan Ward of the Ophthalmology Department gave a presentation on retinal imaging and its future use in animal identification. The group was shown a hoof trimming demonstration and presentation on laminitis and screw claw in bovines by Dr. Sarel van Amstel.

Lunch was held at a stocker operation owned by Dr. Richard Daughtery, current President of the Tennessee Cattlemen's Association. While there the Juniors were shown a demonstration using ultrasound technology to check for pregnancy in cattle.

The rest of the day was spent at the Dollywood theme park in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. From roller coasters that made them squeal to water rides soaking the group to the bone, the Juniors enjoyed an afternoon of rides, laughs and fun.

Friday - June 27th

Round - Up started the day in Horton, Ala., at Whitley Red Angus. There the group enjoyed viewing cattle, weight guessing on a mature Red Angus bull, bobbing for apples and a welcome from the Alabama Cattlemen's Association and a representative of the Alabama House of Representatives. The group also competed in the team sales competition, a contest designed to teach marketing skills and team work by selling live cattle to a group of judges.

Swan Creek Red Angus welcomed Round - Up attendees to their farm for cattle tours, supper and a team judging contest. In this contest, the Juniors were paired in teams of two, one acting as a ringman to instruct the exhibitors

and the other as the judge, placing the class and reciting their reasons to a team of judges. Several breeders in the area brought cattle and offered their assistance in this contest including the Bobbitt's, the Duke's, the Patterson's, Mary Swander and the Lampley's.

The Juniors wrapped up the day at Atkinson Red Angus in Pulaski, Tenn., where the Atkinson's held a barn dance and homemade ice cream social. It was an evening of fun for all while the Juniors kicked up their heels and danced the night away.

Saturday - June 28th

Rising Star Ranch, a Tennessee Walking Horse Farm in Shelbyville, Tenn., was the first stop of Round - Up on this day. The Juniors were able to see several examples of breeding stock. The group was shown how stud horses are collected and given an explanation of the differences in semen handling practices utilized in horse breeding vs. cattle breeding.

Next stop was at Hickory Hill Red Angus in Taft, Tenn. The Southeast Red Angus Association held its annual field day in conjunction with Round - Up visiting. Owner Wiley Finley and Farm Manager John Carter had several groups of cattle on display and had a couple of speakers lined up to entertain the crowd. The annual Round - Up Quiz Bowl was held featuring the Juniors teamed with several distinguished adult guests in attendance. The teams competed in a contest that matched wits on topics relating to Red Angus and the beef industry.

Returning to the headquarters hotel in Nashville, Tenn., the Juniors held a pizza party, award ceremony and election of new officers. New officers are Tyler Rush (At Large) of Jasper, Mo., and Montgomery Dempsey (South Region) of Millington, Tenn., while Marianne Mendoza (West Region) of Chico, Calif., was re-elected. Kris Weidenbach (North Plains) was elected JRA President. I'd like to give a special thanks to all those that sponsored and hosted Round - Up this year and encourage all JRA members to prepare for Round - Up next year in South Dakota. ■