

More Than a *Tool* on Your Roster

By: Morgan Nipp

An Angus breeder from Ohio, Harold Etling, eagerly ordered a steak labeled "Angus" for dinner. Harold, like any other proud rancher had high expectations for his meal as he knew the work he had contributed to raising high quality cattle. You can imagine his disappointment when he received his steak and was unsatisfied. Harold realized there needed to be a better way to assure consistent beef quality, including tenderness, juiciness, and flavor. Just a few short years later there was news of a program launching, Certified Angus Beef (CAB). The mission was simple "To increase demand for registered Angus cattle through a specification-based, branded beef program to identify consistent, high-quality beef with

superior taste." In 1978, the world's original beef brand sold their first pound of Certified Angus Beef. After 46 years, over 22 billion pounds of beef labeled Certified Angus Beef have been sold.

Certified Angus Beef continues to be recognized as a high-quality product because beef must meet the 10 quality specifications. These specifications for beef are modest or higher marbling, medium to fine marbling texture, the cattle must be less than 30 months of age at harvest, carcass must have a 10-to-16-inch ribeye, carcass cannot weigh more than 1100 pounds, carcass cannot have more than one inch of fat covering, carcass must be of superior muscling, carcass has to be practically free of capillary rupture,

carcass cannot be a dark cutter, and there is to not be a neck hump exceeding two inches.

Just like Harold, Roger Wann with Wann Ranch recognized the call for a better product. Beef earns its label long before it hits the case. Roger realized this when his customers were calling demanding bulls with higher marbling EPDs. Once customers were emphasizing the need for bulls with better marbling Roger said "Danny and I had had been talking about paying more attention to marbling and we thought we should probably up our game a little bit. Since then we have been more dialed in on CAB and what CAB can do for our industry." Understanding the value of genetics in producing top-quality beef, Wann





Ranch began focusing on raising bulls that could pass on superior marbling traits to their offspring.

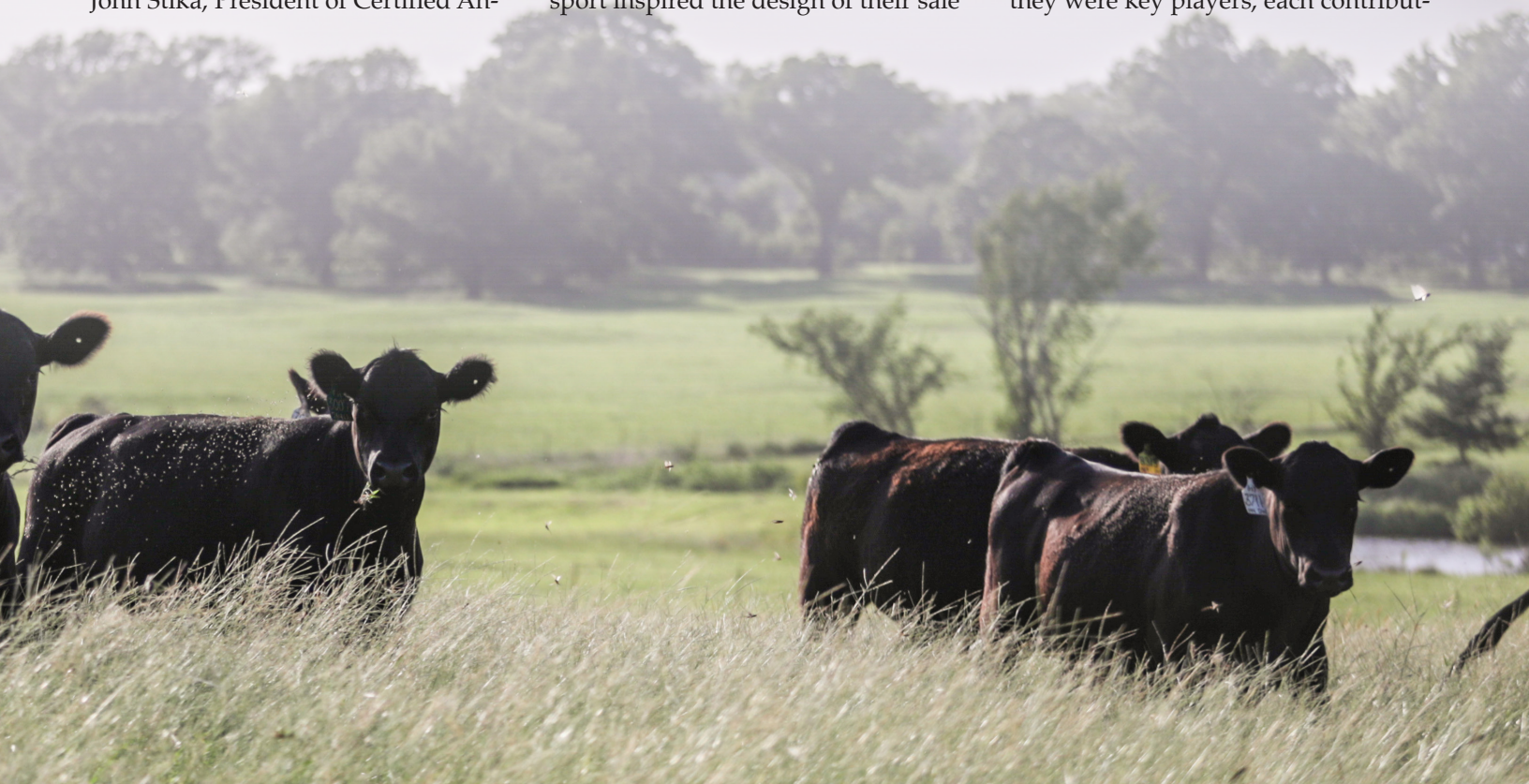
For customers, purchasing bulls with exceptional carcass EPDs meant they could produce calves with a higher likelihood of meeting the Certified Angus Beef standards. Because of Certified Angus Beef, Angus cattle are recognized as a higher quality and market trends tend to prove that. According to the American Angus Association in 2023, carcasses that classified as CAB were \$95.48 per head over base price. A letter written by John Stika, President of Certified An-

gus Beef, stated "In 2022, licensed U.S. packing plants certified 5.4 million CAB carcasses under USDA supervision, sold 1.6 billion pounds of CAB branded products, and annually pay producers more than \$182 million in Certified Angus Beef grid premiums."

Roger, Danny, and Jim's dedication to raising bulls with high carcass EPDs also fostered a reputation for excellence. Their passion for baseball often mirrored their approach to raising cattle—both required a keen eye for potential, dedication, and strategic planning. This enthusiasm for the sport inspired the design of their sale

catalog. Bulls are highlighted in categories such as "Jim's Draft Picks" and "The Triple AAA Farm Club Blue Chip Prospects." These names reflect their belief that selecting the right bulls was similar to drafting star players who could transform a team – or in this case, a herd.

This focus on genetics had far-reaching benefits. Purchasing bulls with exceptional carcass EPDs allowed customers to produce calves more likely to meet the Certified Angus Beef (CAB) standards. These bulls were more than just tools on your roster; they were key players, each contribut-



ing unique strengths to ensure success. Certified Angus Beef has elevated the recognition of Angus cattle as superior quality, with market trends consistently supporting this. When discussing how CAB adds value to a purebred operation, Danny remarked, "Customers have better marketing options," which is why Angus cattle consistently rise to the top of the market.

Danny said "We had a niche for calving ease bulls, now we have a niche for calving ease bulls, with growth, and with carcass" which is what makes Wann Ranch known as a premier source for high-quality bulls. In their Spring 2024 offering, 88% of the bulls qualified for the "Targeting the Brand" logo. This logo highlights registered Angus bulls with the genetic potential to produce calves that meet the challenging specifications of Certified Angus Beef. The logo can be used on any registered Angus bull with a minimum marbling EPD of +0.65 and an Angus Grid Value Index (\$G) of +55 or higher. Just as baseball talent draft picks are evaluated, Roger, Danny, and Jim meticulously assess their bulls, ensuring that each one have the potential to be a top performer, capable of producing outstanding beef that live up to the Certified Angus Beef promise.

To demonstrate their commitment to quality and their alignment with the Certified Angus Beef brand, Wann Ranch proudly features the "Brand the Barn" painting on their sale barn. This iconic CAB logo serves as a testament to their dedication and is a mark of distinction, making Wann Ranch one of the few farms in Oklahoma to be honored. To celebrate the branding of the barn, Wann Ranch is hosting a Certified Angus Beef Educational Forum October 18th. The forum features a array of topics including "Opportunities with Certified Angus Beef" by Bruce Cobb, Executive Vice President of Production at CAB, "Feeder Calf Procurement" by Spencer Smith with Capstone Beef, and "Why Targeting the Brand Matters" by Jim Moore, past CAB Commercial Cattlemen of the Year. To learn more about the forum contact Roger at 940-727-8492.

