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Awards Contest

July 20, 2026
St. Louis, Missouri

Honorable Mention

Angus Beef Bulletin

Angus Beef Bulletin

Multiple Angus Beef Bulletin team members.

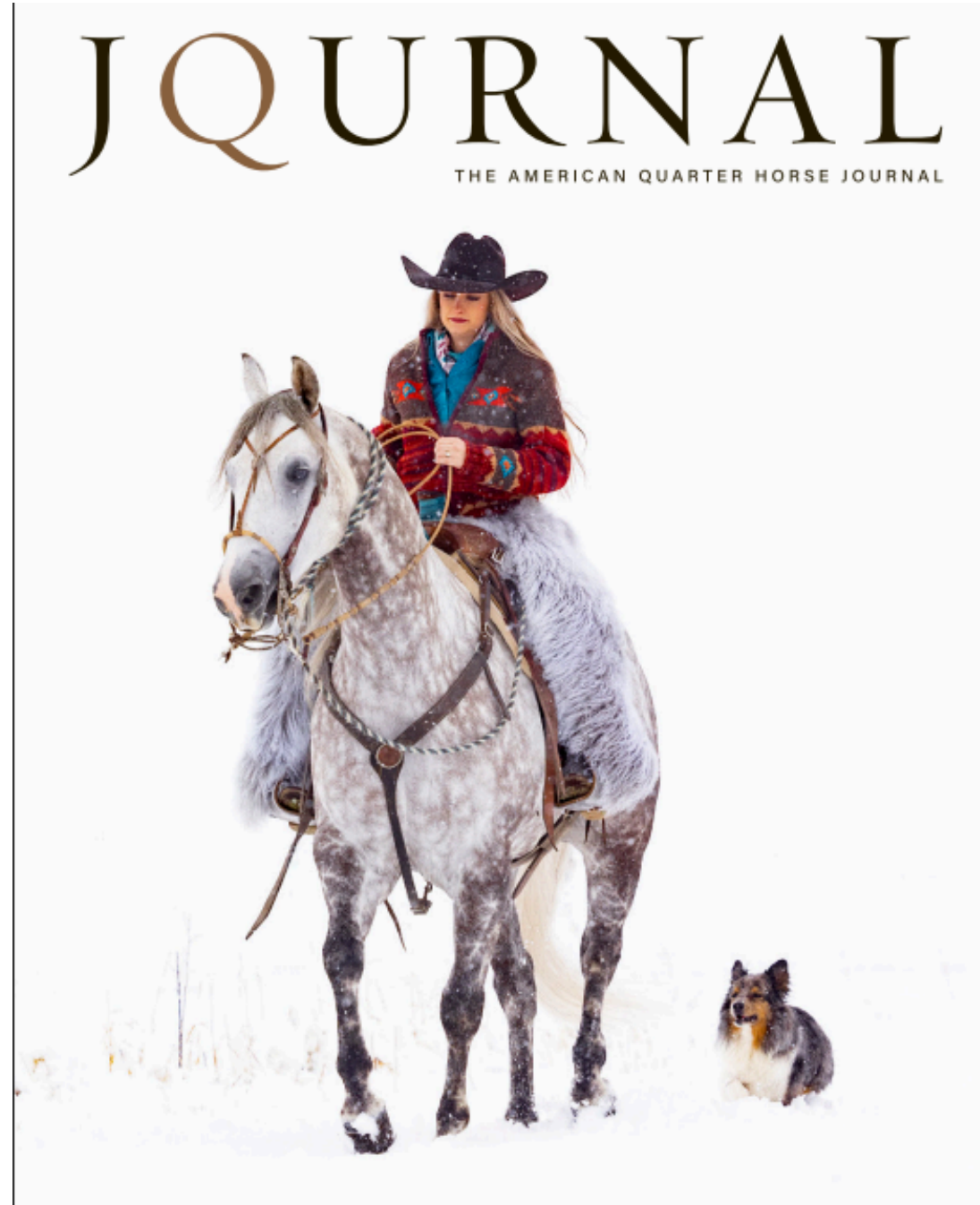
Second Place

Angus Journal

Angus Journal

Angus Journal

GENERAL EXCELLENCE: PUBLICATION



WINNER

January-February and November-December issues

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Editor-in-chief Becky Newell

Honorable Mention

Western Livestock Journal

Western Livestock Journal

Anna Miller Fortozo, Charles Wallace, Kirby Brincefield, Mike Oldcorn, Hannah Jackson,
Tristan Martin

Second Place

Tri-State Livestock News weekly

Tri-State Livestock News

Publisher: Bree Poppe

Editor: Carrie Stadheim

Association Editor: Ruth Wiechmann

Designer: Tristen Polensky

CALVES AND KIDS, RAISING A FAMILY ON THE FARM



Amanda Hall and her family raise cattle and assist her father's brokerage business.

It is a unique, uncommon opportunity for kids to be raised in agriculture. With less than 2% of the current population living on a farm or ranch, multiple generations are removed from a lifestyle that includes growing crops or raising livestock to earn a living and feed their families. For the kids lucky enough to grow up on a farm or ranch today, values like hard work, generosity, patience, care and grit are woven into their character and give them a strong foundation for success in any pursuit. Amanda Hall, from Lexington, Kentucky, and Mandy Atterholt, from Loudonville, Ohio, are both raising their families on multi-generational beef operations.

Hall's father operates a beef brokerage business, so she's been engaged in the cattle industry her whole life. Hall purchased her own pastureland to begin a cow-calf and backgrounding operation



Mandy Atterholt works for Certified Angus Beef and her family raises Angus cattle in Ohio.

and now she and her husband, Reid, run the farm, sell freezer beef direct to consumers, and Hall assists with her father's business. The Halls have two young children, Charli and Owen.

Atterholt, who works as the Beef Community Educator for Certified Angus Beef, did not grow up on a farm herself but was immersed in 4-H and FFA, where she fell in love with agriculture and telling the stories of producers. Mandy and her husband, Aaron, have three children — Claire, Natalie and Tyler. Along with Aaron's brother, Mike, and his wife and two daughters, they run the cattle farm started by the brothers' grandparents in 1956.

Today, it is an Angus seedstock operation, where the Atterholts have the opportunity to raise their children as the next generation on the farm.

Continued on page 8

FLEX YOUR GRAZING MUSCLES | PG. 10

Are growing and feeding hay costing your operation? Find out how to better plan and utilize your pastures.

HOW DO YOU SELECT BULLS? | PG. 13

Help us learn how beef producers select bulls based on their level of management and be entered to win prizes.

CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY ACT | PG. 15

NCBA has made huge strides to stop the enforcement of the Corporate Transparency Act which would create burdensome hoops for small business owners to jump through.

SOUTH DAKOTA RANCHING FAMILY PROTECTED FROM PERSECUTION

Since 1910, the Maude family of western South Dakota has raised cattle on land near the Buffalo Gap National Grassland. Today, the ranch is run by Charles and Heather Maude who, in addition to cattle, now also raise hogs and crops. Charles and Heather homeschool their two children, instilling in them a respect for the hardworking agricultural way of life. Between Charles and Heather, their families have a combined 250 years working in production agriculture with only a brief pause during World War II when their grandfathers' generation served in the Armed Forces.

Since that time, the Maude family worked with their neighbors, federal and private alike, to build a strong community in the area. Charles and Heather were federal grazing permittees in good standing, and their permit granted permission to graze their cattle at certain times on the Buffalo Gap National Grassland.

More than a year ago, their life was turned upside down. Last March, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) alleged that a hunter complained about a fence blocking access to a portion of the grassland. Immediately, Charles and Heather met with USDA and agreed to a land survey to settle the issue. Just days later, two armed U.S. Forest Service agents showed up to serve the Maudes with a federal indictment for "theft of government property," a trumped-up charge with penalties of up to 10 years in prison and \$250,000 in fines.

These types of boundary questions are common in the West because many land boundaries were determined by hand drawn maps linked to physical resources like trees or rocks, many of which have changed in the last 100 years. The unique and challenging topography of the West is another reason boundary lines might deviate from legal property boundaries but be perfectly logical to account for a creek or a cliff.

"When a survey uses markers like 'a large rock' or 'a big oak tree' as part of determining the boundary, that leaves room for



Photo courtesy of USDA.

generations later when those landmarks change," said National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Executive Director of Natural Resources Kaitlynn Glover, who also serves as executive director of the Public Lands Council (PLC). "Especially with the steep hills and valleys near the Maude family, it can be extremely challenging to actually pinpoint the boundary line between property, much less put a fence on the line."

Because of how common these boundary issues can be, the federal government has procedures in place for remedying these situations. The government can conduct a land swap to trade a portion of federal land for a portion of private land, issue a special use permit, sell the small parcel, or go through other disposal tools to address the boundary issue.

"Instead of following the normal procedure, the Forest Service took a simple matter of correcting historical boundaries and tried to make criminals out of the Maudes," Glover said. "Charles and Heather were each indicted separately, forcing them to retain

Continued on page 8

VACCINES AND CATTLE | PG. 10

Cattle have a deep-seated history with the creation and use of vaccines, and they're a vital tool for animal health and safety.

HIDDEN HAZARDS | PG. 11

Processing plants continue to find increasing numbers of foreign objects in beef carcasses and it's shining a bad light on beef.

A BELLWETHER FOR BALANCE | PG. 16

Don Cose examines four developments that may have a huge impact on the cattle market in 2025.

NCBA SECURES PUBLIC LANDS RULE REPEAL, PREVENTS DISRUPTIONS FOR GRAZERS

Thanks to the persistent advocacy of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and the Public Lands Council (PLC), ranchers across the West are celebrating a major victory as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) begins repealing its controversial "Conservation and Landscape Health" rule — commonly known as the "Public Lands Rule." During the Biden administration, this rule added conservation as an official use of federal lands, allowing for conservation leases which could have displaced cattle if grazing or any other use was deemed incompatible with restoration goals. In response to this organizational effort and the voices of ranchers nationwide, the Trump administration and new BLM leadership are now reversing course, preventing major disruptions to cattle production and safeguarding ranching on public lands.

The Biden administration's "Public Lands Rule" violated the multiple use mandate under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). NCBA and PLC challenged the rule in a 2024 lawsuit, not only because it violated the multiple use mandate, but it also would have paved the way for the federal government to remove family ranching operations and other uses from these working lands. Under FLPMA, BLM is required to balance the multiple uses of public lands, including livestock grazing, energy, mining, timber and recreation. The Biden-era rule would have upended this multiple use



Cattle producers who graze on public lands are a testing ground for activists.

system by adding conservation as a brand-new use for federal lands without Congressional approval, in direct conflict with existing federal law. The Biden administration also proposed this rule without input from federal lands ranchers and local communities that depend on revenue derived from grazing.

Continued on page 7

FIVE WINTER GRAZING TIPS | PG. 8

Grazing management is a year-round endeavor, but as producers head into winter, here are five easy things to consider.

CATTLEMEN'S COLLEGE FOR ALL | PG. 10

New this year, all registered attendees can participate in top-notch Cattlemen's College sessions.

2025 ESAP REGIONAL WINNERS | PG. 12

Each of these cattle operations display how they've spent years working to leave the land better than they found it for future generations of cattlemen and women.

WINNER
National Cattlemen
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Honorable Mention

The Drive print newsletter

Cattlemen's Beef Board

Cattlemen's Beef Board, Swanson Russell

Second Place

Angus Beef Bulletin EXTRA

Angus Beef Bulletin

Multiple members of the Angus Beef Bulletin team.

GENERAL EXCELLENCE: NEWSLETTER



WINNER

The Advantage Newsletter

Hereford Youth Foundation of America/National Junior Hereford Association

National Junior Hereford Association

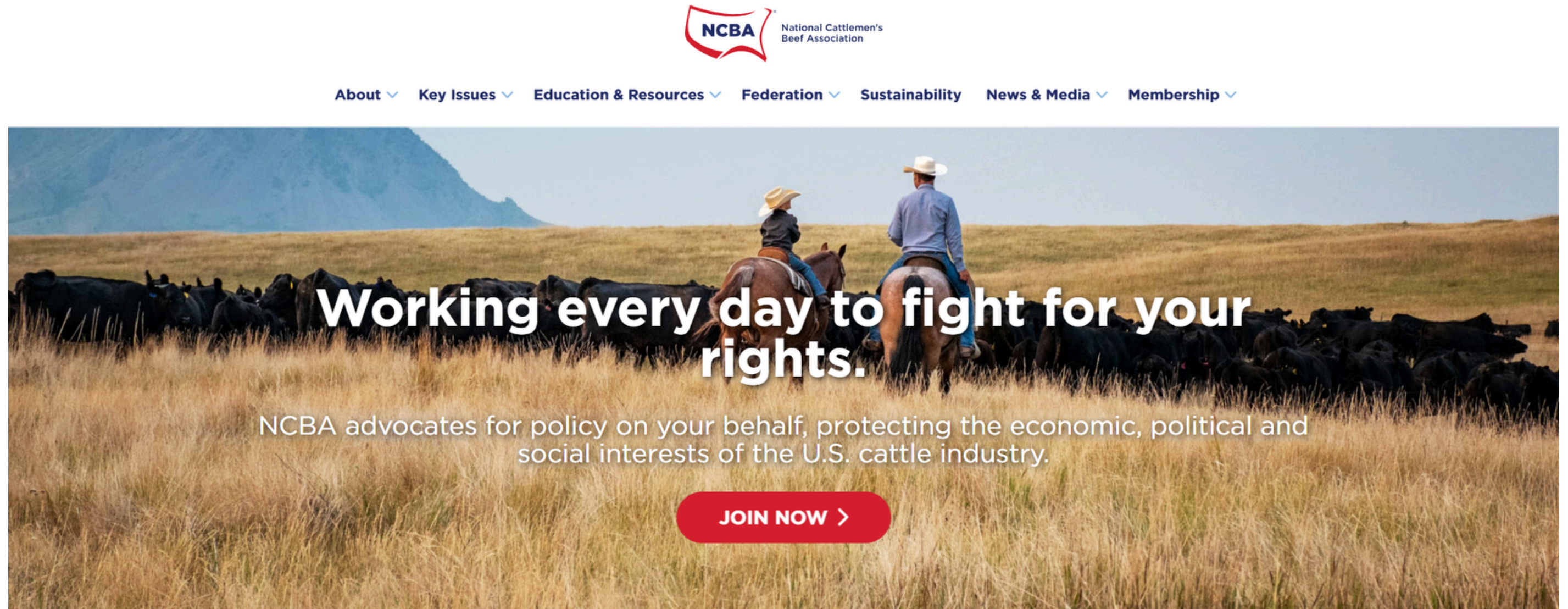
Second Place

Western Livestock Journal website

Western Livestock Journal

Tristan Martin

GENERAL EXCELLENCE: WEBSITE



WINNER

NCBA.org

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Honorable Mention

Maude Saga

Tri-State Livestock News

Publisher: Bree Poppe, Writers: Rachel Gabel and Carrie Stadheim

Second Place

In Good Hands

Angus Journal

Megan Silveira, Jenna Whitaker

GENERAL EXCELLENCE: STORY PACKAGE

MULTIMEDIA



PorkBusiness.com:
https://www.porkbusiness.com/news/hog-production/leading-heart-story-hoosierland-porks-jennifer-romero?utm_campaign=snd



Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1ECM8bxcnb/>

IN PRINT



PORK

PORK BUSINESS/NEWS/HOG PRODUCTION

Leading with Heart: The Story of Hoosierland Pork's Jennifer Romero

After multiple doctor visits, tests with no answers and excruciating pain, sow farm manager Jennifer Romero knew something was wrong. A trip to the emergency room followed by hospital admission finally resulted in a diagnosis.



By [Jennifer Shike](#)
November 10, 2025 07:38 AM



It started off as a minor inconvenience: Who doesn't have back pain when they work on a farm all day?

Jennifer Romero brushed it off because she didn't have time for it. As the Hoosierland Pork sow farm manager for Martin Family Farms, she knew her team needed her to be strong. But as spring turned to summer, the pain continued to escalate.

https://www.porkbusiness.com/news/hog-production/leading-heart-story-hoosierland-porks-jennifer-romero?utm_campaign=snd

WINNER
A Leader With Heart
Farm Journal's PORK

Writer: Jennifer Shike, Broadcaster: Clinton Griffiths, Videographer: Mike Byers

Honorable Mention

Drovers - State of the Beef Industry - 2025 Report

Drovers

Editor: Angie Stump Denton, Art Director: Lindsey Pound,
Content Manager: Wayne Hardy

Second Place

VISION, Issue 3

BioZyme Inc.

Writer: Shelia Grobosky

Design: Addie Raber

Ideation: Samantha Taylor

Proofers: Jenette Masarie, Jennifer Miller, Lysney Wittacre



WINNER

Salute to Service

Angus Journal

Angus Journal

Honorable Mention

Beef Resource Guide

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Second Place

2025 BioZyme Dealer Retreat Program

BioZyme Inc

Content created & designed by Marketing Team with lead by Samantha Taylor



WINNER

Red Angus Youth Expo Show Program

Cultivate Agency

Honorable Mention

Goat Rancher Aug. 2025-ABGA National Show

Goat Rancher

Terry Hankins, ABGA

Second Place

National Junior Angus Show

Angus Journal

NATIONAL SHOW COVERAGE



WINNER
2025 State Fair of Texas Show Coverage
Cultivate Agency

Honorable Mention

Eight Decades in the Saddle

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Designer: Clint Swearingen

Second Place

A Life With Leather

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Designer: David Brown



WINNER

Backbone and Bloodlines

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Designer: Clint Swearingen

Honorable Mention

'Winter-ready' cover

Angus Beef Bulletin

Artist: Leann Schleicher

Second Place

Shorthorn Country - January 2025 Cover

Shorthorn Country

Designer: Amy Studer

COVER



WINNER

Red Angus Magazine February Cover 2025

Red Angus Association of America

Publisher: Tracey Koester, Photographer: Lindsay Murdock

Honorable Mention

Western Livestock Journal - November 10, 2025

Western Livestock Journal

Anna Miller Fortozo, Charles Wallace, Kirby Brincefield, Mike Oldcorn, Hannah Jackson,
Tristan Martin

Second Place

USDA Cattle Plan

Tri-State Livestock News

Publisher: Bree Poppe; Designer: Tristen Polensky

NATIONAL
CATTLEMEN

National Cattlemen's
Beef Association

JULY 2025 | Vol. 41, No. 9 | NCBA.org

2025 YCC PROGRAM CULTIVATES THE NEXT
GENERATION OF BEEF INDUSTRY LEADERS

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) successfully concluded its 2025 Young Cattlemen's Conference (YCC) June 5, capping off an intensive, coast-to-coast leadership development experience for young and emerging leaders in the beef industry. The program, which is sponsored by John Deere, Tyson, Five Rivers Cattle Feeding and Farm Credit, spans eight days and four states. The YCC program offers state and breed affiliate-nominated producers an in-depth look at every sector of the beef supply chain while also developing advocacy and leadership skills essential for the next generation of cattle industry leaders.

The journey began in Denver, Colorado, where participants were introduced to the foundational work of NCBA, and provided with an in-depth look at current cattle and beef market dynamics from CattleFax CEO Randy Blach. The group explored NCBA's dual roles as a grassroots membership organization and as a contractor to the Beef Checkoff program, gaining valuable insight into how policy and promotion efforts are driven by producer involvement and input.

In Denver, the group also dove into hands-on leadership development, receiving training in effective spokesperson techniques and media engagement. These sessions prepared attendees to confidently communicate on behalf of the beef industry in their



Continued on page 13

SAFE, EFFECTIVE VACCINES | PG. 8
The regulatory process to ensure cattle vaccines are safe and continue to be effective is thorough and rigorous and requires the help of producers.

HAWAII CATTLEMEN'S TESTIFIES | PG. 11
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council's Nicole Galase travels to D.C. to speak in front of the House on the challenge of urban encroachment and loss of farmland.

FACES OF THE FEDERATION | PG. 18
Timmerly Heilyer shares how her involvement in the Federation of State Beef Councils has shaped her perspective.

WINNER

National Cattlemen July 2025

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Second Place

The Prairie's Song

Angus Journal

Photographer: Julie Mais
Designer: Jaime Albers



WINNER
We Like Ike
The American Quarter Horse Journal
Doug McElreath

Honorable Mention

Table of Contents

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Ian Kasnoff

Second Place

The Old Way

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Russ Grimes

Designer: Lori Hays

When Pigs Click

Social network analysis reveals new findings about animal behavior

By Jennifer Shike

Social networking isn't just for people trying to connect. Researchers are analyzing the social networks of pigs to better understand how pig-to-pig interactions ultimately impact performance and well-being.

"Just like humans, anytime you put a group of animals in a confined space, even though they have plenty of resources, they'll establish their own behaviors and hierarchy," says Dan Hamilton, director of product performance at PIC. "Some of those interactions are positive, some are negative. It's like putting your kids in the backseat of the car for too long. They may get a little bit antsy at each other after a while. Animals do the same."

PIC Digital Phenotyping Behavior Monitoring

CHOW HOUND

ACTIVITY

- 60% of time at feeder
- Frequently pushes others out

TRAITS

- Assertiveness: High
- Sociability: Low

SOCIAL BUTTERFLY

ACTIVITY

- Moves between groups
- Rarely assertive

TRAITS

- Assertiveness: Low
- Sociability: Very High

LONE WOLF

ACTIVITY

- Minimal interaction
- Sleeps alone in corner

TRAITS

- Assertiveness: Low
- Sociability: Very Low

WHAT'S AHEAD?

Hamilton thinks the next step is to place more cameras to collect additional data at nucleus and multiplication sites.

"Then we need to look at scenarios of factors we want to understand more to see if there's a better way to manage or feed pigs," he says. "I think we're still early enough in the process that we're highly encouraged we need to invest more, but we don't have enough learnings to confirm the final result."

PIC has been using camera vision for feed and leg selection, as well as to determine body condition on sows, farrowing duration and more.

"There are a lot of projects in the works," Hamilton says. "Some will be fruitful, some may not, but everyone is excited about it. We've got a whole team of engineers and some good partners in the industry that are helping us bring this technology to fruition. It's amazing how technology allows us to take these concepts from an idea to a result in a really short time. The hardest part is getting it commercialized, and

machine learning to come up with the next steps."

The research demonstrates how data-driven approaches can support more informed decisions on breeding, housing and welfare strategies, the study explains.

"If you think about pork production over the past 20 to 30 years, it continues to evolve, but a lot of the traits that we measure are really the same," Hamilton says. "The basic things like litter size, number weaned, pounds of pigs weaned, growth rate, efficiency and survivability are all important traits, but as we continue to push the envelope to improve welfare while improving efficiency and profitability, we need more traits to help with that."

aged to see them come up as 20% to 40% heritable. To put it into perspective, traits the industry typically selects for like litter size are below 10% heritable, he says. Some growth traits the industry selects for are now 20% to 30% heritable, so being in the 20% to 40% heritability on behavior is exciting.

"When you start to evaluate a pen of pigs, there's always one pig that moves around more. He's the agitator," Hamilton says. "There's another pig that always spends all his time in the feeder and pushes everybody else out. Those are just one-of observations, but social network analysis allows you to also know which pig is which, then tie that into their findings."

Findings revealed that as pigs spend more time together, their social interactions become more structured. Some pigs emerge as central figures within groups, indicating the development of a social hierarchy. Key indications of social connection, such as how central a pig was in the network or how connected it was to others, increased over

pen, collecting data on individual animals using cameras and movement sensors to record the pigs' posture and location in real time.

Through the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and techniques to map animals' interactions, researchers gained insights into pigs' social relationships.

"When you start to evaluate a pen of pigs, there's always one pig that moves around more. He's the agitator," Hamilton says. "There's another pig that always spends all his time in the feeder and pushes everybody else out. Those are just one-of observations, but social network analysis allows you to also know which pig is which, then tie that into their findings."

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PIGS HAVE CLUES, TOO

The study, conducted on a commercial pig breeding farm in the U.S., demonstrates how emerging technologies can be applied to modernize animal husbandry. An automated monitoring

Honorable Mention

Weathering the winter

Kansas Stockman

Macey Mueller

Second Place

'Are Record Cattle Prices Giving You Some Spending Money?'

Angus Beef Bulletin

Writer: Troy Smith

Using genomics in the commercial cowherd

KNOWN GENETICS HELP UNLOCK THE FULL POTENTIAL OF AN ANIMAL, REGARDLESS OF PEDIGREE STATUS

By Rachel Waggie

In an era where progress happens rapidly and technology constantly is evolving, producers who are willing to adapt quickly often reap the benefits of new opportunities. Though the use of genomic data is not new in the cattle industry, applying it to commercial cowherds recently has begun to gain more traction.

Jesse Luckie of Snake Creek Ranch near Ashland recognized an opportunity for genomic testing in his commercial cowherd more than five years ago. Luckie saw the value seedstock producers were adding through genomics and knew there eventually would be a trickle-down effect for the commercial sector of the industry. Instead of waiting to jump on the bandwagon, he became something of an early adopter of the technology among commercial cattlemen.

"We're all trying to make improvements in our cowherd," he said. "When [Snake Creek Ranch] started this process, the idea was basically just to get a good benchmark to improve upon."

Luckie said the key is to identify, and then focus on, those traits that need to be improved within the cowherd before starting genetic testing. At Snake Creek Ranch, highly heritable characteristics like calving ease, growth and carcass traits are emphasized through the genetic selection process. The ranch retains ownership on all its calves, develops its own replacement heifers and feeds out the remaining heifers and their steer mates. Carcass data then is collected and reviewed after harvest, providing a "report card" of sorts on which Luckie judges the herd.

Snake Creek currently only tests its females—using Method Genetics out of St. Joseph, MO—and uses artificial insemination and bulls with known genetic backgrounds to produce the next generation. Luckie said they plan to cull harder on age soon, reducing the maximum age of cows in the herd from 10 to 8 years old. By turning over females quicker, he can change and improve the genetic makeup of the cowherd more efficiently.

Luckie said genomics are a piece of the puzzle, but not the entire picture.

"I don't think genomic testing is a substitute for good herd management," he explained. "It's going to give you a baseline at the end of the day. You can't improve upon something that you know nothing about."

Philip Weltmer began using genomics on his herd of commercial females in 2014. W&S Ranch, Weltmer's beef operation near Smith Center, has used the genomic results in combination with phenotype from the outset, evaluating heifers both visually and genetically to select higher quality females.

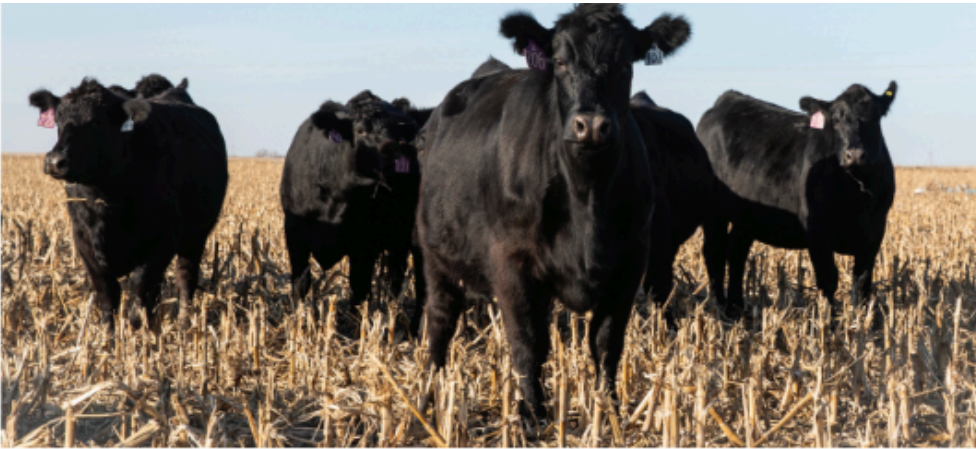
In the beginning, Weltmer handpicked females to test, but he soon realized there was potential for high-quality heifers to be overlooked. He expanded the genetic testing to cover all females and quickly saw positive results.

"The quality is changing; we can see it in our grid data," Weltmer said.

The 2024 calf crop was the second crop of which Weltmer tested all calves, both males and females, and already he has seen the benefit of testing steers. W&S Ranch uses the Igenity brand of genomic tests offered by Neogen. Igenity Feeder, a new feedlot test, is used for his steers. In the first year of using the novel tool, Weltmer said it was highly accurate, estimating a finished weight within an average of 3% of actual weight at the time of harvest. The feedlot tool also uses the DNA test to formulate a bell curve of dates near the projected end of the feeding phase for an animal, which Weltmer accounts for when selecting the optimum marketing strategy for a set of fed cattle.



Luckie and Weltmer both use tissue samples from the ear for testing.



Weltmer described the difference utilizing genomics has made to his commercial herd as night and day. Since 2004, the W&S Ranch cowherd has been managed in a cookie-cutter style, following the same routine year after year. Using DNA test results to make genetic changes and pinpoint specific traits has improved the animals' performance on pasture, in the feedlot and on the rail, and he has the data to prove it. More than 20 years ago, the first pen of cattle Weltmer finished weighed an average of 1,212 lbs. Last year's pen averaged 1,456 lbs. He credits improved genetics for the 244 lb. gain he's seen over the past two decades. Simultaneously, Weltmer has been able to find a "sweet spot" for ribeye area (REA) and produce consistent results for that characteristic. Through precise genetic selection, he took the herd's average REA from about 12 inches up to what he considers optimal, which is somewhere between 13.5 and 14 inches.

While some may think genomic testing only benefits large-scale producers, Weltmer believes the opposite. He stressed that utilizing critical genetic data may be even more important for producers with smaller herds. This is because the risks associated with retaining a female with essentially unknown genetics increase as herd size decreases, potentially both slowing the rate of genetic progress as well as lowering the value of that animal's offspring. For example, two replacement heifers in a herd of 20 females equate to 10% of that cowherd, a significant portion of genetic potential. Genomics could help that producer narrow down the best heifers to keep that would further the genetic progress of the herd rapidly and increase the value of offspring from that female while negating some of the risk factors.

Neogen Territory Manager for Kansas Rick Pfortmiller broadly described genomics as a risk management tool. More specifically, he explained it as the science of looking at genetic markers that indicate differences between animals and their genetic potential, or what an animal is expected to do under the perfect conditions. However, genomics is not a guarantee of how an animal will perform; phenotype, environment, nutrition and management also have an impact.

Pfortmiller compared the value of genetic testing to the value of time. He said, eventually, the animal likely will sort out the answers to producers' questions, but with genomics they can be found and changes made in a fraction of the time. As a basic example, it traditionally would take nearly two years for a black bull to show whether he carries the gene for red coat color: the first year to grow and mature, and then 283 days gestation for his first offspring to be born. Through testing, those markers can be identified at birth and knowledge of coat color status used for selection and management purposes.

The more a producer knows about their herd, the more they can base decisions on identifying the animals with increased profit potential and less risk, Pfortmiller said. Genomic testing can be adapted to benefit all types of producers, regardless of individual goals. With the ability to manage risk more specifically and the tools to pinpoint animals that can help reach a certain target, commercial producers can be more efficient than ever before.

Generally, the process of genetically testing animals is straightforward. DNA is collected from an animal at any point in its life, either through blood, hair, semen or tissue samples. After DNA has been collected according to the chosen company's protocols, samples are sent to the corresponding laboratory for testing. Producers work with the company to identify which tests they want to use and results typically are delivered within a few weeks of submission. Then, producers are able to customize their results, selecting which data points to consider when making decisions for the herd or prioritizing certain traits over others from year to year. In general, field representatives are available for interpretation of results, though services vary between companies.

Ultimately, Luckie and Weltmer agree the cost of genomic testing is covered many times over by the value added to the cowherd when the data is utilized.

"This isn't an expense in a heifer," Pfortmiller said. "It's an investment in the cowherd. If you know where you want to go, [genomics] can help you get there." ■

MARCH 2025

KANSAS STOCKMAN

WINNER

Using genomics in the commercial cowherd

Kansas Stockman

Rachel Waggie

Honorable Mention

Sharing Gratitude Strengthens Relationships

BioZyme Inc

Writer: Shelia Grobosky

Graphic Designers: Samantha Taylor & Addison Raber

Second Place

Why now is the right time to feed cattle in Illinois

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes

WHEN PRICES ARE HIGH

Cattle buyer and ag lender reflect on record cattle market.

Story by Jena McReil
Photos by Katie Barnett

As Craig Scarmardo opens the door from inside his pickup, he's met with a flood of familiar sounds — bawling calves, clanking gates and the rumble of a semi-truck in the distance. Hours before sunrise, the crew at Scarmardo Cattle Company near Caldwell is busy settling in new arrivals from the prior day's purchases.

The team of buyers attends nearly 70 auctions each week across Texas, filling orders for stocker and feedyard customers across the South and Midwest. Every day the facility is the stopping point for cattle on the way to their next destination.

Craig walks the pens in the early morning light and looks over the stock one by one. In one corner, there is a set of freshly weaned calves ready to run on wheat pasture in Central Texas. In another, a group of backgrounded feeders destined for a feedyard in Nebraska.

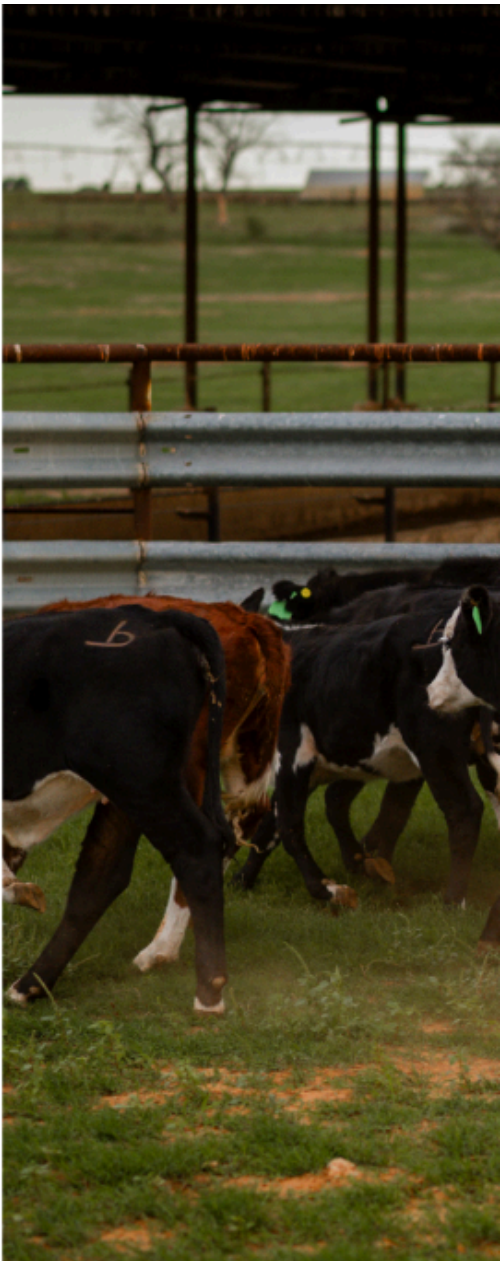
"Our job is to put cattle in the right place at the right time to maximize their value," Craig says. "We work to make both parties, the buyers and the sellers, happy."

Scarmardo Cattle Company is one of several family businesses established by Craig's father, Pete Scarmardo. Right out of high school in the late 1970s he purchased a few head of cattle and leased a set of pens. From there, Pete pursued his dream and built a future in the agriculture industry for his three sons: Scott, Craig and Ty.

"It boils down to hard work," Craig says of his father. "Some strategies work, and some are lessons, but he gets up and goes to work every single day."

Decades ago, no one could have anticipated weaned calves bringing \$1,500 per head or \$2,000 eight-weight steers. Today's record-high cattle prices bring profit potential, but also a high-stakes game of financial planning. Craig says keeping a close eye on the ledger and maintaining a strong relationship with a trusted agriculture lender is key.

"Whether we're buying auction calves, calves off the ranch or a string of yearlings off winter pasture, the amount of dollars we are handling is exponentially bigger than it was five years ago," he says. "So it's been a little tougher to operate. We've put more capital at risk on smaller margins."



WINNER

'When Prices Are High,' January 2025

The Cattleman

Writer: Jena McReil, Grant Company

Honorable Mention

Not Your Granddaddy's Cows

Angus Journal

Becky Mills

Second Place

Pigs of the Future: Genetic technology unlocks precision and understanding

Farm Journal's PORK

Jennifer Shike



Angus Beef Bulletin
100
March 2025

Quality Takes Time

Growth curves favor greater carcass premiums with increased days on feed.

by Miranda Reiman, director of digital content and strategy.

When it comes to finishing beef cattle, a pound of gain is a pound of gain, right? Not so fast, says livestock growth biologist Pete Anderson. The director of research for Midwest FMS says it's important to understand the variation in the weight cattle put on throughout the finishing phase, because it could change marketing decisions. "A fed steer is not just a larger version of

process like reproduction, healing or respiration. Growth is a process, and understanding that process is critical to managing for carcass value." **Bovine biology 101** Most mammals follow similar growth curves. Bone growth levels off first, followed by muscle, and fat accumulates more quickly toward the end. "Fat doesn't grow until we get excess calories," he notes. It takes more calories

feeding period, meaning that it is less efficient and more expensive to put weight on. "The more they weigh, the higher their maintenance requirement is, and the energy required for that increases," Anderson says. So, the logic might follow that the best approach is to market cattle before they hit this most inefficient stage of feeding. Once again, not so fast, says Anderson. By the final days on feed, up to 80%-90%

a steer is gaining 4 pounds (lb.) a day, about 3.2 lb. per day is being added to the carcass, and dressing percentage is improving, too. "You have to ask yourself, is the daily cost more or less than the value of 3.2 pounds of carcass? If it's more, keep them on feed. If it's less, then sell them," he says, admitting it's more complicated than that, but it's a place to start. "Very simply, profitability increases until the incremental cost of gain exceeds the sale price."

Marketing method matters

One major deciding factor is how the cattle are sold. "On any given day, some individual animals are becoming more valuable, and some are becoming less valuable," Anderson says. "The value of the entire group may be increasing or decreasing, but it is always changing." Those who sell on a live basis will not benefit from the increase in carcass value like those selling on a grid, and not all cattle are ideally matched for that marketing method.

"If you're selling average cattle on the grid, you should be getting better than average price because of the risk you carry," Anderson says. "If you're selling outstanding cattle, you should get way more. If you're selling cattle that don't fit, you're going to get hit." Discounts and premiums look different today than they used to, so any math that relies on decades-old equations is probably dated, he notes. "Packers are accepting bigger carcasses. They're a lot more accommodating for heavier," he notes, adding, "and in a population where we're only going to have 25 million fed cattle, we have to be." Market signals suggest the ideal target is to get cattle as heavy as possible, without pushing too many into overweight carcass



"Very simply, profitability increases until the incremental cost of gain exceeds the sale price." **Pete Anderson**

Anderson says, is to sort strategically at the end of the feeding period, but that adds cost and disruption so it's not right for all situations.

Profit potential

Avoiding discounts is important, but the real route to increased profitability lies in moving the marbling needle. "Quality grade drives your grid results," Anderson says. Population data indicate that jumping from 70% Choice to 90% Choice has the correlated effect of doubling the number of Prime and Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) carcasses. It also increases yield grade (YG) 2s, but

Anderson says it's almost impossible for lean premiums to outweigh marbling premiums. "You get 10% more Yield Grade 2s and you can take your wife to dinner," Anderson says. "You get 10% more Prime and you can take your wife to dinner in Cozumel. That's the difference."

Anderson looks to a day when adding marbling doesn't automatically mean adding external fat, too. Although it's not a dream immediately realized, he is confident the breed can make strides. "Here's why I know we can: because we've done it before," he says, showing a chart of Angus birth weight and yearling weight trends. "Birth weight and yearling traits are correlated traits. Marbling and external fat are correlated traits. When you get more of one without any selection pressure on the other, you get more of the other because they come along together." Yet, in the early 1990s, those trends

"We put a lid on birth weight and continued to get more yearling weight," Anderson points out, as producers put downward pressure on birth weight and upward pressure on growth. It takes an average of 246.8 lb. of corn to take an animal from a YG3 to a YG4, but moving that same animal from low-Choice to premium-Choice — the marbling requirement for CAB — takes just 13.2 lb. of corn. "What if we got more marbling without more fat?" Anderson ventures. "We can move them a whole quality grade for a buck and a half. If we just get the marbling, it's dang near free." Anderson says that will be increasingly

important in the future with more pressure on environmental sustainability and efficiency. "Sooner or later we're going to have to answer for the calories that we're putting in these cattle," he says. For now, beef is three and four times more expensive than competing proteins, and consumers still choose beef. "If we're going to charge that premium, it better taste good," Anderson says. Biologically, marbling is the last addition to the carcass. But quality grade should not be an afterthought in a profitability calculation.

"The point here is to do the math, use the tools, get the calculators. Because it's not so simple that we can just do it in our head, drive by and say, 'I think we should feed another week,'" Anderson says. "It's way more complicated than that." **NR**

Editor's note: Anderson presented at the 2024 CAB Feeding Quality Forum in Dodge City, Kan. To review his PowerPoint® presentation or discuss other presentations,

Angus Beef Bulletin
101
March 2025

WINNER
'Quality Takes Time'
Angus Beef Bulletin
Writer: Miranda Reiman

Honorable Mention

Eight Decades in the Saddle

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Jim Jennings

Second Place

Purpose Follows Passion

Certified Angus Beef

Writer: Lindsay Graber Runft

IN GOOD HANDS

Oklahoma program finds success in and out of the show ring

by Megan Silveira, managing editor

Palms a little shaky, Tre Broome gripped his show stick. His left hand was white-knuckled around the tool, but his right? His right hand was loose and steady on the halter — just what Mr. Black, his steer, needed before walking into the grand drive of a lifetime.

Hands are important. They're what Broome used all summer to work Mr. Black's hair. Hands are what a team of flitters used to get that same animal ready to compete at a show this summer in Tulsa, Okla.

But they're more than just a tool to get things done. Broome knows a good set of hands can also offer support. He's felt it in the "job well done" handshake from one of his mentors, Bo Blakey.

It's even a hand that marked one of Broome's greatest moments as a showman, when Scott Greimer brought his palm down on Mr. Black's side, offering the duo the champ slap at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) Steer Show.

While all of these hands have played a big role in Broome's life, there's one encounter that stands out from the rest. The Boys Ranch Town in Edmond has been Broome's home for the last three years, and thanks to Blakey and other ranch staff, Broome's felt the warm embrace from the hands of God.

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In Good Hands *continued from page 25*

Ironically, now it's hard to keep him out of the show barn.

"I like the environment," Broome says. "It just got me past the obstacles that I was going through. When I got here, I got saved. God working in my life just made me a better person."

MORE THAN LUCK

Broome is one of 12 boys who share daily chores in the show barn. At any given time, Blakey says there are up to 15 animals they're caring for.

As the show barn manager, it's been Stratton Walck's job for the past year and a half to help the boys care for the animals and help prepare for shows. While he was taking on the task of teaching others when he accepted the role, the young cattleman admits he had a lot to learn, too.

"I would say I was a bit lost and just trying to jump around, make things happen and [figure out] what I wanted to do," he explains. "It's definitely been a change in my life. It's helped me out for the better."

While putting himself in a faith-filled community like Boys Ranch Town has helped Walck connect deeper with the Lord, he says he's been reminded — alongside the boys — that the cattle business is about camaraderie.

"The boys we've got right here today, they've come a long, long way," he says with a soft smile as he watches a crew of about six wash calves. "Overall they do a really good job of working together."

It's a fine line, he adds, finding the balance of keeping the boys safe and productive while letting them gain their independence and confidence. Like most stock show kids, age can play a big factor in determining roles in the barn.

"I really try to push those older kids to be leaders," Walck explains.

Broome was one of those Walck could see had potential.

"I really had a gift for it," Blakey confirms. "He literally has broke most animals in our barn, and he's super patient. He's worked hard to get to that point, and he's a good leader and role model for the other boys."

That dedication helped Broome earn the right to first pick at show calves this year.

While Blakey is quick to admit their team isn't on the mission of breeding steers, it seemed God had different plans when an embryo calf came out as Mr. Black rather than Mrs.



“Faith and livestock just go hand in hand. I think that’s why we’re in the ag business.”

— BO BLAKEY

"When I saw him, I was like 'Yes, I want that steer,'" Broome says. "I picked him, and it was just the perfect option. I could see how good he was."

Despite the confidence, there were a lot of nerves come show day in Tulsa. Winning the class was one thing, but Broome, Walck and Blakey all admit they felt a bit like they were floating when it was time for the grand drive.

"I was kind of zoned out," Broome admits with a laugh, "just hoping and wishing to win."

When the champ slap came, Broome was excited — not just for himself, but for the entire team at Boys Ranch Town.

"It was amazing," he says. "It wasn't just a win for me; it was a win for all of us because we all put in work. It's amazing having everybody here. I wouldn't trade any of them for anything, because we just have the chemistry to be able to work together and we just love each other."

While Blakey could easily pat himself on the back for the breeding decisions he's helped make, he looks at the purple and gold banner now hanging in the office at the ranch and sees a much bigger picture.

"You can't breed for boilers all the time then all of a sudden have the grand champion steer [at the NJAS] and think that I did it," Blakey says. "I didn't. It's what God has done."

Reveling in the win and the love of the One who made it possible, Broome's got big plans for his future. He's set to attend Oklahoma State University in the next year, where his studies will help him prepare for a future career as an ag teacher.

He's come to realize his story isn't just a coincidence or a twist of fate.

Every challenging moment of the past was God moving intentionally, ensuring Broome would land in good hands at the Boys Ranch Town.

In this tight-knit, faithful community, Broome's been supported. He's been grounded, he's been challenged, he's been saved.

It's a legacy he'll be proud to hand off to the next generation. ■



VOLUNTEERS

Part of the appeal to joining the Boys Ranch Town show team, in Bo Blakey's opinion, is the access to good people in the business breed.

"I think in the Angus industry... and especially in the Oklahoma Angus Association, the people who come around our boys and support them at shows is amazing," he says.

Mark Johnson and Ben Horrichow are two names that come to mind easily. Blakey says both have donated cattle to the program and played a significant role in helping their program find show calves.

From Ben Broome's eyes, donations and help like this have changed his life. "I would like to say thank you to all of y'all. I thank you," he says. "We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for y'all."

While Blakey is always humbled by the support, he's come to know that love and support are never in short supply in the cattle business.

"Faith and livestock just go hand in hand," he says. "I think that's why we're in the ag business."



Know someone who needs the help of Boys Ranch Town and Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children?
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Boys Ranch Town

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Megan Silveira

Honorable Mention

Choose Safety - Always

Angus Journal

Megan Clark

Second Place

Weaning Done Right

Drovers

Angie Stump Denton

Baltar's note: Kim Holt is a freelance writer and copywriter from Caldwell, Idaho.

Honorable Mention

From Tragedy to Legacy

DTN/Progressive Farmer

Pamela Smith

Second Place

"Calves Worth More Than Corn"

Angus Beef Bulletin

Writer: Paige Nelson



WINNER

'Bold Flavor, Better Beef,' October 2025

The Cattleman

Writer: Shelby Kirton, TSCRA

Honorable Mention

Mexican Border Closure Burdens Texas Feedyards

DTN/Progressive Farmer

Jennifer Carrico

Second Place

Poisoned Pastures

DTN/Progressive Farmer

Chris Clayton



THE ROAD AHEAD

Industry leaders offer predictions for the beef cattle business.

By Jena McRell

Rising from their seats, a crowd of cattle raisers applauded as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins took the stage during the 2025 Cattle Raisers Convention & Expo in Fort Worth. The Texas native spoke April 12 during Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association's annual membership meeting.

"It's really great to be here. This is my background and passion," Rollins said. "I have loved traveling the country. We have been to almost 10 states now, but to be here with the cattle raisers feels like coming home."

That is exactly where Rollins was in the room full of ranchers, landowners and wildlife managers who shared a passion for the land and livestock. With lifelong ties to rural America, Rollins grew up near Glen Rose, about an hour south of Fort Worth.

She attended Texas A&M University on an agriculture scholarship and later earned a juris doctorate from the University of Texas School of Law. Her distinguished career has involved public policy and advocacy work, including serving as domestic policy chief during President Donald Trump's first administration.

A Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association member herself, Rollins gave a nod to the organization's early founders who, nearly 150 years ago, recognized the need to stand together and preserve the ranching way of life. She emphasized this important call to lead and protect, saying, "This country was built by ordinary people who were called to meet their moment."

Rollins was sworn in as the 33rd U.S. Secretary of Agriculture in February, and since that time, has been moving full steam ahead at USDA. "We are putting farmers and ranchers first," she said. "We want to get rid of every barrier between you and success."

Among the Trump administration's priorities are reducing bureaucratic red tape and overreach, renegotiating imbalanced trade commitments, and ushering in a new era of prosperity for rural America.

"I'm so honored to be part of such a transformative, somewhat disruptive, administration," Rollins said, "as we work to return the power to the people and to give all of you the space that you need to do what you do best — feed America and the world."

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, a native of Glen Rose, addresses the crowd during the 2025 Cattle Raisers Convention & Expo.

WINNER

'The Road Ahead,' June 2025

The Cattleman

Writer: Jena McRell, Grant Company

Honorable Mention

Beef Producers, It's Time to Speak Up

DTN/Progressive Farmer

Jennifer Carrico & ShayLe Stewart

Second Place

“Common Ground: It all starts by defining your breeding objective.”

Angus Beef Bulletin

Writer: Mark McCully

From The Editor

Before you pay extra, put the difference in perspective.



Shauna Hermel, editor
sherme@angus.org

It's bull-sale season. As you comb through your options, whether you are selecting your next herd sire from amongst your go-to seedstock supplier's offering, attending a sale or using Angus Media's new global sale book search (see page 132), there's a table I encourage you to use.

It's called "Accuracy and Associated Possible Change," and it can be found online at <https://bit.ly/03AccAPC>. You can navigate to it from www.angus.org by choosing "Tools & Resources" in the upper navigation and selecting "Accuracy and Possible Change" from the submenu.

It's a big table, but it is oh so important in putting differences in expected progeny difference (EPD) values into perspective when you are pricing your next herd sire. Bull A may excel in calving ease direct (CED) by 3, but is that enough to matter? Bull B may have 10 pounds (lb.) more weaning weight (WW) EPD, but is that enough to matter? The answer is it depends — on your breeding objectives, but also on the accuracy and the associated possible change in those numbers.

Basic concepts

Accuracy (Acc) is easy. Think of it as the confidence we have that the current EPD will be the animal's true EPD. Sires used heavily in multiple herds through artificial insemination (AI) may reach accuracy values of 0.95, or even 0.99, meaning we are 99% confident that bull's EPD is his true value.

While the best genetics in the breed may be being born right now, they will start with EPDs that are pedigree averages of their sire's and dam's EPDs and an accuracy of 0.05. As registered Angus breeders submit data (individual performance, genomic profile and progeny records) to Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®), the accuracies increase. While most yearlings won't have progeny, genomic testing can provide prediction insight equivalent to having progeny (see "Progeny Equivalents" table at <https://bit.ly/03stakesPE>) and get us to accuracies on yearlings of 0.35-0.45.

Possible change is really pretty simple, too. For each 0.05 accuracy for each EPD, there is a possible change value assigned. That value is 1 standard deviation (SD).

Animal performance within a population will fall within a normal distribution — that bell-shaped curve — with most animals (68%) falling within 1 SD of the average, 95% falling within 2 SD, and 99% falling within 3 SD.



Tied to an accuracy value of a bull's EPD, it also gives us a window within which we can expect a chosen bull's true EPD value to fall. For example, at an accuracy value of 0.35, the possible change value is 10.2 for WW. If our bull has a WW EPD of 67, we have a 68% confidence his true EPD will fall between 56.8 and 77.2 (67 ± 10.2). We would have 95% confidence his true EPD would fall within 46.6 and 87.4 (67 ± 20.4) lb.

Seem like a large window? At 0.80 accuracy, the possible change value for WW is much less — 3.1. Consider a bull with a 67 WW EPD at 0.80 accuracy. With 68% confidence, we would expect that bull's true EPD to fall within 63.9 and 70.1; with 95% confidence, we would expect his true EPD to be between 60.8 and 73.2.

Another point, to be "statistically different," values must be at least 1 SD apart. With a 0.35 accuracy, a WW EPD of 70 would not be significantly different from a WW EPD of 65. However, at a 0.80 accuracy there would be a significant difference.

Putting it into practice

So, knowing what we know, how do we compare the two sets of EPDs in Fig. 1? Let's start with CED. Bull A has a 7.0 CED; Bull B has a 13 CED. At an accuracy of 0.35, the possible change is 6.7, putting Bull A's 1 SD window at 0.3 to 13.7 and Bull B's window at 6.3 to 19.7. With only a 6-lb. difference, the CED EPDs of these two bulls are not significantly different, but it's close. How much problem calving ease is for your herd will determine if the difference is significant enough for you to pay more for.

Look at weaning weight. Bull A has a WW of 67 at a 0.42 accuracy, for a 1 SD window of 57.6 to 76.4 (67 ± 9.4). Bull B has a 79 WW EPD at a 0.45 accuracy, for a 1 SD window of 70.4 to 87.6 (79 ± 8.6). While there is some overlap, there is a significant difference in the two bulls. If you sell at your local auction market soon after weaning, Bull B's WW advantage may provide the greater reason to bid higher.

One more. Marbling. Bull A has a marbling EPD of 0.94 at 0.36 accuracy. A possible change value of 0.20 gives a 1 SD window of 0.74 to 1.14. Bull B has a 0.71 marbling EPD at 0.41 accuracy. A 0.18 possible change provides a 1 SD window of 0.53 to 0.89. If you retain ownership through the feedlot or want to increase your score on the Genetic Merit Scorecard™, there's a real difference.

Each bull has his own advantages; but, as you compare EPD and dollar value profiles, don't just look at whether the EPD is numerically higher or lower. Consider the accuracy of the EPD, how much it could change (possible change) and whether two values are significantly different. **AB**

Fig. 1: Comparing EPD profiles of bulls

	Production EPDs					Maternal EPDs			Carcase EPDs		
	CED	EM	WW	DWC	CEM	MS	MR	EP	FBF		
Bull A	7.0	-2.0	+67	+116	+17	+16	+25	+34	+42	+267	
ACC	.35	.50	.42	.37	.34	.28	.26	.36	.34	.32	
	Production EPDs					Maternal EPDs			Carcase EPDs		
	CED	EM	WW	DWC	CEM	MS	MR	EP	FBF		
Bull B	13.0	+3.0	+79	+144	+21	+15	+21	+17	+45	+255	
ACC	.37	.54	.45	.48	.39	.34	.35	.41	.40	.36	

WINNER

“From the Editor: Before you pay extra, put the difference in perspective.”

Angus Beef Bulletin

Writer: Shauna Hermel

Honorable Mention

Ranch Writing

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Jim Jennings

Second Place

Angus Angle

Angus Journal

Julie Mais

Capture the memories

WHERE I CAME FROM
OPINION

BY BETTY HAYNES

"HELLO?" I ANSWERED, teetering the phone between my ear and shoulder as I carried feed to our chickens. "If you still want to take some pictures, now is your chance," my husband, Dan, growled through the phone. I took inventory of my shabby appearance: athletic shorts, mud boots, old T-shirt. Sigh. Sweat dripped from my brow as I thought of all the reasons why I shouldn't be in front of the camera. There was no time to shower, no time to put on makeup, and definitely no time to lose 50 pounds. All week I had been trying to organize

an evening for a few family wheat harvest photos. Each time, I was met with a variety of very real farm excuses. Like: "Rain is on the way." "I'm trying to finish this field before dark." "We're broken down." Or my personal favorite, "I'm just really not in the mood." Fair enough. I had given up on my chances of snagging any shots of our sweet girls standing in amber waves of grain. But now, as he pulled into the last field, Dan changed his mind. The sun was setting, and our time was running out. The girls and I quickly changed and drove a few miles to the wheat field. Dan climbed down from the combine to greet us in filthy blue jeans and a stained shirt. A tired smile formed behind his scruffy, unshaven face. Bonus points for authenticity, right? I snapped some photos of Dan, Clare and Stella, thinking we'd have a handful of win-

ners. We smiled and laughed and had the best time. I clumsily balanced my camera on the hood of the car for a self-timer shot of us all, knowing that capturing four perfectly timed smiles was nearly impossible.

MEMORIES FROM THE LENS My friend Haley Stewart has a photo project called Hands of Harvest, where she photographs families working on the farm, particularly during harvest and planting. Haley says she wants to make sure farm families never forget working alongside the generations who came before. My family is as guilty as any for not photographing workdays on the farm. Several years ago, we signed up for the Hands of Harvest project when my grandpa Kenny was still living. Haley got photos of him on the farm — all smiles and callused hands and Carhartt coat. Today, these photos are priceless mementos of a time we'll never get back. The morning after our impromptu shoot, I went through the photos. Tears welled in my eyes at how precious our little family is, how I love them so much my heart could burst, and how thankful I am to have



FAMILY: With dirty clothes and sweaty faces, we took last-minute family photos. *—BETTY HAYNES*

taken the time to document the day. In 20 years, it won't matter that I was sweaty and bare-faced and carrying a few more pounds than I'd like. Dan won't look back and see dirty, stained clothes and a scruffy face. We will see our family just as we are right now — all of the messy, beautiful, perfect details of life in the summer of 2025. So, here's your sign to take the pictures and save the memory. Do it while the people you love are still here and while your children are still little, because time sure is a thief. *Haynes writes from her Oakford farm. Email her at betty@midwesternlens.com.*

The not-so-glamorous side of living on the farm

WHERE I CAME FROM
OPINION

BY BETTY HAYNES

DAN OPENED THE front door, and his gaze met mine. The look on his face meant one thing: Something was wrong. "Don't go looking for Josie," he said softly, knowing our 3-year-old, Clare, was within earshot. My stomach dropped. Sweet Josie, Clare's favorite kitten, Josie. The first litter born at the farm. Josie. The kitten Clare sneaks into her bedroom, Josie. "What happened?" I asked, already knowing the answer. He dropped his gaze and shook his head. Oh no. This one is going to hurt.

THE CIRCLE OF LIFE I turned 30 this year and have lived on the farm for most of my life. I've loved — and lost — countless animals. And yet, it never gets easier. I can still remember the phone call to

my college dorm, four hours from home, when my mom broke the news that Honey, our golden retriever, had broken her leg. She was 14 and would need to be put down. I was heartbroken. One of the hardest lessons on the farm is reckoning with the purpose livestock serve for our families. Every year we'd raise, feed and love our 4-H calves, understanding they served a greater purpose. The sale of those calves helped put me through college. And today, our cattle, pigs and chickens literally put food on our table. In some ways, the death of our pets and livestock is the hardest it's ever been. Because now, not only do I need to face my own grief, but I have the near-impossible task of explaining death to my animal-loving, empathetic, wise-beyond-her-years 3-year-old. And the proceeding cascade of "whys" that I can't answer. Earlier this year, we had to put down my childhood horse, Chief. He colicked and didn't come out of it. And even though he was 27 and blind, it was still hard. Clare had grown to love Chief, and we fed him every day. One day he was gone, and she didn't understand why.



KITTEN: This litter of kittens has been a special one, marking our first born on the farm. Clare has loved them each dearly — making them blanket pets, giving them hugs and feeding them treats. I knew the loss of her favorite kitten, Josie, would be especially challenging to explain. *—BETTY HAYNES*

Cattle farmers: Pawns in the world trade game

WHERE I CAME FROM
OPINION

BY BETTY HAYNES

"THIS IS A pure exodus of funds from the cattle market," our hedge broker said as my husband and I planned our next move on the farming chessboard. It's not that we didn't expect cattle markets to decrease. Every time we've sold cattle in the last 12 months, Dan has said, "There's no way it can get any higher than this." But it has. The kicker is how it happened and what it means for small family farms like ours. We're 31-year-old farmers who grow corn, soybeans and wheat, plus feed cattle to support our growing family. The last few years have been a challenge for the grain side of our farm, wading through negligible grain markets, outrageous input costs and questionable trade deals. Through it all, cattle were our life raft.



CATTLE: On the roller coaster of current events and cattle markets, this is us — checking cows with our girls on the farm we've worked so hard for. *—BETTY HAYNES*

not only does it insult the intelligence of America's cattlemen and women — it's flat-out incorrect. "It's a fundamental misunderstanding of the market and the drivers of beef in the grocery store," says Josh St. Peters, Illinois Beef Association executive vice president. "We've been in a two-and-half-year run of strong cattle markets, and tariffs have not been a true factor in this." Cattle price is much more complex, reflecting a decade of decreasing supply from drought, liquidation and declining heifer retention. At the same time, consumer demand for U.S. beef's taste, texture and quality continues to climb. "To keep American beef 'first,' I understand that we need a global market. To maintain consumer demand for ground beef, we need to import lean trim from countries like Argentina. Conversely, global markets help add value to U.S. beef by exporting cuts that our consumers don't buy, like oxtail. "The most maddening part of the president's Argentina announcement is that he made it about the price of our product," St. Peters says. "It's incredibly disappointing for him to beat this over our head without understanding that family farmers are price takers and not price makers." **TRUE CONSEQUENCES** We operate in a free market that runs on price discovery, not price fixing from the government. Maybe the real question isn't why the price of beef is so high, but why people are already out of money when they walk into the grocery store? As I write this, the cash price of cattle is down almost 20 cents from where it was

The retail beef price has yet to respond. To put it plainly, if we crash the cattle market, it would take months for consumers to see lower prices at the grocery store. But it would immediately pop the life raft for cattle feeders like Dan and me. Trump touts that tariffs and trade deals will be good for America long term, but how many small and medium-size family farms will we sacrifice in the short term? "There are a lot of people torn between their politics and their pocketbook," St. Peters says. How long can young farmers like Dan and me weather an environment where every commodity on the farm could either lose money or break even? Not very long. The farm isn't just our job — it's our home and our life. And I'm tired of our beef and our soybeans and our sweat and our team being pawns in the world trade game. *Haynes writes from her Oakford farm. Email her at betty@midwesternlens.com.*



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Midwestern Lens
Betty Haynes

Honorable Mention

Finding Financing For Farming

DTN/Progressive Farmer

Elaine Shein

Second Place

Who's Your Daddy?

The American Quarter Horse Journal

Becky Newell

THE FLUID BORDER CRISIS

South Texas agriculture is reeling from Mexico's failure to deliver essential water under a 1944 treaty.

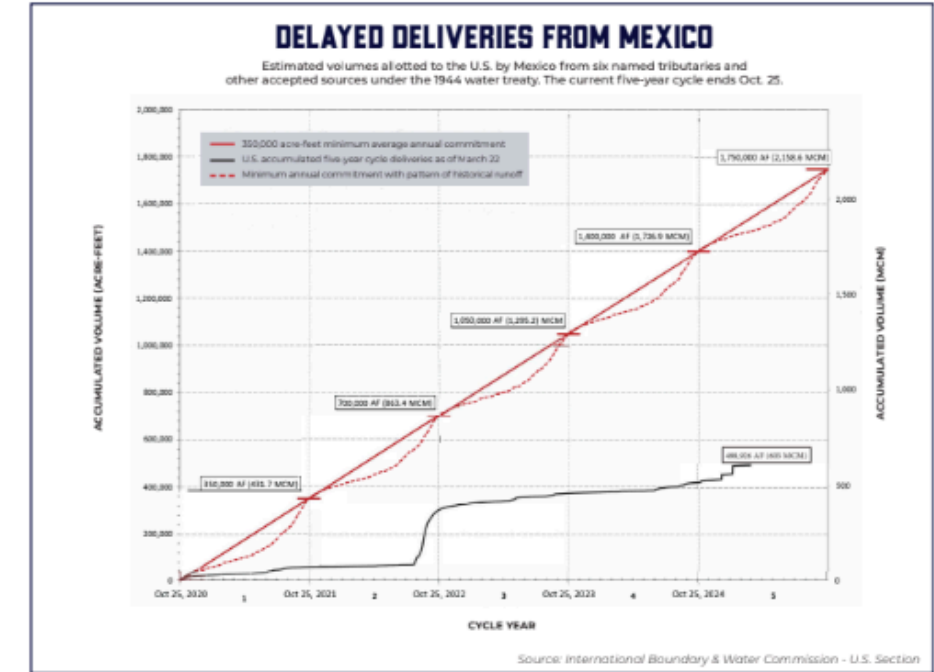
By Diane Meyer

It was only February in the Rio Grande Valley, and already Fausto Salinas Jr. was feeding his cows a bare-bones ration.

For South Texas ranchers like Salinas, feeding cattle hay through the dry months has always been part of the job. But with no rain since August 2024, this year is shaping up to be grimmer than the last. "Right now, we're running hay through a vertical mixer, adding a little cottonseed meal and corn just to keep them alive," he says. "They're not gaining weight, but at least they're surviving."

Salinas, a longtime Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association member, has been forced to sell one-third of his herd. His family's fifth-generation farm in Hidalgo and Starr counties that once provided for his cattle and crops has been left barren, the result of both an unforgiving drought and a broken promise.

This struggle isn't just the work of Mother Nature — it's a crisis exacerbated by politics. Under the 1944 U.S.-Mexico Water Treaty, Mexico is required to send an average of 350,000 acre-feet of water per year to the U.S. from six of its tributaries. But with Mexico's delinquent deliveries, Texas ranchers and farmers are left in limbo. Last year, producers received negative water allocations, leaving them unable to grow essential forage crops.



Mexico's hesitance to share water with the U.S. stems from pressing domestic challenges, including severe droughts, municipal water shortages — particularly in Mexico City — and the growing demands of its agricultural sector. The country is heavily reliant on irrigation, especially in its northern regions.

As a result, citizens and farmers demand their government prioritize domestic water needs, often complicating efforts to meet international treaty obligations. Janecka says these dynamics incite Mexico to pray for rainfall, which has largely worked.

"It's impossibly unpopular for a Mexican president to take water from their own citizens to give to Texans, particularly Texas farmers," he says. "So, they allow the rain to fall where it does and provide the water that enters the basin. But in terms of deliveries, Mexico has apparently not proactively delivered water in living memory."

In the past, when Mexico claimed there wasn't enough water to make deliveries, the U.S. had little recourse but to take them at their word. Today, technology provides a more exact understanding of rainfall patterns and river basin conditions, making it clearer than ever that Mexico is prioritizing its own water users while leaving Texas agriculture and cities with inadequate supply.

"That's where we are in this relationship," Sulemana says. "The hard facts are that each of the last three years, we've started the year with less water in reserves than we did the year before. We've hit historical lows."

"Mexico is the furthest behind they've ever been in total amount, and at this time in the cycle," Janecka echoes. "We are in the most dire situation we've ever been in terms of where our existing supply is at this point in the growing season, heading into the next year. So, I have nothing but concern."

CONSEQUENCES

For generations, livestock and crop producers in South Texas have relied on irrigation as a safety net during drought. Access to water meant ranchers could stockpile hay, ensuring their herds had feed during dry periods.

HOW MUCH WATER ARE WE TALKING?

Mexico is responsible for delivering an annual average of 350,000 acre-feet — about 114 billion gallons — of water to South Texas. For perspective:



It could fill the Empire State Building **412 TIMES.**



It could fill Dallas Cowboys' AT&T Stadium over **146 TIMES.**



It would create a **5-INCH-DEEP** lake across Big Bend National Park.



About 1.2% of Lake Mead's full capacity of **28.9 MILLION** acre-feet.

without legislative approval from Washington, D.C., and Mexico City. According to Janecka, minutes are adopted routinely and allow for important progress.

The most recent November 2024 development, Minute 331, marks a historic shift by granting Mexico greater flexibility in water deliveries to the U.S. Previously, Mexico could only provide additional water under specific conditions, such as when attempting to meet past-due obligations.

Now, Mexico can deliver excess water at any time, allowing for improved resource management. Minute 331 also includes a controversial provision allowing Mexico to receive treaty credit for water releases from tributaries below Amistad and Falcon reservoirs, such as the San Juan River, which U.S. users historically viewed as free water.

Janecka believes that while the International Boundary and Water Commission and state-level negotiations provide a foundation for collaborative discussions, meaningful progress is inhibited by deeper political and economic factors. One pressing issue is the influence of illicit actors like cartel-affiliated groups exerting control over water distribution in Mexico, ensuring resources are directed to their allies while independent farmers are left without. This gray-market water economy complicates enforcement efforts beyond the commission's jurisdiction.

Given these realities, experts say the U.S. must find ways to encourage Mexico to fully utilize its new flexibility under Minute 331. Potential approaches include diplomatic negotiations, economic incentives or leveraging trade agreements to push for compliance. Janecka suggests the U.S. has been too passive in asserting its rights under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement and could use trade pressure to challenge Mexico's water policies, which disproportionately benefit Mexican farmers while harming U.S. agricultural interests.

Securing water from Mexico has typically required strong advocacy from U.S. representatives and pressure from the State Department. However, with the Rio Grande Valley holding only two congressional seats, the region has struggled to gain national attention.

U.S. Rep. Monica De La Cruz, a District 15 Republican, is among the lawmakers pushing for stronger enforcement mechanisms. In November 2024, she introduced House Resolution 10113, the South Texas Agriculture Emergency Assistance Act, to provide financial relief to Texas farmers along the Rio Grande.

Honorable Mention

New World screwworm coverage

DTN/Progressive Farmer

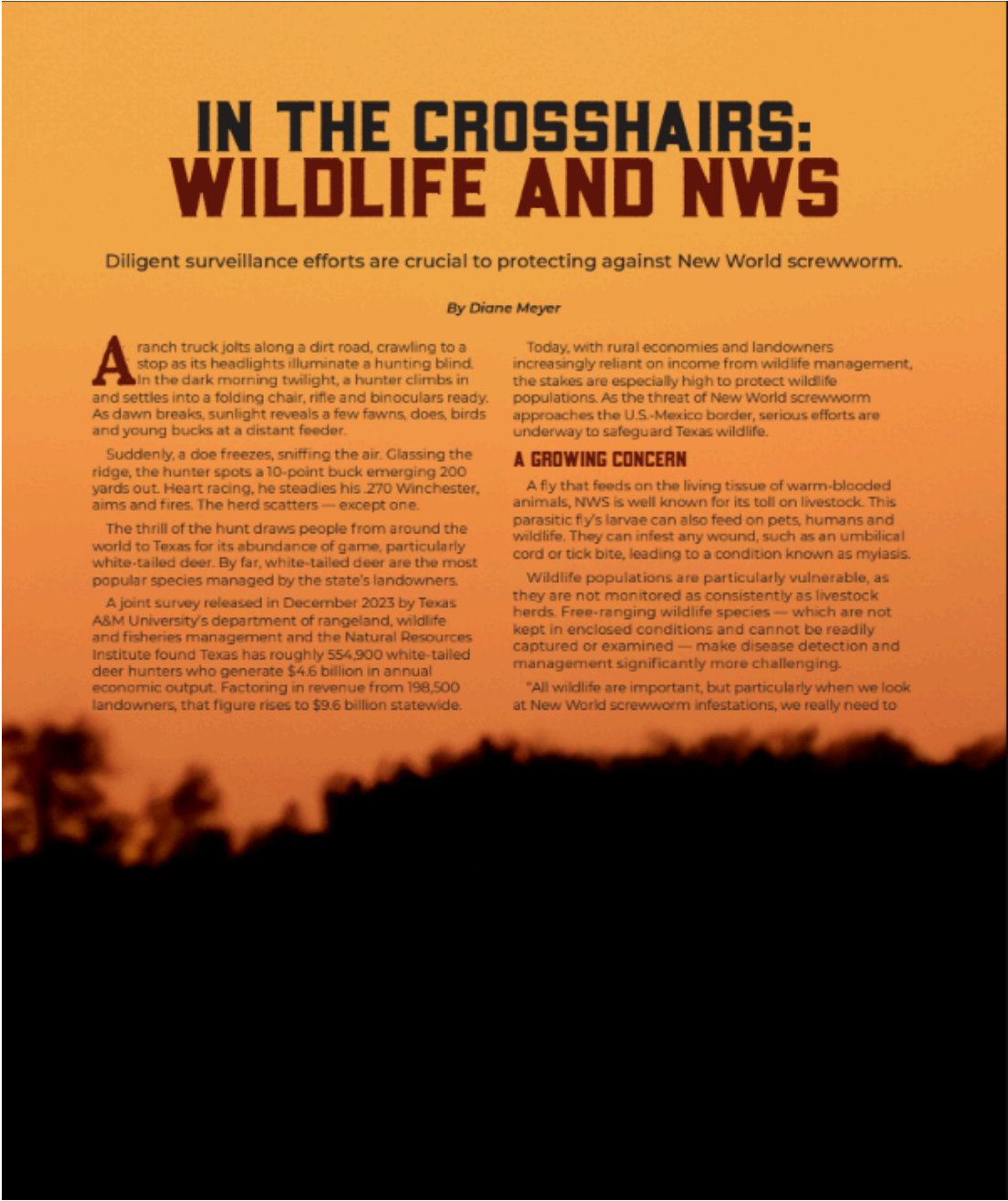
Jennifer Carrico

Second Place

1 Horse, 1 Farrier, 1 Year

American Farriers Journal

Esco Buff



WINNER

NWS Coverage

The Cattleman

Writer: Diane Meyer, Grant Company

Honorable Mention

Don't Ignore the Nudge

Farm Journal's PORK

Jennifer Shike

Second Place

The greatest

Kansas Stockman

Scarlett Madinger

YOUR LIFE

CATTLE CULTURE

by Lindsay Sankey

The Provider

Generosity matters.

She popped a quarter into the cart lock and pulled it free — one of those small rituals that marked her rare day off the farm. Errands in town weren't glamorous, but they were a break from sorting herd notes and checking waterers. Inside Aldi she made her way to the dairy section, waiting behind a couple choosing a gallon of milk. They were slow and deliberate in their dairy selections, crossing items off a handwritten list. Their clothes were thin, worn and not nearly warm enough for the biting Indiana cold. She noticed, but didn't judge.

Farm folks know better than most: you can't always tell someone's story by looking from the outside. That's why we like genomics.

They apologized for being in the way. She smiled. No bother. She had time today. Later, in the checkout line, she found herself behind the same couple. The man was quietly counting bills, checking his pockets. "I don't think I have enough," he whispered to his wife.

She dug through her purse and came up with a few crumpled dollars. Together, they looked at their

groceries, trying to decide what they could do without.

The cashier scanned the items and gave the total. The man handed over their money.

"You're short," the cashier said gently. "\$1.40."

The couple began reviewing their cart again, trying to choose what to leave behind.

"How much are you short?" the woman behind them asked.

"\$1.40," the cashier repeated.

"Well, I've got that," she said, reaching into her purse and handing over the exact amount. The couple was visibly relieved and thanked her several times. They left with everything they needed.

She chatted briefly with the cashier. They both agreed lightheartedly that everyone's been there. Farming teaches you humility. You learn to stretch a dollar, to help when you can, and to accept help when you need it.

She packed her bags, returned her cart and retrieved her quarter. Then she loaded her car and settled in for the drive to the bank.

"This car is such a mess," she

muttered to herself, organizing the passenger seat and console. She lifted a tablet and her herd notes from the morning and paused.

There, beneath the stack of papers: \$1.40.

Across town, my phone rang.

"Hi, Mom. What's up?" I asked.

"Boy, do I have a story for you!" she said, her voice full of energy.

I leaned back in my office chair as she told me what had happened. Like her, I got chills.

She gave, and somehow, she got it back.

It was a small amount, but it carried weight. A quiet reminder that generosity doesn't always go unnoticed; and often, it finds its way back to us. Whether through a stranger's kindness or a bit of unexpected grace, the help we offer has a way of returning, just when we least expect it.

For our Angus family, it's a gentle nudge to keep showing up for each other. Whether it's \$1.40, a word of encouragement or a neighborly *favoe*, generosity matters. Often, it's enough to make all the difference. 



80 | ANGUS JOURNAL | FALL 2019

WINNER

Cattle Culture

Angus Media

Lindsay Sankey

Honorable Mention

Attitude, work ethic trump talent, Greenway says

North Dakota Stockman

Julie Ellingson

Second Place

How I conquered my digital habit

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes



WINNER

Barbed wire—holding up since the 1880s

High Plains Journal

Lacey Vilhauer

Honorable Mention

Schrader Ranch

Generation 6 Marketing

Designer: Peyton Schmitt

Second Place

Igenity: Your Roadmap To a Better Herd

Neogen - Igenity

Neogen Marketing and Creative Team

Lead creative: Matthew Hall

Lead writer: Anthony Ling

WINNER

2025 State Fair of Texas

Cultivate Agency



Second Place

State Fair of Texas

Cultivate Agency



WINNER

Grow With Gelbvieh - Feedlot 1/2 Page Ad

Gelbvieh World

Designer: Malerie Markley

Second Place

Pedigree International Savanna Breeders

Goat Rancher

Allison Ramirez



WINNER

Red Angus Youth Expo

Cultivate Agency

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WINNER

Savanna Spectacular Announcement

Goat Rancher

Alison Ramirez

Honorable Mention

National Swine Registry | Sires of the South Logo

Inman Collective Marketing Group

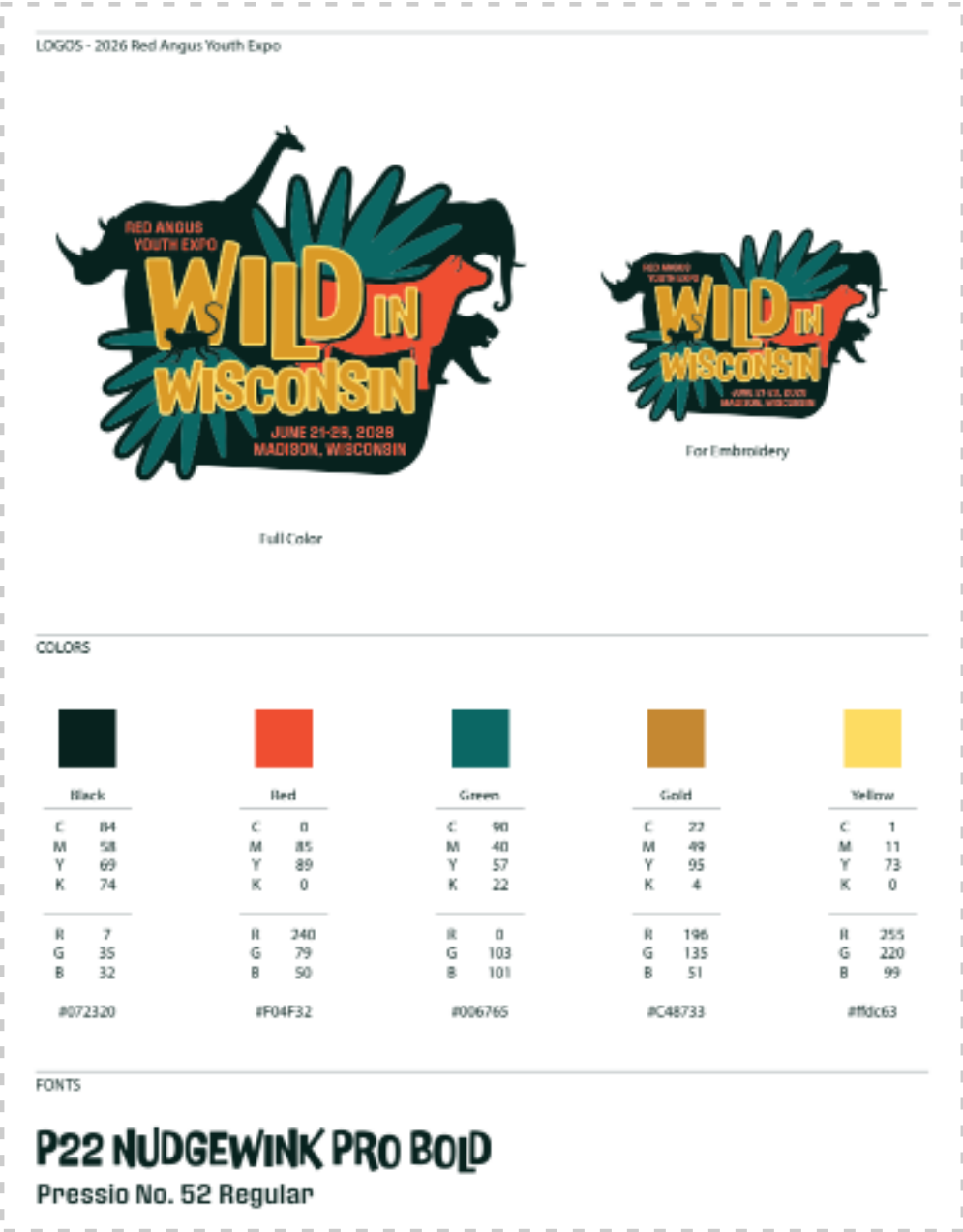
Savannah Hopkins and Ruth Inman

Second Place

2026 National Junior Angus Show - Bases Loaded in the
Bluegrass

American Angus Association

Molly Biggs



WINNER

2026 Red Angus Youth Expo Show Logo

Cultivate Agency

Honorable Mention

Grow With Gelbvieh - Maternal Excellence Flyer

Gelbvieh World

Writer: Megan Underwood

Designer: Megan Underwood

Photographer: Audrey Powles Photography

Second Place

2026 National Junior Angus Association Membership Mailer -
Your Roadmap to the NJAA

American Angus Association

Molly Biggs

BROCHURES, FLYERS AND DIRECT-MAIL PIECES



Funded by the Beef Checkoff



UNLOCKING THE VALUE: WHAT THE BEEF CHECKOFF BRINGS TO DAIRY OPERATIONS

The Beef Checkoff, established by the 1985 Farm Bill, collects \$1 per head on cattle and beef imports to drive demand through promotion, research, and education. That increased demand helps boost producer profitability. As a dairy producer, your input is essential for the sustainability and growth of the entire beef industry, benefiting both your operation and the broader industry. Get involved today to see the impact.

DAIRY BY THE NUMBERS: DAIRY'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE BEEF CHECKOFF



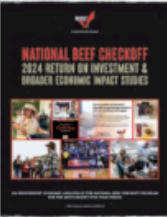
Since 2002, dairy beef contribution to the total U.S. beef supply has ranged from 18% to 24%.¹



Dairy producers pay \$1 per head to the Beef Checkoff program when selling dairy cattle or calves—this equates to about 16% of total Beef Checkoff assessment revenue.²



Dairy producers currently make up about 12% of the approximately 100-member Cattlemen's Beef Board.



RETURN ON INVESTMENT: THE VALUE OF THE BEEF CHECKOFF

The most recent (2019–2023) Return on Investment (ROI) study revealed that every dollar invested in the Beef Checkoff returns approximately \$13.41 to the industry. Additionally, domestic demand-driving efforts supported by the Beef Checkoff helped keep steer prices about 8% higher per year from 2019–2023. This ROI underscores the program's effectiveness in enhancing demand and adding value to every segment of the beef supply chain.

Source: National Beef Checkoff 2024 Return on Investment & Broader Economic Impact Study.



To learn more about the Cattlemen's Beef Board Return on Investment study, scan the QR Code.

BEEF CHECKOFF COLLECTIONS THROUGHOUT THE CATTLE PRODUCTION CYCLE

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR REMITTING THE BEEF CHECKOFF ASSESSMENT?

Buyer

Generally the Buyer is responsible for collecting the Beef Checkoff assessment from the Seller.

Seller

However, both the Buyer and the Seller are responsible for seeing that the Beef Checkoff is collected and paid.

pay(s) \$1 to

Qualified State Beef Council

50¢



Cattlemen's Beef Board
\$ invested in national Beef Checkoff programs

50¢



Your State Beef Council
\$ invested in state Beef Checkoff programs

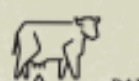
If you are a producer from one of these seven states — Alaska, Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island — you will remit directly to the Cattlemen's Beef Board.

Importers pay the dollar-per-head Beef Checkoff or the equivalent on imported cattle, beef, and beef products. These Beef Checkoff assessments are collected by U.S. Customs.

If you have any questions regarding who is responsible for remitting the Beef Checkoff assessment or how to remit payment, please contact your State Beef Council or contact the Cattlemen's Beef Board at (303) 867-6304.



COW-CALF PRODUCER



DAIRY PRODUCER

LIVESTOCK MARKET

When cattle are sold through a livestock market or video market, the Market collects and remits the Beef Checkoff assessment.

CATTLE DEALER/ORDER BUYER

When cattle are sold to a Cattle Dealer or Order Buyer, the Dealer/Order Buyer collects and remits the Beef Checkoff assessment.

ANOTHER PRODUCER

Both the Buyer and Seller are responsible for making sure that the Beef Checkoff assessment is collected and remitted. For clarity and consistency, we encourage the Seller to take on this compliance responsibility.

VEAL GROWER

When dairy calves are sold to a Veal Grower, both the Buyer and Seller are responsible for making sure that the Beef Checkoff assessment is collected and remitted. For clarity and consistency, we encourage the Seller to take on this compliance responsibility.

CATTLE SHOWS AND FAIRS

When producers sell their animals at fairs or cattle shows (4H/FFA shows, Purdoned cattle shows, etc.), the Organization that runs the sale collects and remits the Beef Checkoff assessment.

FEEDLOT

When cattle are sold directly to a feedlot, the Feedlot collects and remits the Beef Checkoff assessment.

PACKING PLANT

When cattle are sold to a packing plant, the Packing Plant collects and remits the Beef Checkoff assessment.

DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER BEEF SALES

When producers market their cattle as beef, the Producer is responsible for remitting the Beef Checkoff assessment.



National Beef Checkoff

CATTELMEN'S BEEF BOARD
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WINNER

Unlocking the Value: What the Beef Checkoff Brings to Dairy Operations
Cattlemen's Beef Board

Writer: Davis Gidney & Chad Smith - Cattlemen's Beef Board, Designer: Sami Wallingford - Made of Design

Honorable Mention

Bowman Superior Genetics 'Profit by De\$ign' Sale

Shorthorn Country

Designer: Amy Studer

Second Place

Bar X S25

Angus Media

Ella Barrett



WINNER

National Swine Registry | 'The Draft' Catalog

Inman Collective Marketing Group

Ruth Inman

Honorable Mention

American Angus Association Annual Report

American Angus Association

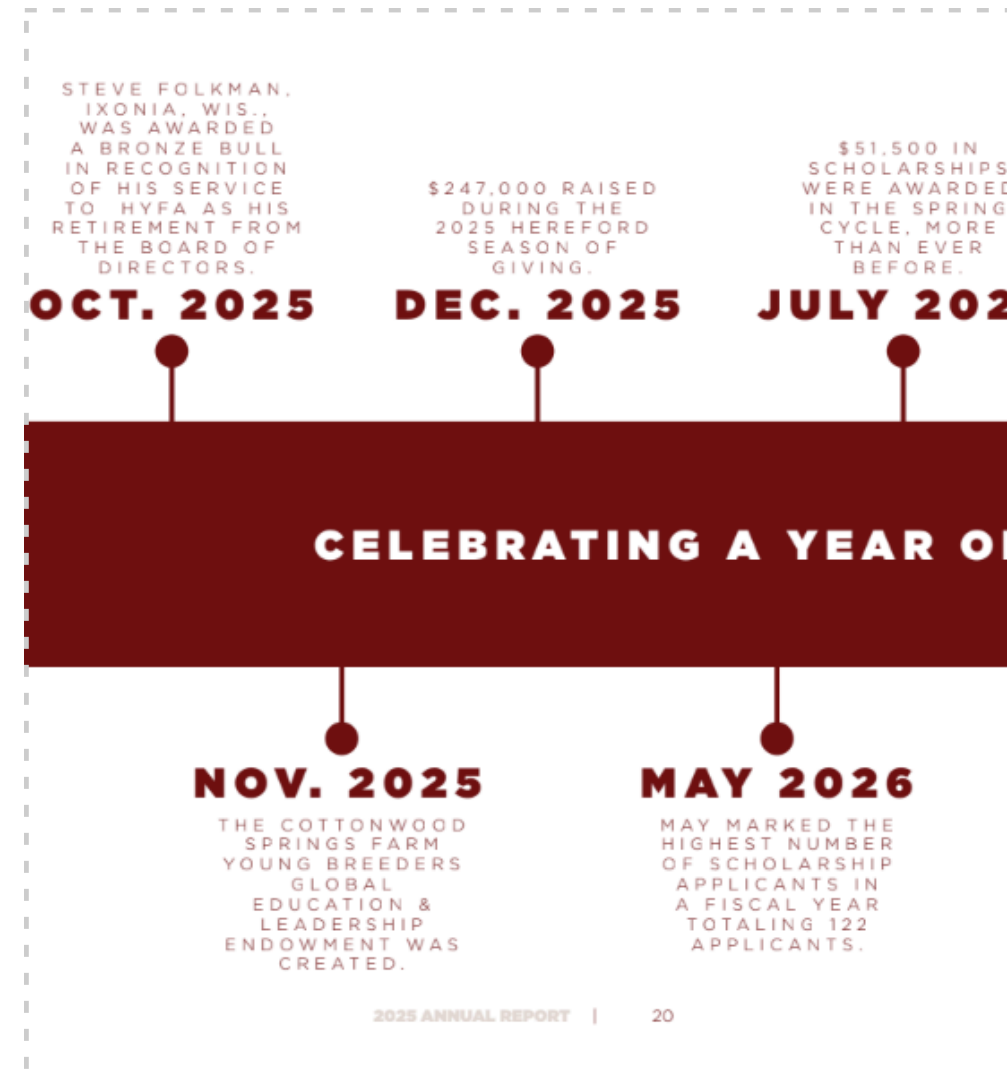
Jaime Albers, Sarah Moyer, Molly Biggs, Molly Loughridge,
Jessica Hartman and Emily Grund

Second Place

2025 Angus Foundation Impact Report

American Angus Association

Molly Biggs and Ryann Kats



WINNER

Hereford Youth Foundation of America Annual Report

Hereford Youth Foundation of America

Chloé Durian

Honorable Mention

Female Foundations

Angus Media

Savanna Simmons

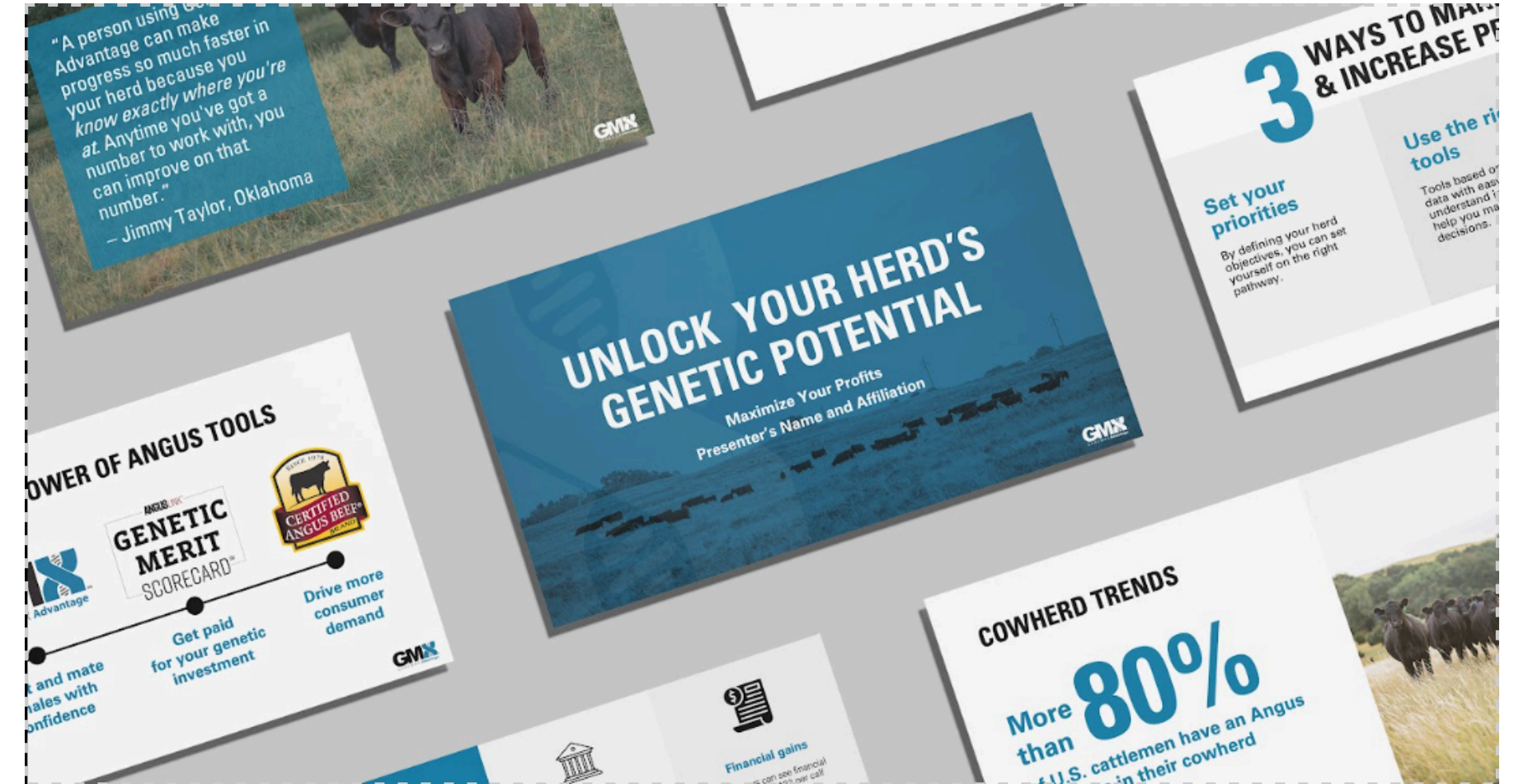
Second Place

Golden Tickets

Stock Show Trendsetters

Designer: Abigail Drewitz

MISCELLANEOUS DESIGN



WINNER

GeneMax® Advantage™ Branding

Angus Media

Liz Haugen



Honorable Mention

Western Livestock Journal website

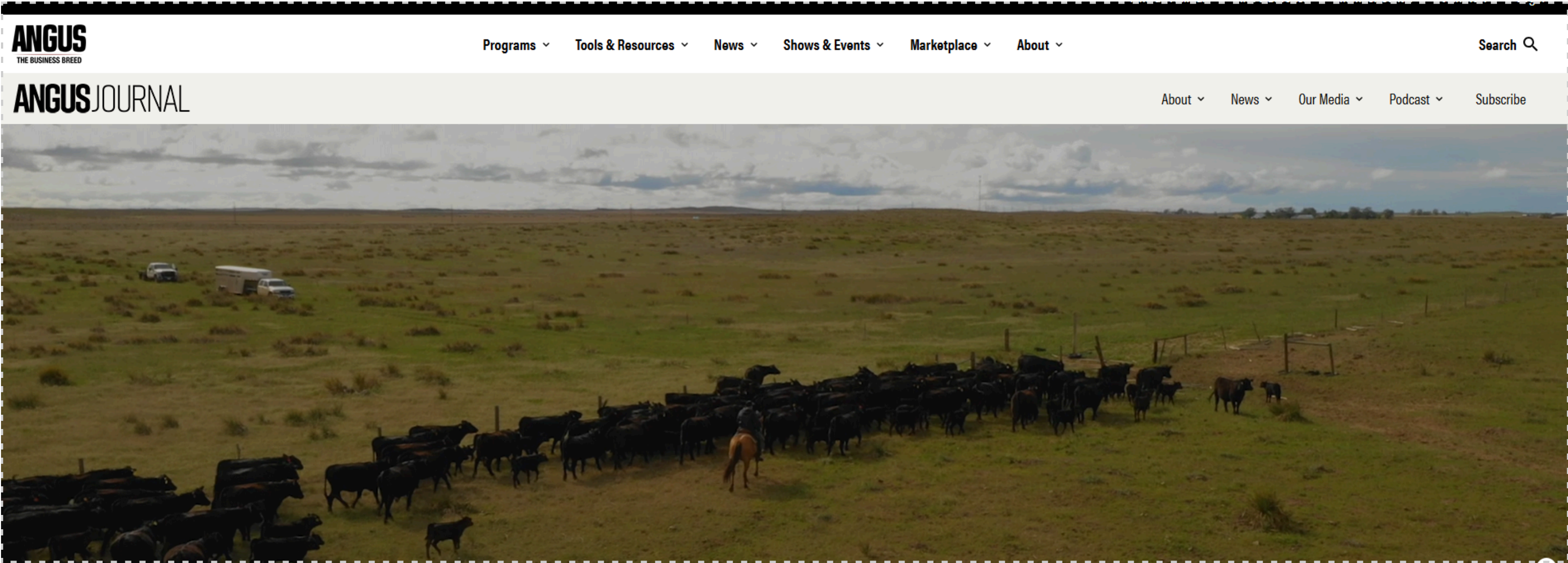
Western Livestock Journal

Tristan Martin

Second Place

Angus Beef Bulletin webpage

Angus Beef Bulletin



WINNER

AngusJournal.net

Angus Journal

Honorable Mention

NCBA.org

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

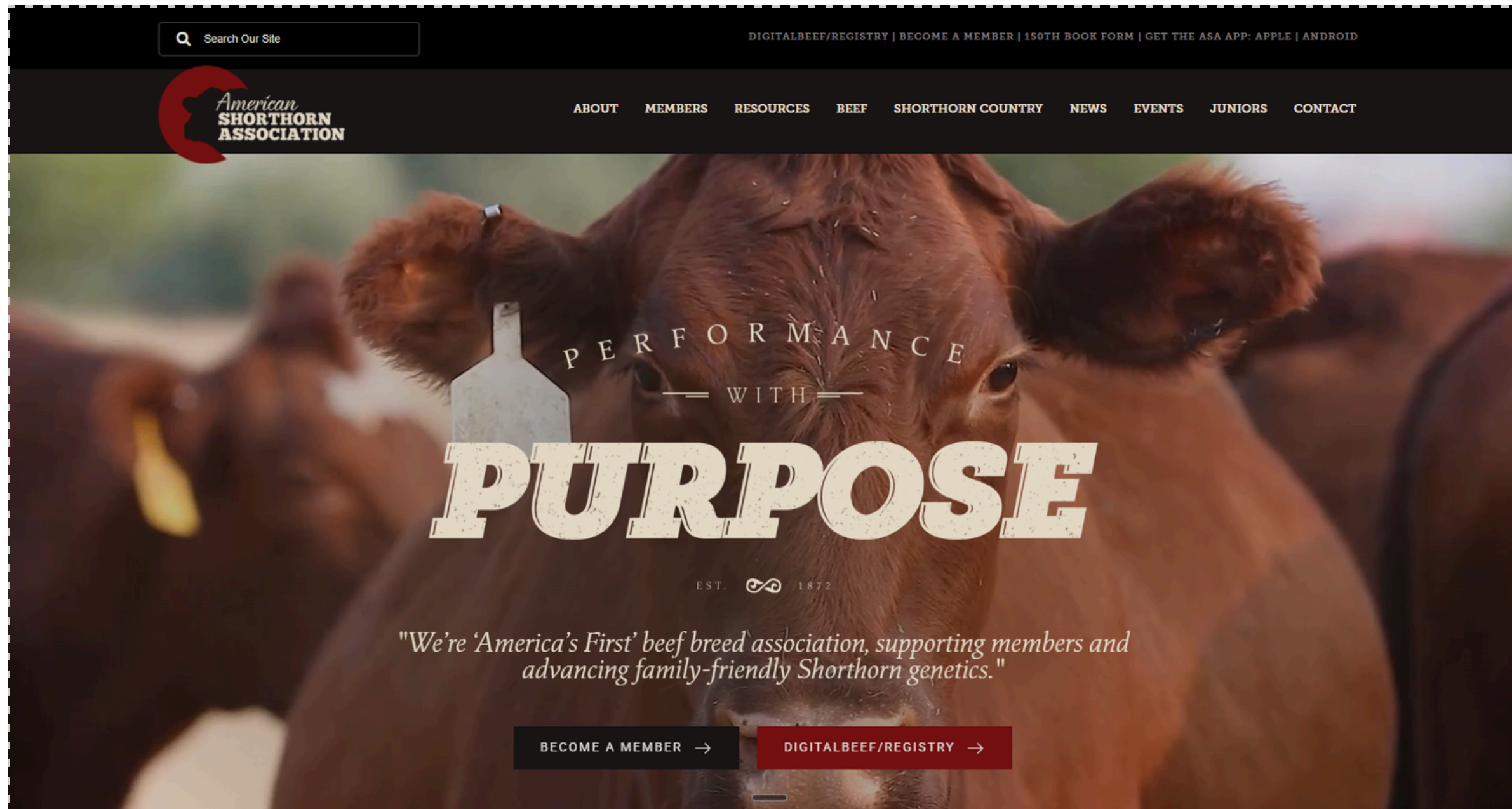
National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Second Place

Junior Red Angus Association

Cultivate Agency

ASSOCIATION WEBSITE



WINNER

American Shorthorn Association - New Website

American Shorthorn Association

Innovative Media Creators (IMC) with provided direction from American Shorthorn Association staff

Honorable Mention

Katie Colin Farm Redesign

Angus Media

Lauren Hitch

Second Place

Shaffer Gold Rush

Cultivate Agency

BREEDER WEBSITE



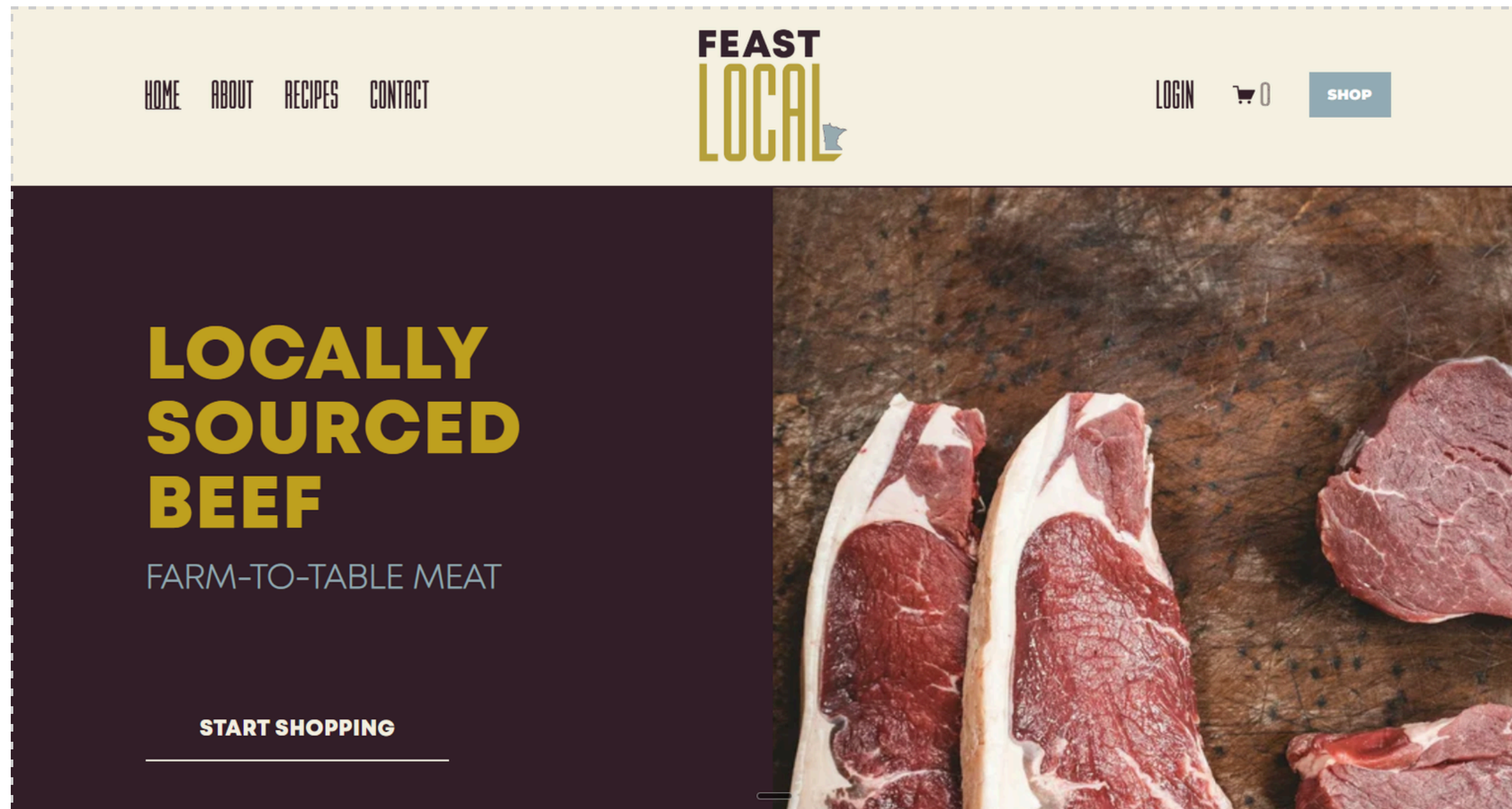
WINNER

ECO Angus LLC

Angus Media

Lauren Hitch

LIVESTOCK-AFFILIATED WEBSITE



WINNER

Feast Local

Generation 6 Marketing

Website Designer: Haylee Supple; Existing logo design provided by Robin Kleine, Girlfriend Original Promotions, LLC

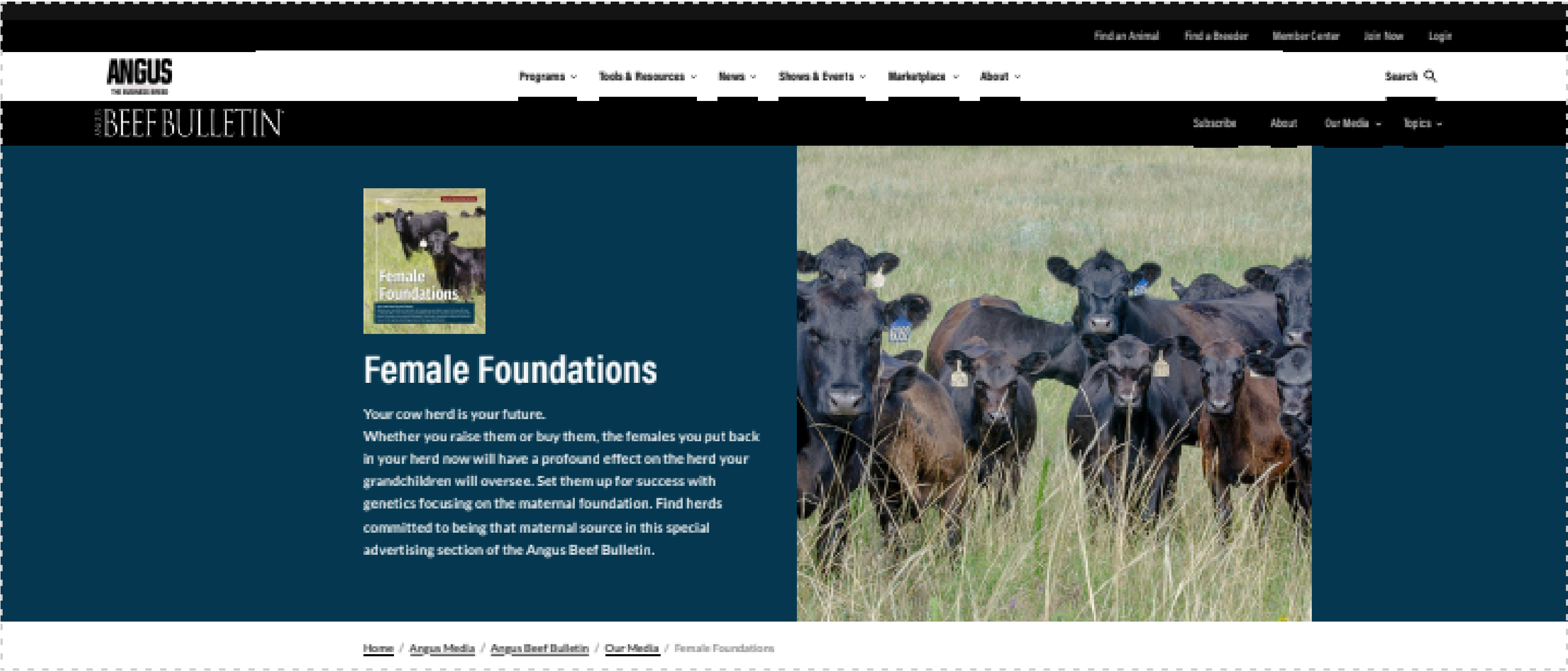
Second Place

Common Ground Coalition

Grant Company

Created by: Grant Company

CAMPAIGN OR LANDING PAGE



WINNER

“Female Foundations”

Angus Beef Bulletin

Second Place

National Swine Registry | 'The Draft' Digital Marketing Campaign

Inman Collective Marketing Group

Ruth Inman and Allison Wheeler



CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

WHAT WE DID

Objective: The objective of the Pollard Farms digital campaign was to drive qualified Angus breeders and commercial cattlemen traffic to the Pollard Farms sale book, increasing awareness, engagement, and visibility of the sale. Ultimately, the goal was to support a successful sale by placing the sale offering in front of a highly relevant, motivated audience during the critical pre-sale window.

Goal: The primary goal of the Pollard Farms digital campaign was to increase traffic to the Pollard Farms online sale book, boost overall sale visibility, and contribute to a successful sale outcome. The campaign ran from August 20, 2025, through September 20, 2025, strategically aligning with the final promotional push leading up to sale day.

Audience: The campaign targeted highly qualified Angus audiences based on Angus.org user data. Targeted segments included users who had visited or interacted with:

- Breeder-focused content
- Commercial-focused content
- AAA login page
- EPD search page
- Sale books page
- Sale calendar page
- Sale reports page

These audience segments ensured the campaign reached active Angus breeders and commercial producers with strong purchase intent.

Campaign: The Pollard Farms digital campaign consisted of a combination of display ads and video retargeting placements served to Angus audiences across Facebook and premium placements on the highly trafficked Angus.org homepage. Video retargeting creative featured original footage shot on the Pollard Farms operation in June 2025, allowing the campaign to highlight the program's quality, cattle, and brand authenticity while reinforcing sale awareness.

Analytics: The digital campaign generated more than 89,000 total touchpoints and over 2,900 clicks to Pollard Farms sale-related content. Engagement primarily came from male users aged 45 and older in Midwest states, closely aligning with the target demographic for the Pollard Farms sale. As a result of these efforts, the Pollard Farms sale book recorded 87,991 total page views, demonstrating strong buyer interest and sustained engagement throughout the promotional period.

WINNER

Pollard Farms Digital Campaign

Angus Media

Mackenzie Leach, Whitney Reeve, Cate Doubet

Honorable Mention

The Drive E-Newsletter

Cattlemen's Beef Board

Cattlemen's Beef Board, Swanson Russell

Second Place

Beef Bulletin

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

zoetis

Poultry Health Today



The team and processes behind hatchery performance

Dear Lisa,

This month, experts discuss the importance of process evaluations as well as key processes that help hatchery teams produce robust chicks. These activities are vital to producing healthy birds for growout.

Explore More



Industry Support: 3 Min. Read

Identifying hatchery risk and leaning in to help

With more than 13 billion in ovo vaccinations annually in the U.S.,¹ process evaluations are a critical step for hatchery success.

Learn how Darryl Jones works with hatcheries to help them reach their goals



Hatchery Success: 3 Min. Read

Guide for frozen vaccine thawing and mixing

Correctly handling frozen poultry vaccines is essential for maintaining vaccine efficacy. Errors in temperature, timing or sanitation can reduce effectiveness and increase disease risk.

Review best practices for aseptic vaccine mixing

Poultry Health Today



Holistic Salmonella prevention links vaccination, flock management

Dear Mike,

This month experts discuss the importance of holistic Salmonella management in layer flocks, which include biosecurity, monitoring and staff training in addition to vaccination.

Explore More



Salmonella: 5 Min. Read

No silver bullet: Why Salmonella management in layers requires full-flock strategy

Salmonella control in layer flocks requires a holistic management plan. Your vaccination program is an important tool that works in tandem with biosecurity, hygiene, monitoring and employee training.

Learn about whole-flock Salmonella control strategies



Salmonella: 4 Min. Read

Management, vaccination keys to Salmonella prevention in cage-free layers

Optimal Salmonella control is achieved when good management is combined with vaccination. Dr. John Brown discusses how to develop a vaccination program and help ensure vaccine coverage in cage-free hens.

Poultry Health Today



We're featuring your favorites – and we want to hear from you!

Dear Daniela,

We're looking back at your favorite articles from this year. The most popular Poultry Health Today articles included insights into the aMPV outbreak, best practices for effective vaccination and opportunities to use hatchery transfer data. Looking ahead, what topics would you like to read about in 2026? Let us know – submit your story ideas [here](#)

Explore More



Hatchery Success: 3 Min. Read

Key success factors: Poultry spray cabinet vaccination

Avian metapneumovirus (aMPV) is a hot topic across the industry, and Poultry Health Today readers have bolstered spray cabinet best practices to support aMPV vaccination now that vaccine is available.

Explore success tips



Hatchery Success: 3 Min. Read

How in ovo vaccination data can help optimize hatchery performance

Poultry producers and others are seeking more from their investments in all corners of the business. Broiler hatcheries are positioned to gain insights, at their fingertips, during egg transfer.

WINNER

Poultry Health Today E-newsletter

Bader Rutter

Second Place

Stock Show Trendsetters Social Media

Stock Show Trendsetters

Social Media Content Creator: Abigail Drewitz



Dr. Kalen Cookson

The People Behind Poultry

3 MIN READ

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

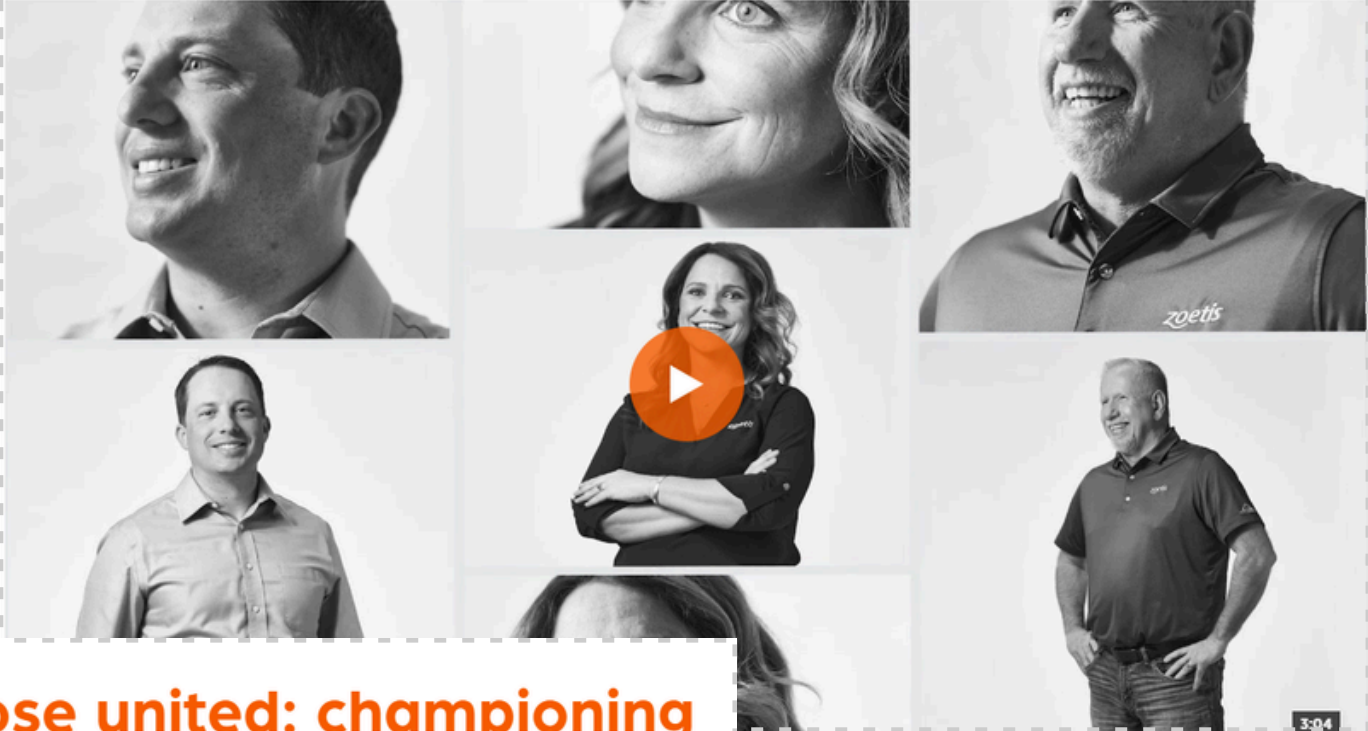
Driven by science: Advancing poultry health through research and real-world insight

Video | January 05, 2026 | Dr. Kalen Cookson, Zoetis



Precision under pressure: a team approach to protecting chick health in the hatchery

Video | August 31, 2025 | Roger Dodson, Zoetis



INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Passion and purpose united: championing poultry health and industry success

Video | July 22, 2025 | Dr. Olivia Wedegaertner Vann, Zoetis



Olivia Wedegaertner Vann, PhD

Regional Account Manager

2:05

WINNER

People Behind Poultry blog series

Bader Rutter

Honorable Mention

Texas Shoer Aids & Abets Break N The Law's Return to the Show Ring

American Farriers Journal

Jeff Cota

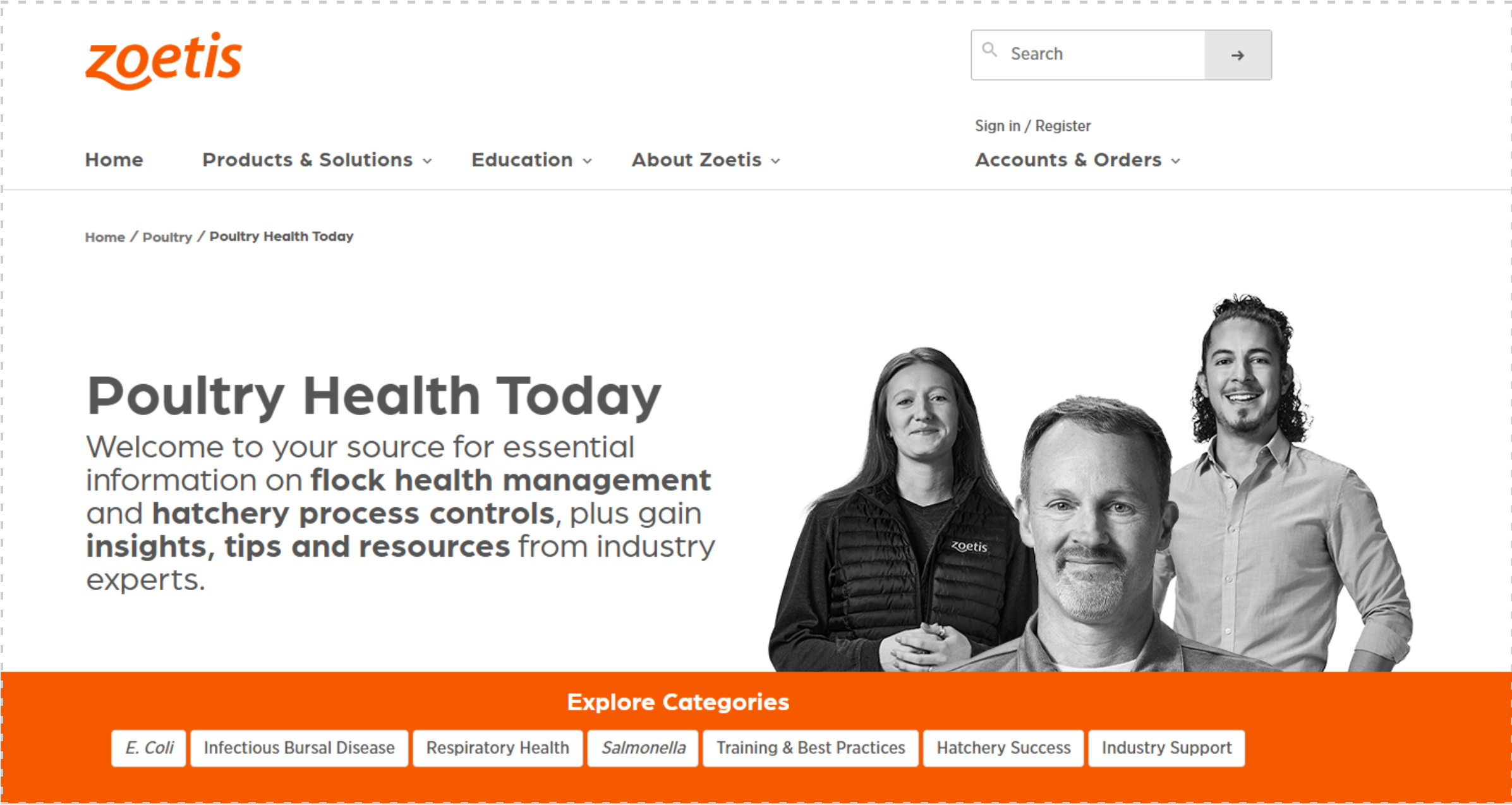
Second Place

Kylene's Blog

High Plains Journal

Kylene Scott

BEST OVERALL BLOG



WINNER

Poultry Health Today Blog

Bader Rutter

Honorable Mention

Cattlemen's Call

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

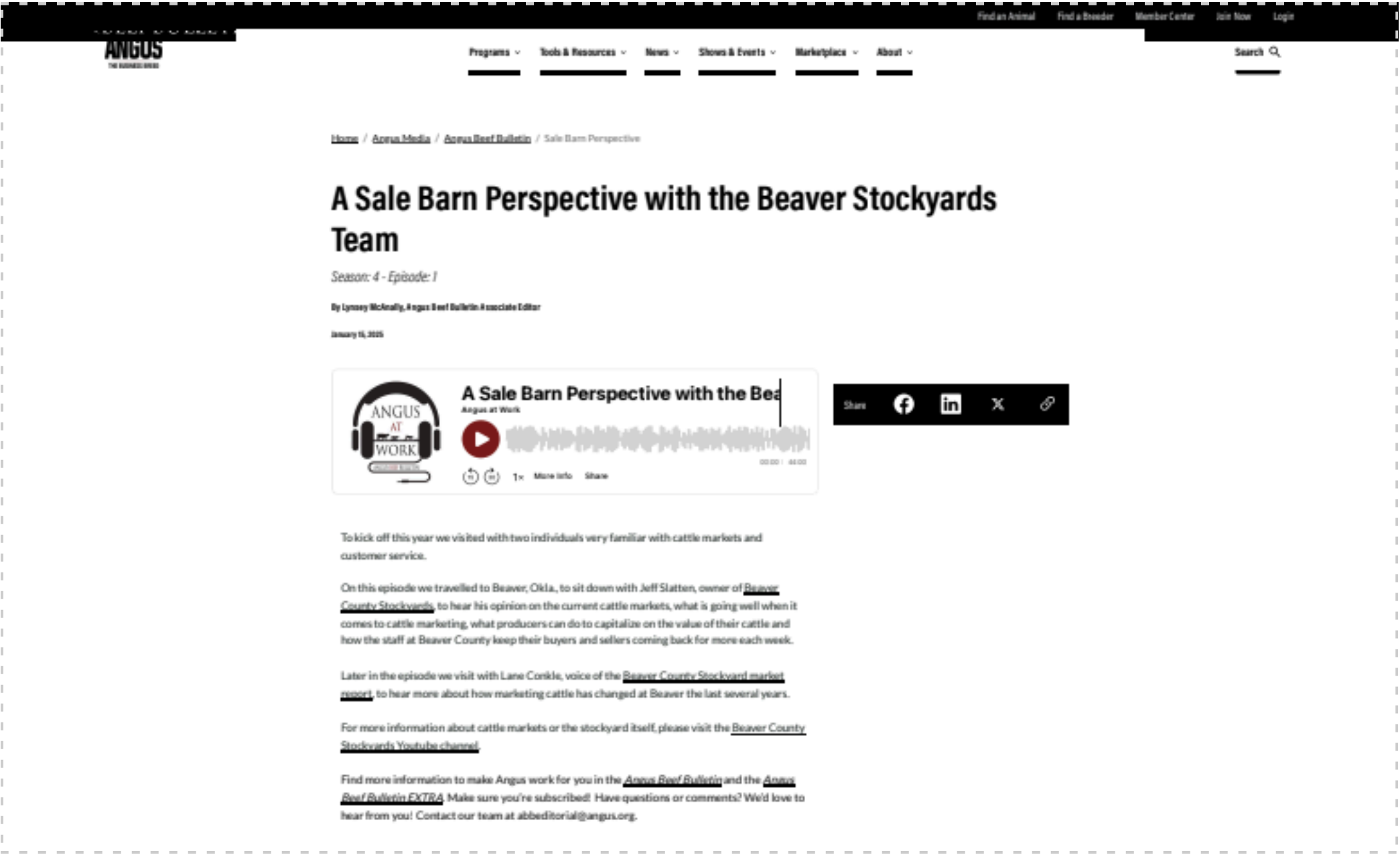
National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Second Place

Emily Spray: The Truth About Stock Show Moms | Episode 24

Farm Journal's PORK

Podcast Host: Jennifer Shike
Podcast Producer: Zach Zingula



WINNER

Angus at Work: A Sale Barn Perspective with the Beaver County Stockyards Team
Angus Beef Bulletin

Hosted and produced by Lynsey McNally

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TOPICSSTORENEWSRESOURCESSPECIAL COVERAGESUMMITPRODUCTS & SUPPLIERSPUBLICATIONSHELPSUBSCRIBECLASSIFIEDS



Webinar Replay
Thrush in the Modern Horse [Webinar]
December 3, 2025 | Posted in Diseases, Therapeutic Shoeing

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TOP ARTICLES

- Footcare & Farrier Business Insights
- Hoof-Care Highlights: July 11, 2026
- Find Your Place in the Hoof-Care World
- [Podcast] A Conversation with Bobby Salsbury
- 5 Questions to Ask When Investing in a Farrier Rig

WINNER

Thrush in the Modern Horse

American Farriers Journal

David Hallock and Jeff Cota

Second Place

Six Mile Ranch - The Bulls

Innovation Media

Stacy Young



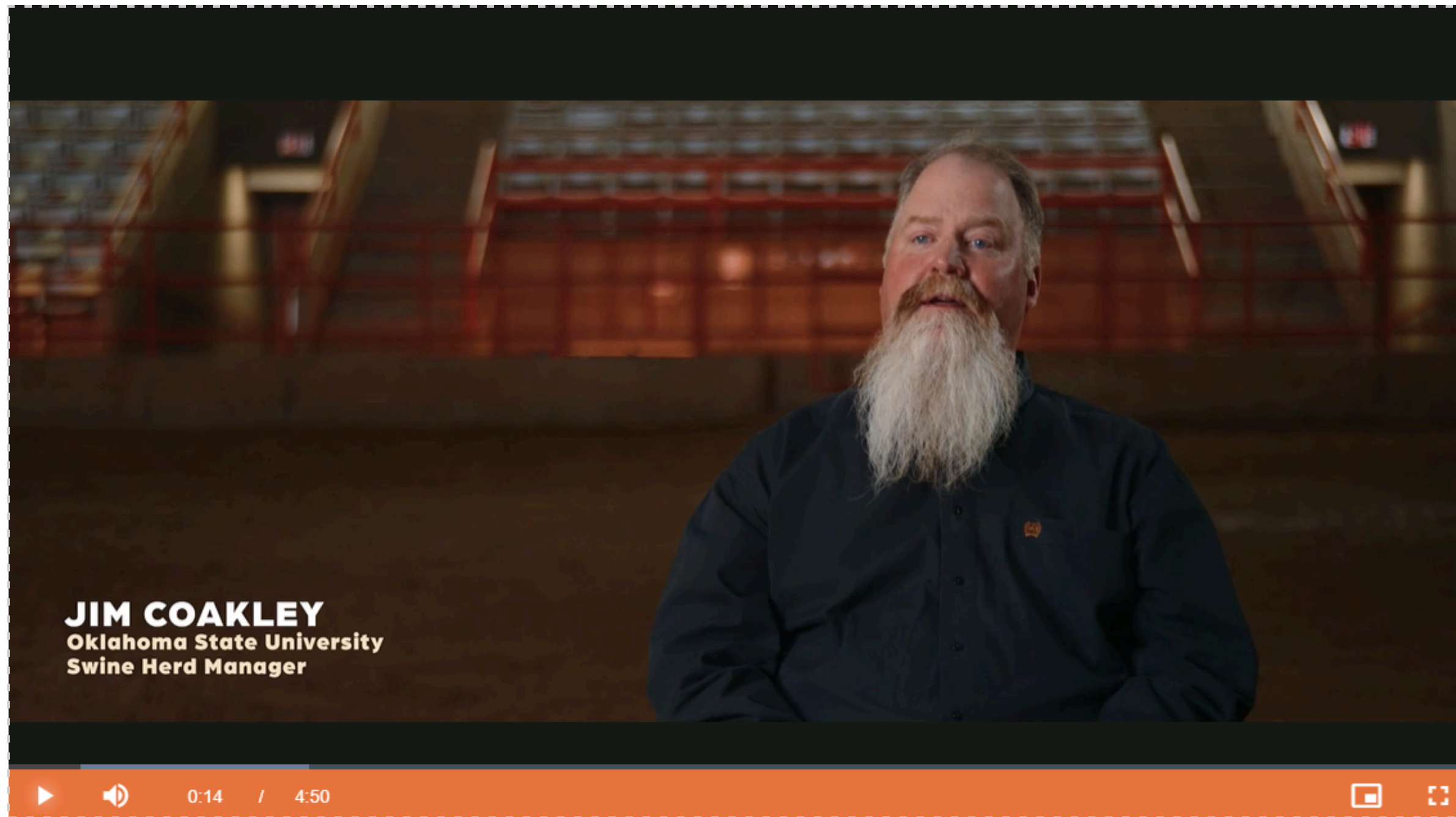
WINNER

Vence on the Broken I Ranch

Grant Company

Videographers: Eric Grant, Theron Harvey, William Casey & Jarod Dye

MARKETING VIDEO — OVER 3 MINUTES



WINNER

Champions of Care: Jim Coakley

Bader Rutter

Bader Rutter and Good Credit Studios with Zoetis- Julianna Langemeier

Honorable Mention

Driven by Devotion

Angus Journal

Megan Silveira

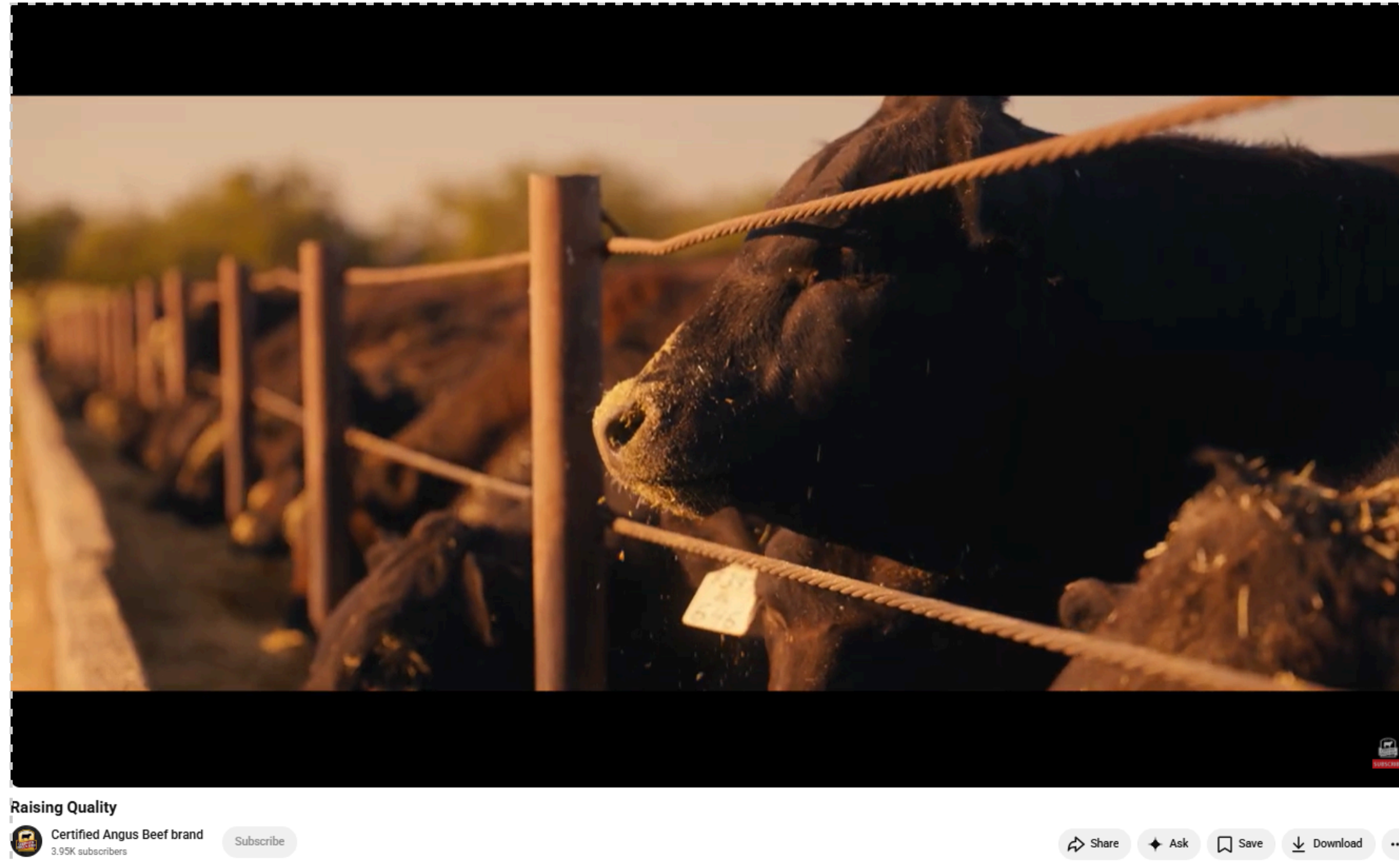
Second Place

Grit, Faith, and a Vision for the Future

Bader Rutter

NPPC Project Manager: Mikayla Dolch, BR Associate Creative Director: Kate Martin,
BR Producer: Jonathan Hanusa, BR Project Manager: Nick Praznowski,
BR Director and Editor: Kyle Arpke,

FEATURE VIDEO — UNDER 3 MINUTES



WINNER

Raising Quality

Certified Angus Beef

Max Stewart and Lindsay Graber Runft

Honorable Mention

Mike McGuire - Angus Heritage Foundation

American Angus Association

Grace Knepp

FEATURE VIDEO — OVER 3 MINUTES

Second Place

I am KLA

Kansas Stockman

Whitney Dahmer



WINNER

Montana Angus Tour

Angus Media

Cate Doubet



WINNER

The Angus Media Difference

Angus Media

Whitney Reeve

Second Place

World Livestock Auctioneer Championship Special

Grant Company

Videographer: Grant Company



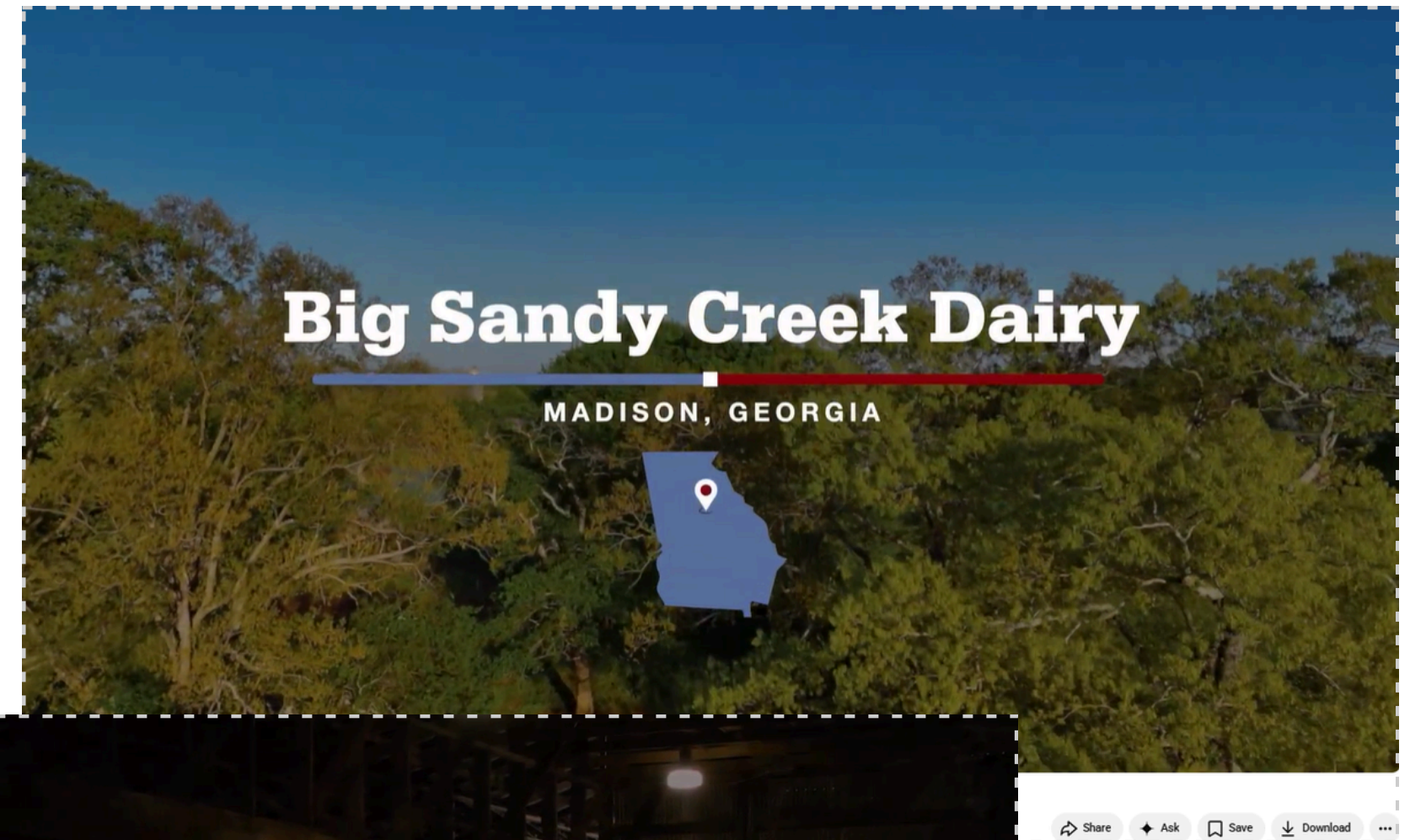
WINNER

Holstein America | June 2025

Grant Company

Videographer: Grant Company

VIDEO SERIES



WINNER

Holstein America | June 2025

Grant Company

Videographer: Grant Company



Honorable Mention

Quiet Leadership

American Angus Association

Jessica Hartman

Second Place

Eyes Forward

Angus Journal

Megan Silveira



WINNER

The Youngest Cattlewoman

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes

Honorable Mention

Lassos and Blue Skies

Angus Journal

Megan Silveira

Second Place

Sunset Succession

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHS



WINNER

Flint Hills Gathering

Kansas Stockman

Rachel Waggie

Honorable Mention

Midwest Feeder

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes

Second Place

The Rancher Vet

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes



WINNER

Stampede

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes

Honorable Mention

Building Relationships in Ink

American Angus Association

Molly Biggs

Second Place

Driven by Devotion Photostory

Angus Journal

Megan Silveira

PICTURE STORY, PHOTO SEQUENCE OR PHOTO ESSAY



WINNER

Next Gen Cattlegirls

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes

Honorable Mention

Saliva & Steel

American Angus Association

Jessica Hartman

Second Place

She Leads the Way

American Angus Association

Molly Biggs

WINNER

Indigenous Cowboy

Midwestern Lens

Betty Haynes



PR CAMPAIGNS — FOR AGRICULTURAL AUDIENCES



Industry Voice Sponsored Article

National Hog Farmer Feedstuffs

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ad impressions

137
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Uncovering the link between claw lesions and sow performance

Index built upon data from more than 30,000 sows highlights early indicators of herd performance.

November 1, 2023 2 Min Read



SUBMITTED BY ZINPRO

Sponsored by Zinpro

By Lucas Rodriguez, Ph.D., discovery researcher, global research & discovery with Zinpro

Claw lesions are a silent problem with real consequences. These physiological abnormalities in the sow's hoof - such as heel overgrowth or white line lesions - often go undetected but have major impacts on sow reproduction and performance.

A multivariate analysis from Zinpro® revealed that sows with poor claw health consistently underperformed in farming metrics. Sows with severe lesions were shown to produce approximately 5% fewer piglets born alive compared to healthy sows.¹

By detecting claw lesions early, producers can make proactive decisions to prevent performance losses and help sows reach their genetic potential.

From symptom to signal

To help empower producers to act earlier and catch claw lesion issues before they impact sow performance, Zinpro launched the Zinpro Sow Excellence Index - the swine industry's first data-driven benchmarking system designed to prove a correlation between claw lesions and sow productivity.

The Index offers the following benefits to producers:

- Provides early warning before lameness hits to bolster herd health
- Quantifies monitoring through advanced data analysis and supports better decision-making for swine production systems
- Links predictive insights to lifetime productivity, enabling systems to quantify the key performance indicators (KPIs) that matter most
- Strengthens welfare credibility and reinforces the Zinpro commitment to sustainability

This tool helps demonstrate a statistically significant relationship between claw health and reproductive performance under real world conditions. Producers can benchmark against top-performing herds, prioritize claw health interventions and improve sow longevity and lifetime productivity.

Real-world application

Using the Lesion Index (L-Index), a standardized way to measure lesion severity and frequency, the Zinpro Sow Excellence Index establishes benchmarks that can be used to evaluate herd health and longevity.

Swine producers can benchmark their farms against a global dataset from more than 30,000 individual sow assessments and receive customized L-Index reports through a Zinpro Feet First® evaluation. The Zinpro Sow Excellence Index then reveals how claw health directly correlates with productivity, longevity and welfare, turning lesion scores into actionable insights for herd performance.

Checking for claw lesions takes less than a minute per sow and can be built into a routine check to assess sows during lactation. If lesions are identified, producers can quickly adjust nutrition, housing or management to limit lost performance.

By identifying claw lesions before they impact sow performance, producers can make informed decisions that support both animal welfare and herd efficiency. Contact your Zinpro swine expert to access your herd's claw lesion scores and receive a customized Zinpro Sow Excellence Index report or visit [Zinpro.com](https://zinpro.com) to download the report.

References:

¹ Parada-Sarmiento M, Bernardino T, Tolosa P, Polo G, Zarull AJ. The in-uteri experience of piglets born from sows with lameness shapes their life trajectory. Sci Rep. 2021 Jun 22;11(7):13052.

WINNER

Zinpro® Sow Excellence Index Launch

Kelsi Mayer

broadhead + Zinpro®



Social AD #1

Claw Lesion Education

2,426,275
Impressions

133,204
Link Clicks



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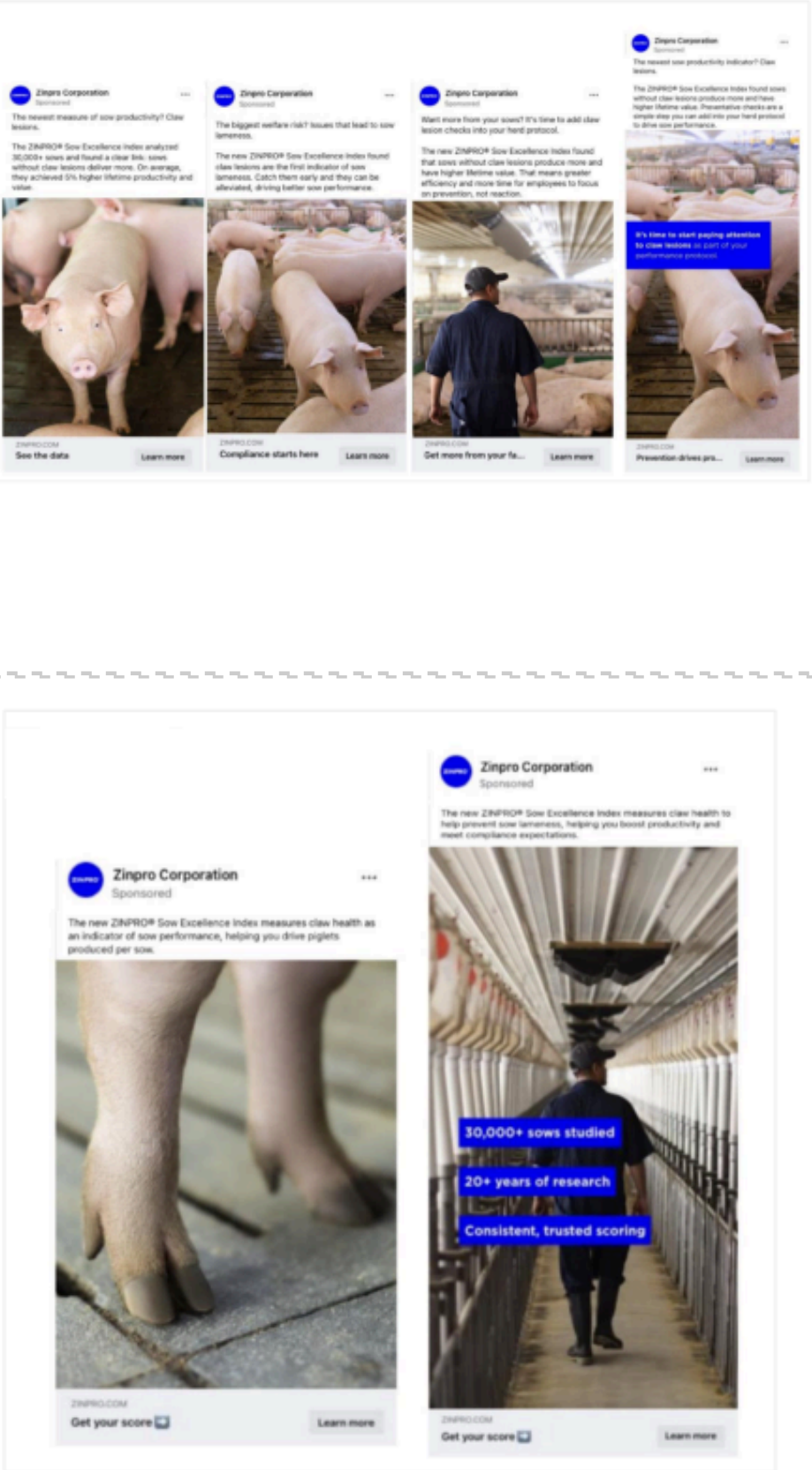


Social AD #2

Zinpro Sow Excellence Index Benchmarks

2,180,474
Impressions

195,723
Link Clicks



© Zinpro Corporation

Second Place

2025 Let's Talk Grazing & Raising Media Event

Bader Rutter

Bader Rutter, Corteva, John Deere, Zinpro and Zoetis

WINNER

Sure Champ Birthday Tour

BioZyme Inc

Writer: Shelia Grobosky, Social Media Content: Jenette Masarie, Others: Lynsey Whitacre, Lynn timer Anderson, Lisa Norton, CEO



WINNER

Healthy Heifers Media Kit

broadhead

broadhead + Boehringer Ingelheim

