



Highlights of the Board of Directors Meeting October 25–27, 2009

The Board had a very full three days of meetings with the first day including a visit and tour to Olds where they had discussions with the Olds Agricultural Society and Olds College.

Olds Visit

The Board accepted an invitation last spring from the President of Olds College to meet at the College in October. The visit included a tour of the facilities at the agricultural grounds and a presentation on future plans. The Olds Agricultural Society also provides secretarial services for the Alberta Angus Association.

The Board toured the facility and were able to sit in on part of a Simmental sale being held there.

Olds College impressed the Board. They seem to have managed to maximize benefits from government programs by developing cooperative ventures with other organizations within the community. They offered an open invitation for possible future joint ventures and business.

Market Update

Andrea Brocklebank, Research Manager for the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, shared an in-depth analysis of the current market conditions and her forecast for the coming year. It is difficult to compress a comprehensive report but she essentially said we had expected strong markets in 2009 but have been impacted by the recession, H1N1 and COOL. The market is volatile and expansion will likely not occur until 2011.

Canadian Angus Foundation

The Canadian Angus Foundation generated significant and serious discussion during the meeting. To assist it in meeting its objective to enhance youth activities, a proposal was debated that would increase membership fees by \$25 with all of it going to fund Junior activities. It was to be shared between the Canadian Junior Angus Association and the provincial groups. The supporters felt that all members should share in the cost of running Junior programs and were concerned over the amount of time and effort being expended in fundraising.

After serious discussions, the motion was tabled. The Board has asked the Foundation to look at their goals and objectives before assessing additional costs to the membership.

Genetic Defects

A large number of members have taken advantage of new DNA tests to help determine if their breeding animals might carry a genetic defect. Because we now have the ability to identify these animals and in an attempt to help breeders avoid mating two carriers, all pedigrees now identify any known carriers plus any animals that have been tested free of any defects.

The Board has resolved to help strengthen the value of our pedigree by resolving that “Any calf born after January 1, 2010 that has a known genetic defect, recognized by the Association within the first two generations of its pedigree must be tested free of the said genetic defect to be eligible for registration.”

Sire Verification

Two recent parentage errors that followed American sires used in Canada encouraged the Board to standardize our requirements. An amendment was passed requiring that “all imported sires be sire verified before progeny can be registered in order to be consistent with Canadian standards.”

Board Committees

The Board of Directors officially disbanded the World Angus Forum Committee with thanks for a job well done. The Board established three new committees in addition to one other that is already operational. The Board committees and assigned responsibilities are as follows:

1. **Succession Committee**

Members: John Donaldson, Kirk Wildman, Bob Switzer

Responsibility: To plan an orderly succession with the planned retirement of the Chief Executive Officer in 2011.

2. **Finance Committee**

Members: Roger Hardy, Kirk Wildman, Jim Colodey, Cecilie Fleming

Responsibility: To review the way the Association is financed and investigate and study the possibility of owning our own building.

3. **Breed Development**

Members: David Bolduc, Laird Senft, Gary Latimer

Responsibility: To research and report on genetic evaluation programs and advances in genetic defect testing.

4. **Commercial**

Members: Bob Switzer, Frank Strimbold, Lee Brown, Cecilie Fleming

Responsibility: The first task assigned is to review and recommend a recognition program for commercial feedyards and feeders. The second is to put together a plan for establishing an accreditation program for commercial breeders in our Canadian Angus Rancher Endorsed program.

5. **Advertising and Promotion**

Members: Lois McRae, Shane Castle, Tom McDonald

Each of the committees is to report to the Executive Committee with suggestions of areas involving policy issues that they feel would assist the Board in their role. Their reports are due within a month and will be acted on at the February meeting.

Canadian Beef Breeds Council (CBBC)

Don Mackenzie, a past president and current Chairman of the CBBC attended the meeting to share a report on the activities of the Council. He participated in a recent delegation with the Minister of Agriculture to Russia and is optimistic about our market opportunities there.

The Council is actively encouraging market reports by all purebred breeders in order to establish statistical verification of the value of purebred seedstock genetics. A mailout has been made to all purebred producers and we need to encourage them to participate and respond.

CBBC has not yet received our application for financial support of this summer's Forum but the Board was assured that it would be positively received.

World Angus Forum Financials

The final figures for the Forum won't be available until we hear about some expected grants. If those grants come in as expected the total cost to the Association will be within the budget allotted.

Anaplasmosis

Recent reported cases in British Columbia and Manitoba and the fact that CFIA is looking to do extension testing in herds that sold bulls to one of the ranches possibly affected generated discussion. Canada is one of the very few countries in the world with an Anaplasmosis-free designation.

The value of that designation to our import status is uncertain and the Board did not wish to take a stand either to recommend dropping or protecting that status. It was referred to the new Breed Development Committee for study.

New Environmental Policy

The board voted to add a new end to the Association to the effect that all decisions will be environmentally sound. As a result of this motion, the Association should not support any policy that may infringe on the health of animals or their handlers, should not adopt any new policy without first assessing health and environmental impacts, and should support initiatives that contribute to improved environmental stewardship.

Geneprob Genetic Defect Reports

The Board requested that Geneprob reports be made available to any member who requests them as a tool for better breeding decision.

The Canadian Angus Association can perform a herd analysis to calculate which animals have a probability of being a carrier of Arthrogryposis Multiplex (AM) (formerly known as Curly Calf), Neuropathic Hydrocephalous (NH) and Osteopetrosis (OS). Members can contact Kajal Devani in Breed Development at 1-888-571-3580 to request an analysis of their herd. The probability of each animal having inherited the gene for each defect is calculated, along with sire and dam information that allows members to follow the inheritance.