

THE LINK

Angus Link Enrollment 101

by Chris Engel, American Angus Association



To make it through this past winter, I'm sure many of you have adopted the mentality to hunker down, do

what you can to survive and pray it doesn't drag on too long. While it's been a hard winter for most, I hope your schedule afforded you time to learn something new by digging into an interesting article or two, or attending an educational meeting in your area or, even better, a national meeting further from home.

Regardless of the location, platform or subject, I hope you stumbled across some information regarding a program, product or service that piqued your interest for its potential benefit(s) to your operation.

The American Angus Association's new feeder-cattle program, Angus LinkSM, is such a program.

Capturing value

Angus Link, launched this past fall, was designed to help you better market your calves in an effort to capture the value you have already added — the use of quality genetics, good management practices, and sound health and nutrition programs. In case you didn't catch it, you don't have to use only registered Angus bulls to enroll. A percentage of calves can be sired by bulls registered with another breed association and/or by non-registered bulls.

Angus Link assigns three numerical scores to each enrolled group of calves based on their

genetic makeup (presented in a three-celled box named the Angus Link Scorecard). The three scores are on a scale of 0 to 200. A score of 100 for each of the scores represents the industry's average feeder calf.

The scores allow potential buyers to determine — at the speed of commerce — your calves' genetic value potential in terms of postweaning performance in the feedlot, as well as carcass quality hanging on the rail.

Your Angus Link Scorecard will also serve as a useful tool in the future by helping you benchmark your genetic progress from year to year to aid in making your next calf crop better than the last.

Once you enroll your calves, you will receive neon-green Angus Link visual ear tags for each head enrolled, as well as a group Scorecard, which will be one component of your group's Marketing Certificate. Your Marketing Certificate can be customized at any time prior to sale to include details on things like:

- ▶ the health protocol or the nutrition program you used;
- ▶ any other programs in which your cattle are enrolled (i.e., a branded health protocol or a third-party verification program); and
- ▶ even your marketing plan with sale date and location, amongst other things.

You can add as much or as little as you want.

You also will be able to choose

Continued on page 64

Your Angus Link Scorecard will also serve as a useful tool in the future by helping you benchmark your genetic progress from year to year to aid in making your next calf crop better than the last.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

List 1: What you'll provide during enrollment

- ▶ **Create username**
- ▶ **Define calving season (MM/YYYY-MM/YYYY)**
- ▶ **Describe your cow herd**
 - Number of calving females
 - Breed composition
 - Identify bulls you used in the past from which you retained heifers
- ▶ **Identify the bulls you used to sire the calves you are enrolling**
- ▶ **Identify how many calves you are enrolling**
- ▶ **Confirm you have given the minimum vaccines required to enroll**
 - To be eligible for enrollment, calves must receive at least one blackleg vaccine, one modified-live virus (MLV) vaccine (or two doses of a killed equivalent) to guard against bovine respiratory disease (BRD) and one Pasteurella vaccine prior to shipment
- ▶ **Indicate whether or not you plan to dual-enroll these calves in one or more AngusSource[®] verifications (USDA Process-verified Programs)**
- ▶ **Order your tags**
 - You can receive blank ear tags (just the Angus Link logo and your unique seven-digit enrollment number) or elect to have farm management IDs printed at no additional cost on your ear tags (up to five alphanumeric characters — numbers 0-9 or letters A-Z)
- ▶ **Sign a declaration**
 - Verifying the information you provided is truthful and accurate
- ▶ **Payment Information**
 - Visa, Mastercard or Discover accepted

whether or not you make your enrollment public. By doing so, your group's marketing certificate will be listed on the cattle feeder section of Angus Link's website (www.anguslink.com/findcattle), as well as in a biweekly email that reaches more than 800 cattle buyers directly.

At your convenience

With spring calving season beginning to wind down and warm-season grasses beginning to emerge (thank goodness!), time is getting hard to come by. You have a lot going on and a growing list of things that need to get done. I have good news: Angus Link enrollment is easy, and it doesn't even have to be done during banking hours, on a weekday or even during daylight at all. It's entirely web-based and can be completed in less than an hour with a decent internet connection and an idea of what you will need to provide.

List 2: What you may want to locate before getting started

► Your American Angus Association Customer Code

- If you have had registered Angus bulls transferred to you, this six- or seven-digit number will allow you to upload a complete list of bulls you have purchased over the years with two simple clicks. This will make identifying both current and historical bulls easy.
- If you don't know this number, look on your registration certificates, contact your Angus seedstock provider or call our customer service team at 816-383-5161.

► Health records

- Product names and dates (or planned dates) of administration.
- If you don't know everything you plan to give yet, that is okay! You can provide more details later by customizing your Marketing Certificate.

► Bull turnout list

- If your bulls are all Angus and you provided your AAA Customer Code when creating your username, you will just have to click the bulls used to breed your cows.

► Non-Angus bulls' registration number or breed composition

- You will be able to enter non-Angus bulls manually or upload an Excel file from your records.

To avoid any unwelcome early-morning or late-night headaches, I have included two lists to make sure you have what you need when you sit in front of your computer to enroll. The first lists information you'll be asked to provide when enrolling in Angus Link; the second includes some things you may want to track down prior to getting started to make the process go as smoothly as possible.

Keep an eye out for a narrated enrollment video coming soon!

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call us! **I**

Editor's note: The American Angus Association offers a host of programs to assist commercial cattlemen in profiting from their Angus genetics. The *Angus Beef Bulletin* will feature two columns to share insights about the programs. Chris Engel, director of Angus Link, will author "The Link." Ginette Gottswiller, director of Angus Source, will author "The Source."