

Yon Joins Industry Peers at Young Cattlemen's Conference

Drake Yon, Ridge Spring, S.C., explored the beef industry's production, policy and consumer relations.

by Jordan Lamb, communications intern

Drake Yon of Ridge Spring, S.C., represented the Angus breed at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) 2026 Young Cattlemen's Conference (YCC) May 28-June 4. The event is an opportunity for cattlemen and women of different agricultural backgrounds and interests to share experiences and dive deeper into aspects of the industry.

Yon and 70 other passionate individuals were selected to be part of the 2026 YCC class. Attendees from across the nation began in Denver, starting at the NCBA office and concluded the trip in Washington, D.C., with a stop at Capitol Hill. Along the way all aspects of the beef industry from start to finish were highlighted, including Five Rivers Cattle Feeding, Empirical Foods, Tyson Foods beef plants and Certified Angus Beef.

"Getting to experience the event with 70 other people that are just as passionate about the beef business as I am, and that experience the same challenges I do, was the most gratifying part," Yon says.

The opportunity to attend is especially meaningful for Yon and his family. His mother, Lydia, was the first-ever YCC scholarship recipient when the program launched in 2003.

Today, her son's selection represents not only personal



achievement, but also a powerful continuation of that legacy.

Yon is well versed in both involvement and history within the Angus breed. He, his wife and children reside near Ridge Spring, home to Yon Family Farm.

Yon shares that one of his greatest joys is working alongside his parents, wife and siblings as they manage their Angus cattle operation. Additionally, Yon Family Farm serves as a *Certified Angus Beef*® Ranch to Table program and owns a retail store to market local beef and pecan products from their orchard.

"At almost every stop, I got to see the impact Angus has on the beef industry as a whole, not just for us Angus breeders," Yon says. "The

Certified Angus Beef tour made me proud of our breed and the people that we have working inside it. I'm so thankful to the Angus Foundation for the opportunity and the Association as a whole for entrusting me to represent the breed. Don't let the cows at home keep you from doing something that's going to be impactful for the rest of your life."

The Angus Foundation annually selects a young cattleman to represent the breed at the conference through a competitive application process, with a strong emphasis on leadership experience and active involvement in the American Angus Association and the broader beef industry. The trip is fully funded by the Angus Fund, which provides vital, unrestricted support for the Angus Foundation's mission to advance Angus education, youth development and research.

"Opportunities like this help shape the next generation of industry leaders, and we're grateful for the donors whose support makes it possible for young cattlemen like Drake to grow, connect and lead with purpose," says Jaclyn Boester, Angus Foundation executive director.

Applications to represent the Angus breed at the 2027 YCC will open Dec. 1, 2026, and will be due Jan. 1, 2027. To learn more about this opportunity and the work of the Angus Foundation, visit www.AngusFoundation.org. 