



The VIEW FROM HERE

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Wherever my travels take me, I always seem to end up next to someone quite a bit older than myself. Which, in my opinion, isn't a bad thing, because there is a lot to be learned from those who came before us.

Since this Herd Reference Issue celebrates 40 years of service by the North American Limousin Foundation to breeders of registered Limousin seedstock, I spent quite a bit of time looking through breed history. And while I learned quite a bit, more importantly I was reminded of many things I already knew, but had pushed to the back of my mind.

What I am about to say is not my way of pointing fingers at those of you currently raising Limousin, because it is my opinion you would be hard-pressed to find a more sincere, dedicated group of seedstock producers, but...

Man were the pioneers of the Limousin breed in North America not only promoters, but some of the most energetic, enthusiastic and passionate people I've ever come across. Quite a few of the early movers and shakers are still involved with the breed today, and you know what?—they are still moving and shaking, even though they may need a little Bengay at the end of the day (sorry, I couldn't resist).

I wonder if those of us who weren't around when much of the Limousin groundwork was laid in this country can fully appreciate the hard work and effort our founding members put forth in the early days. Some of the stories I have heard about the overwhelming resistance to the "Exotic" cattle coming into this country will make your head spin. Shoot. We still get calls regularly here in the office from people wanting to rent cars for the prom and weddings. What kinds of questions must have Dick Goff, Dale Runnion and Bruce Waddle gotten back when they were trying to explain the new French breed to an entire nation who had never even heard of them?

Those of us who came along later have, to a certain extent, been able to draft behind the wake created by the pioneers of this breed. I also wonder, what would be possible if we all found it within ourselves to work harder to become the energetic promoters our forefathers were.

Again, I am not criticizing the current efforts, because I know for a fact, as evidence by the advertisers featured throughout this issue, as well as the many stories detailing how individual breeders are promoting their cattle and the breed, that a good many of you take breed promotion very seriously and do a masterful job keeping the breed front and center in the minds of other producers.

What I am suggesting is that we take a cue from famous television chef Emeril Lagasse and "kick it up a notch."

From a magazine standpoint, we couldn't be happier with the amount of participation we get from breeders on a monthly basis, but breed promotion goes far beyond an ad in your national breed publication. There are many more promotional tools available today than there were 40 years ago, so finding the combination that fits your individual program shouldn't be as complicated as one might think. The possibilities are virtually endless: From selling locker beef, to displaying cattle at shows and beef expos, to bull tests, steer feedouts and progeny testing, to local and national advertising, to LimMark ear tags, there are definitely ways to spread the Limousin message far and wide.

Looking back at the last 40 years of Limousin in North America, we owe our founding members a great deal. At the top of the list should be the same respect they had for the breed and the same zeal and creativity they showed when it came time to convince their fellow cattlemen that Limousin deserved a spot of prominence in the North American beef industry.

Here's to 40 memorable years—now let's see if we can top it.