



The VIEW FROM HERE

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The beginning of December I spent two very useful and informative days at the DoubleTree in Denver, Colorado, participating in the first stages of building the Limousin breeds new strategic plan.

I have to admit, I have taken part in planning processes like this in the past for other organizations and this one proved to be more enlightening than my past experiences. My hats off to Jim McKinlay and Brian Rhiness of the Haines Centre for Strategic Management on the bang up job they did facilitating the process.

While the plan is still somewhat wet behind the ears, to me, the undercurrent was twofold—increase the overall quality of the cattle while fostering increased unity among all Limousin breeders.

When the subject of breed improvement came up (and it did a lot) the NALF board and staff members agreed that a great place to start would be to dust off the four principles outlined at the Visions 2004 symposium in Fort Collins, Colorado. For those of you who are new to the breed, or who have slept since then, those four trait areas are—Grade, Growth, Fertility and Docility.

As the talk regarding breed improvement progressed, a lot of discussion revolved around how each of the current Limousin products can be used to make the breed better and ultimately sell more commercial bulls. Throughout the discussion it was apparent the plan will not dictate to individual breeders exactly what kind of genetics they should be using, but rather suggest the type(s) of Limousin critters that will increase commercial demand, thus allowing the breed to grow and breeders to prosper.

While I realize very few truly like change, and it is definitely more painful for some than others, I would argue those of us involved in seedstock production should be more willing and less resistant to change than virtually any other agricultural sector. After all, the focus of nearly every breeding program is to make the next generation better than the last, which is the very definition of change.

Those attending the National Western will have the opportunity to take a look at the draft plan, ask questions and offer suggestions. Only after the membership has had the opportunity to throw in their two cents will the plan be finalized. At that point, it will be all of our responsibilities to take the plan that has been created and make something positive happen.

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