



Around THE WORLD

by Kiley McKinna

I hope you are doing well and everything is good in your part of the country. The fall for most people in the cattle business brings the excitement of weaning the highly anticipated spring calf crop. This is the time of year when all of the hard work you put into breeding decisions, recording keeping, marketing and more importantly, getting a healthy calf to the finish line, becomes a reality. However, this is also the time of year when many producers focus on what can be done to add value to their bottom line in the months ahead.

Through my travels and conversations this summer and so far this fall, the subject of adding value to the spring calf crop has certainly been a popular topic. Frequently, I have been asked the questions: When and how should I market my calves? and What traits and qualities will generate the most value?

As I'm sure you are well aware of, predicting the when, how and what, in terms of adding value, is certainly less than an exact science. However, there are a few things in my estimation that can be done to best position your program to capitalize on profits in the seedstock sector.

To answer those particular questions, first put yourself in the shoes of your customers. With overhead rising and narrow cattle feeding margins, regardless of whether your customer is a commercial cowman or purebred breeder, they need a product that will perform to their expectations and be profitable.

A couple of basic things that are proven to add considerable value to a pedigreed calf at weaning are: registration with NALF, the maintenance of accurate records, utilizing available EPD, DNA and ultrasound technology, and developing a marketing strategy that targets your primary customers.

In closing, I encourage every breeder to reach out and visit with your customers and identify their specific needs. In my opinion, that will be your best gauge of your product's true value. You can also reach out to any *Limousin World* or NALF staff member, or any Limousin marketing agent. We would be glad to assist you in determining what can be done to help make this year's calf crop more valuable. **LW**