

March 21,2014

To: Officers and Directors, American Angus Association

We write this letter at a time of stress at the American Angus Association, and make this attempt to communicate the desperation felt relative to the future of the Association by many concerned employees. This is a difficult letter to write and provide to the Board of Directors, but we believe conveying a formal complaint against the Chief Executive Officer cannot be delayed any further. The current situation is not healthy for the organization, and this environment ultimately jeopardizes the ability to provide the services and support expected and deserved by a loyal membership.

As a staff, we have tried to maintain and cultivate a positive, professional approach in dealing with our membership and the industry. The commitment to always put the best foot forward has likely provided a false impression of the working relationships at the Association, not only to our members, but especially to you, the Board of Directors. We are faced with a deteriorating culture and the staff morale is spiraling downward. There is a complete lack of confidence, trust, and respect for the CEO's ability to provide the leadership and atmosphere needed to maintain, let alone grow, the relevance of this organization.

The CEO is not a strategic planner, but reacts to circumstances and events. There is an apparent lack of preparation and a failure to work together in all planned events, even regularly scheduled Board meetings. This absence of planning is worsened by indecision, which also creates additional frustration for all involved. Without confident direction on a regular basis, staff motivation and efficiency is unachievable. The procrastination, indecisiveness, and apparent lack of purpose by the CEO further hampers productivity.

The use of the word team has been grossly abused the past few years at the American Angus Association. The CEO has not broken down walls to foster a real team, but instead has continued to foster a divisive approach at the top of this organization. A combative mentality has developed and is destroying the organization.

As we contemplate the characteristics necessary to lead a 50 million dollar business forward, it requires someone who displays selfless dedication, work ethic and passion for the breed and the organization. Strategic vision, and the ability to share that vision with a unified team is a necessary requirement. The CEO has been given ample opportunity to unify a dedicated staff with common goals, but has failed to make improvement in this area.

A challenging atmosphere takes its toll in other fashions. We have seen dedicated colleagues, because of the existing environment, seek other employment opportunities. We are on the brink of expanded attrition unless steps are taken. We cannot afford the loss of valuable employees due to the deteriorating culture and environment.

The dedicated breeders of the American Angus Association deserve better for their investment. We all believed that given time, operations would improve, or else arrive at a point that the need for change would become obvious to all. Four years ago, a fellow staff member asked, "At what point are we as staff considered negligent by the Board and our membership if we fail to communicate just what the situation is like here in the office?" That time has arrived. We feel it is our fiduciary duty as a staff to voice our lack of confidence in the performance of the CEO and request his removal before the situation deteriorates further.

We bring our concerns to you because we care about the Angus breed, our breeders and their future. We all intend to continue providing service to the American Angus Association without interruption. Thank you for your consideration of this formal complaint.

Sincerely,

The following Association staff (and their years of service):

Jerry Cassady, 22 years
Chris Stallo, 17 years
Vern Frey, 10 years
Don Laughlin, 34 years
Matt Caldwell, 16 years
Robin Ruff, 6 years
Chuck Grove, 39 years
Lou Ann Adams, 31 years
Matt Printz, 10 years
Sally Northcutt, 11 years
Wes Tiemann, 6 years
Scott Johnson, 18 years
Richard Dyar, 35 years
Bill Bowman, 22 years
Rod Wesselman, 21 years