

**ADAMS ANGUS FARM  
SINCE 1939**

*“Our 70 years of experience in the seedstock industry”*

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I don't believe anyone knew in 1939 with the purchase of those first 3 heifers from Tennessee that that moment would define who we were in the agricultural industry. Row crops primarily defined us during the early years and even through the late 1970's but it has been the Angus Cattle that have allowed us to survive and thrive moving forward through the late 1970's till today.

Let's discuss what I consider to be the key elements to be successful in the purebred industry:

1. **Ability to adapt** – Always be able to adapt to changing trends in your life both professionally and personally. Life will throw curves at you no matter who you are and where you are. Give credit where credit is due and be appreciative for what you have. Change is inevitable but we have to be willing to adapt and move forward even during difficult times.
2. **Keep your cattle balanced across all economically important traits as much as possible** – This may be the most difficult lesson of all to learn and to always be able to avoid. My first memories of the cattle were in the 1970's when cattle from Continental Europe were being brought in to this country to crossbreed with because our English breeds were too small. So then we as Angus breeders across the board decided the only thing that mattered was to make our cattle bigger. We did and throughout the 80's we continued to push for size. Finally in the 1990's we decided low birth weights were most important and as a general rule we looked for lower birth weights and then carcass data became ever so fashionable and now feed efficiency is the hot topic and tenderness etc. etc. Don't get me wrong all of these issues have been important issues but single trait selection will get you in so much trouble so fast!!! . One of the hardest lessons I personally learned in breeding cattle in the early 1980's when we first started

artificially insemination was to stay away from the hot new sires but instead to use well known, proven, tested sires. We wasted so much time and energy in the early years. However, let me also say that you always need to be willing to adapt and make changes taking advantage of new technology and new ideas as they present themselves. Get involved in different organizations and do your homework. Don't get stuck in the same old ruts and never venture out. Often times the best way we learn is through the mistakes we make ourselves. If you quit changing and adapting your progress will be slow. As we get older our desire for change naturally slows but we must push ourselves or be willing to let the younger generation challenge us.

3. **Female performance is the key** – I would say we have never been very good about setting specific goals in our operation other than realizing that performance of the mother cow is the primary thing that matters for long term survival in this business. You can't get caught up in the latest fads and popularity contests. The mother cow has to perform year in and year out regardless of what else you may be striving to change about the cattle. We do a lot of things here to improve performance and try to meet the customers needs but you will never see us compromise on the mother cow. Let's talk about the dam and what she must accomplish. She has to be functionally sound (udder, feet, and legs). She must calve every year and stay on a regular 365 day calving cycle. She must calve unassisted and most importantly do this in a fairly tough environment. Pampering has no place in any purebred operation. The most important criteria in our operation for her to stay in our herd long term are that she has to wean calves at an above average weaning weight. In other words she has to be able to meet the primary challenges mentioned but she must do it with an above average calf at side year in and year out. The only way to know what your cattle are really doing is by keeping performance records whether doing so through the BCIA or Breed record keeping systems that may be available to you.
4. **Customer service is marketing** – taking care of your customers and providing them what they need at a reasonable price year in and year out is the key to long term survival. That's not to say sell them cheap. If you sell them cheap that's what your customer thinks he has purchased; a cheap animal. Stand behind what you sell and always strive to let the customer be right if there are any complaints. Integrity and honesty goes further and does more for you than all the advertising money can buy. Getting involved in agricultural programs such as

BCIA, BIF, Farmers Federation, cattleman's association, statewide breed associations and national associations also helps not only educate you but puts you out there in leadership groups to get to know the people that you can learn from and be associated with. Like minded people enjoy helping each other.

There are many purebred breeders out there that are much more knowledgeable about the industry and better judges of cattle than I but I honestly believe that if you can just focus on the above four elements you can begin to be successful long term in this business. God has blessed us, may he bless you that know Him as well.