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ASA Board Strategic Planning

In February, the ASA Board met with Kevin Ochsner for a strategic planning and board governance session. Breed association boards meet periodically to remain focused and realign in the areas important to the membership and the association. At times, ASA Staff is included with the Board members to share ideas, visions and other information to provide an overview of association activities. Kevin Ochsner is well known for hosting Cattleman to Cattleman on RFD, but his normal business is performing strategy sessions for companies and associations.

To begin the session, Kevin defined the roles of a board and a staff. He also brought attention to the importance of making decisions based on what is best for the breed and association, rather than individual preferences. I must say, in my six years of serving as the ASA Executive, your Board of Directors have continuously served as representatives of you, the membership, and have not brought personal agendas to the Board Room. Kevin also emphasized the importance of discussing items in a professional manner and expressing unification as a group, even if a board member opposed the majority vote. The entire board should be unified on the decision. (DC politicians could take a lesson from our Board.) It would be unfair to this Board or the previous Boards with which I have worked not to sing praises of their accord and (mostly) unanimous decisions. They are a cohesive group who put the ASA above all else to make this

breed first-rate. Kevin pointed out that the Board makes policy and the staff is here to carry out that policy.

The strategic planning began with the staff included. Kevin began by challenging the group to share their thoughts on different activities and areas relative to breed associations and memberships. The list is long and as the information extracted from the Board and staff, many common ideas began to surface. By challenging the group, viewpoints and mindsets blended and a new Mission, Vision and Core Strategies for ASA were created. The groups' concepts included: Technology advancement is outpacing education in applying that technology; Potential increase in divergence of show ring and the performance industry; Misperceptions that Shorthorns are not purebred; Consumer preference demand for less antibiotic or hormone treatment; Increase in local and/or niche markets; Loyalty of our breeders to Shorthorn red, white, and roan; Increased focus on data analytics; Amplified use of convenience traits; Augmented use of genomics; The labor shortage in the industry and Growth in online sales and marketing. These are just a few of the comments the Board and staff shared in the process. Next, the responsibilities of an association and Board were addressed, such as: Representation of the many different membership interests; Oversight of resources and finances; Integrity; Educate and inform membership; Decision making and setting policy; Good communication and

Remain focused on Mission and Vision Statements. After one-and-a-half days of focusing on this task, the Board authored a new Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Core Strategies which are listed at the bottom of this page. One phrase included in these Statements and Strategies that the entire Board feels strongly about and one that I personally am proud to see that they felt important is the "Family Friendly Environment" that is engraved in this breed. Aside from all the technology and changes that we deal with in our industry, there is an importance in the people of the breed and how they interact. These statements and strategies are directed toward serving the membership and breed growth. In the future, these commitments will remain on this page, much like the Initiatives the Board scripted after the Impact 2015 Conference. Those initiatives have, for the most part, been accomplished and the time has come to grow and move on. Exercises like this are important, not only for the Board and Staff, but for the membership of any association.

The Board worked diligently on this project. Trust me they were exhausted after 2 days of demanding activity. The Board has defined a great Vision and Mission Statements which will benefit our breed along with the Core Strategies that we will act on and refer to in the upcoming months. The American Shorthorn Association and its membership now have a unified direction!

American Shorthorn Association Mission Statement

The mission of the American Shorthorn Association is to serve all members and enhance the value of the Shorthorn breed by managing data, maintaining the integrity of the herdbook, educating members and communicating the value of Shorthorn cattle resulting in the expanded use of Shorthorn genetics in the U.S. beef industry.

American Shorthorn Association Vision Statement

Be recognized in the industry as a viable British breed that creates profitability in beef cattle production, with a family friendly environment.

Core Strategies

Educate, equip and empower our members

Increase commercial interest in Shorthorn genetics

Continue to develop and support the Junior program

Invest in research and development to enable breed improvement