Fall 2026 AICA Board of Directors Meeting Recap

AICA Board Advances Major Investments in Genetic Improvement, Research and Market Development

Fall board meetings establish priorities for 2027 and beyond, with an emphasis on delivering greater value to Charolais breeders and their commercial customers.

The American-International Charolais Association (AICA) Board of Directors convened September 29–30, 2026, in Kansas City, Missouri, approving a series of initiatives designed to strengthen the breed's competitive position, improve member services and expand opportunities for registered Charolais genetics throughout the beef industry.

The meetings reflected a continued focus on connecting genetic improvement with measurable economic value. From modernizing the association's registry system to advancing research in red meat yield, carcass value and commercial cattle performance, AICA is making strategic investments intended to benefit members and their customers.

New Registry System Targeted for July 2027

One of the most significant developments was the decision to move forward with the development of a new AICA registry system through Helical. Following presentations and evaluations of the current CGen platform and Helical, the Breed Improvement Committee recommended proceeding with Helical, establishing a targeted implementation date of July 1, 2027.

The association will maintain both registry systems during a nine- to twelve-month transition period to support continuity of service. A member subcommittee will work alongside AICA staff in the design and development of the new platform, helping ensure that the system reflects the needs of seedstock producers.

This investment represents an important step toward modernizing the technology that supports AICA's core registry and performance programs. The objective is to provide members with an improved foundation for managing registrations, performance information and the growing volume of data associated with genetic improvement.

Expanding Genetic Evaluation and Genomic Tools

The board approved continued investment in genetic evaluation, including $30,000 for the development of new expected progeny difference (EPD) traits in 2027. A member subcommittee will work with staff to evaluate potential traits, with an emphasis on maternal characteristics, and recommend a release strategy at the spring 2027 board meeting.

As the beef industry increasingly demands cattle that balance terminal performance with maternal functionality, expanding the information available to breeders remains an important priority.

The board also approved **$100,000 to continue the AICA Genomic Credit Program in 2027**, reinforcing the association's commitment to increasing genomic information within the Charolais population.

Greater genomic participation supports more informative genetic evaluations, strengthens selection tools and helps breeders make more confident decisions earlier in an animal's life. Together, these investments support the continued advancement of Charolais genetics and the information available to members and their customers.

Research Focused on the Economic Value of Charolais Genetics

AICA continues to expand its investment in research that demonstrates how Charolais genetics contribute value throughout the beef production chain.

During the Commercial Committee meeting, university researchers and industry collaborators presented updates on several ongoing projects examining growth, efficiency, red meat yield, carcass characteristics and the economic contributions of Charolais-influenced cattle.

Among the initiatives discussed were:

- **Red Meat Yield and Genetic Cutout Research:** Research examining differences in saleable red meat yield and their economic implications, with an emphasis on better understanding the relationship between genetics, the AICA evaluation and carcass value.
- **Life Cycle Assessment:** Research conducted with Kansas State University evaluating breed effects on cattle performance, economics and environmental outcomes, including the biological and economic value of Charolais genetics.
- **Beef Sensory and Nutrient Density Research:** Additional research evaluating eating characteristics and nutritional attributes of beef associated with AICA research initiatives.
- **Profit Driver:** Continued collection of feedlot and harvest information to better connect genetic selection with downstream performance and profitability.

These projects represent an important evolution in how the association evaluates and communicates genetic value.

Historically, much of the industry's attention has focused on quality grade and carcass premiums. While those remain important, the economic contribution of growth, feed efficiency, carcass weight and red meat yield must also be considered when evaluating the total value of beef production.

AICA's research initiatives are intended to provide the information necessary to quantify those contributions and develop stronger selection and marketing tools for Charolais breeders.

Profit Driver Program Extended Through 2027

The board approved **$51,000 to continue the Profit Driver program through 2027**, supporting the collection of performance and genomic information on an additional 300 head of cattle.

The allocation includes $150 per head in program costs and $20 per head for genotyping.

The Profit Driver initiative is an important component of AICA's efforts to collect commercial performance information and connect genetics to measurable outcomes in the feeding and harvesting sectors.

By expanding these datasets, the association can continue building a stronger understanding of how Charolais genetics influence commercially important traits and where opportunities exist for further genetic improvement.

The Commercial Committee also authorized exploration of additional opportunities to collect genomic information through the harvest stage, further strengthening the potential connections between cattle performance, carcass outcomes and genetic evaluation.

Advancing Red Meat Yield Research

Recognizing the increasing importance of red meat yield in the beef industry's value equation, AICA approved additional support for research being conducted in collaboration with Texas Tech University and USDA's Meat Animal Research Center.

The board approved **$46,845 annually in 2027 and 2028** to support the Red Meat Yield Project.

The initiative is designed to advance research into red meat yield measurements and their potential application in beef cattle genetic improvement programs.

As the industry seeks to improve the amount and value of saleable beef produced from each animal, the ability to measure and ultimately select for economically relevant yield characteristics presents an important opportunity. This research builds on AICA's broader commitment to helping the industry recognize the value of pounds of red meat produced, rather than relying exclusively on traditional carcass measurements.

Strengthening Commercial Marketing and CharAdvantage

The board approved continued investment in commercial cattle marketing and industry relationships, recognizing that the value of Charolais genetics must be effectively communicated beyond the registered seedstock sector.

The Commercial Committee supported an additional **$35,000 for livestock auction promotions and sponsorship initiatives**, building on relationships with Superior Livestock Auction, DV Auction and other marketing channels.

These efforts support increased visibility for Charolais-influenced cattle and the CharAdvantage program, which helps commercial producers identify and market cattle with documented genetic information.

The committee also discussed opportunities to expand industry partnerships and strengthen connections with cattle feeders, packers and branded beef programs.

As more commercial producers seek ways to differentiate their cattle, programs that connect genetic information with market opportunities will become increasingly important. The committee additionally supported continued exploration of Value Trace, an initiative intended to strengthen connections between genetic information and downstream cattle performance and harvest outcomes.

Exploring New Opportunities in Branded Beef

AICA approved **$30,000 for a nutrient density branded beef market development pilot**, creating an opportunity to explore how research-based product differentiation could support Charolais-influenced beef.

The initiative is intended to investigate potential market opportunities that connect the attributes of beef products with cattle sired by registered Charolais bulls.

This effort complements ongoing research into red meat yield, sensory characteristics and nutrient density. While the project remains in the development stage, it represents an opportunity to explore additional ways that Charolais genetics may contribute value beyond the traditional livestock marketing channels.

Expanded National Marketing Efforts for 2027

The board adopted the 2027 National Advertising Campaign and approved **$72,000 for a Strategic Marketing Initiative** designed to strengthen the breed's visibility and expand its reach with commercial producers.

The initiative includes several new communication and promotional efforts:

- An earned-media podcast initiative.
- A *Beyond the Payweight* video series.
- A Charolais Advantage rebranding effort.
- Upgrades to trade show and industry event promotions.

These efforts will complement the association's broader advertising strategy by placing greater emphasis on the economic value of Charolais genetics and communicating that value through multiple channels.

The objective is to reach commercial cattlemen with relevant, research-supported information that strengthens demand for Charolais bulls and helps members communicate the advantages of their genetics.

Supporting Junior Members and the Next Generation

The association also approved several updates to junior activities, scholarship programs and show opportunities.

The 2027 AIJCA Junior National will be held June 12–18 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Junior Council approved a minimum participation age of seven years old as of January 1, with contest division ages also determined as of January 1. The Junior Foundation approved moving the scholarship application deadline to March 31 and will introduce a new online application platform for 2027.

Additionally, the Activities Committee selected the 2027–2028 Class A Roll of Excellence shows and named the late Troy Thomas as the dedicatee of the 58th National Charolais Show. These actions reflect AICA's ongoing commitment to youth development, leadership opportunities and the future of the Charolais breed.

Building Value for Members and Their Customers

Taken together, the actions from the fall board meetings demonstrate a coordinated approach to advancing the Charolais breed.

Modernizing registry technology will strengthen the services and tools available to members. Expanding genomic and performance data collection will support more informative genetic evaluations. Research into red meat yield, efficiency and carcass value will help quantify the economic contribution of Charolais genetics. Expanded marketing initiatives will work to communicate that value to commercial producers and the broader beef industry.

Ultimately, the association's success depends on connecting these investments to opportunities for its members. As the beef industry continues to evolve, AICA remains focused on providing the research, tools and market connections that allow Charolais breeders to make genetic progress, demonstrate economic value and strengthen demand for their cattle.

For complete committee reports and official actions, members are encouraged to review the September 29–30, 2026, AICA Board of Directors and Committee Meeting Minutes in the Charolais Journal. Be sure to view the fall Breed Improvement and Commercial Committee briefs at https://charolaisusa.com/breeder-member-hub/#board, and join us for the next AICA Board Meeting to be held April 20-22, 2027, KCI Expo Center, 11730 N Ambassador Dr, Kansas City, MO 64153.