

Florida Cattlemen's Association

Membership Committee Survey

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IN AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Florida Cattlemen’s Association

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Introduction

These survey responses were collected from the membership committee of the Florida Cattlemen's Association. Specifically, these responses reference the committee's beliefs and views regarding membership recruitment and retention of members in the Florida Cattlemen's Association. Some of the questions elicited common themes from members and where themes existed; there is a short explanation below the survey results graph.

The purpose of this survey is to aid in the development of membership recruitment efforts over the next two-year period.

Survey Results

How long have you been a member of the Florida Cattlemen's Association?

Answers ranged from 3 years to 37 years.

Within the membership committee exists a wide range of experience and leadership.

Why did you become a member of the Florida Cattlemen's Association?

Text Response

Family Tradition in the beginning, and as I became more involved in the FCA private property rights, political issues impacting our industry, regulatory issues brought to the memberships attention,etc.etc.

To network with others with similar business interest and to join together to defend the industry in the political, regulatory and environmental arena

Father was a member, Being a member of FCA gave individuals stature and part of an elite group, Cowboys and Ranchers. As a young man you looked up to and admired the older wiser almost legends who were leaders of FCA. Local Associations gave us opportunities to interact with some of these men. Later on you realized what these men and FCA did politically in Tallahassee, Washington and U. F. At this point you realize that you can help this effort and that the legends don't live forever.

We needed info on how to properly care for our newly purchased cattle. Need to network with like minded individuals.

Professional affiliation. Preserve Florida ranching heritage and way of life. Legislative representation.

to promote the industry and support its members

Support the beef industry, networking, gain ideas from other cattle operations, and educational articles/beef industry articles from the monthly magazine.

For advancement of our beef products. The accomplishment of this goal through the efforts of the state, local and federal government lobbying.

I grew up on a cattle farm in Florida and have attended the Cattlemen's Convention since I was a toddler because my dad was an active member. I've always had a connection, but recently joined as an allied member when I began working for an agricultural company. The company involvement is part of it, but I view the cattle industry as very important because it has always been a part of my family's livelihood/history. I feel the FCA is an integral resource and support group for all cattlemen/cattlegirls.

TO OBTAIN AN EXPANDED KNOWLEDGE OF THE BEEF/CATTLE INDUSTRY

I owned cattle and was a member of the county association so I thought I should join.

my interest in the cattle business is several generations old and when I became an adult I too became a member.

To Hang Out with Friends

Themes from Question 2 Answers

Of these 13 answers, 10 of them relate to family ties and/or professional networking opportunities. The theme of friends, family and networking reveal that personal and meaningful interactions with others were the main reasons that members of the membership committee originally joined FCA.

Recommendation- Determine how FCA can cultivate more meaningful interactions for potential members.

What are the most important reasons you have remained a member of the Florida Cattlemen’s Association?

Text Response
Way of life I truly enjoy.
they association works to maintain a business climate that will offer beef producers the opportunity to maintain a profitable business in Florida ranching and to allow ranching into the future
Unity is strength and we are a small group. Florida will always be a cattle State but we all must be involved. We as people stand for much more than a steak on a plate. And we must have FCA as a vehicle to tell our story to all.
Magazine Educational offerings Networking Fantastic people We are organizers and saw the need to assist both the local and state associations.
same reasons for joining; friendships
promote the industry and support its members
the tireless energy of the Association to promote the beef industry, our cattle/ranching heritage, promotion of our youth industry, and the education of beef to the consumer.
Lobbying, Protection in Tallahassee and Washington
Networking. Having a support group, who you know are truly concerned for the well being of the industry. Also, there is comfort in knowing that by being a member of the FCA you (as a cattleman) are surrounded by the industry's experts. As a cattle producer, it's great to know you are linked to those folks and can use them as a resource.
MAGAZINE AND COUNTY ASSOCIATION MEETINGS
I believe this is an organization of good people with a good purpose. Leadership has been effective in lobby efforts as well as promotion of cattle industry.
The cattle industry is very important to me, The Florida Cattlemen’s along with our county cattlemen’s association do a lot to protect the industry in places that we do not have access to like Washington and Tallahassee. Also we enjoy the local and state fellowship of a organization that is our kind of folks. It is most important to me that the county is active with events, training and fellowship at home
to be apart of a great organization

Themes from Question 3

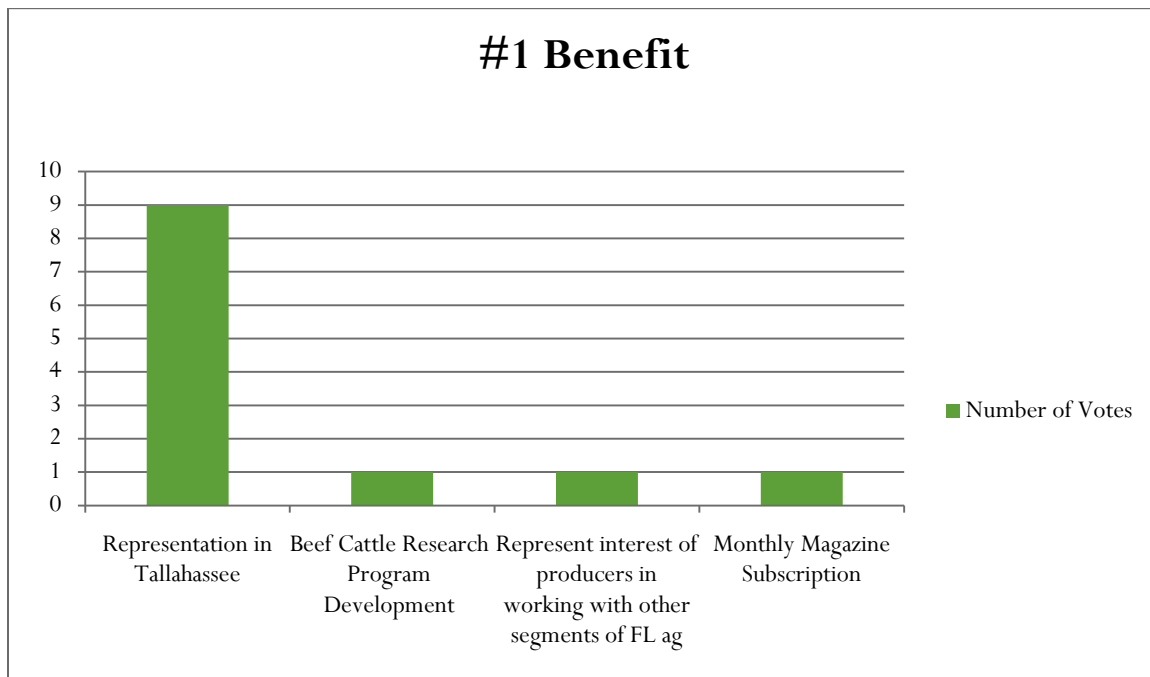
The majority of these answers focus on the importance of the beef industry. To a great extent, members of the membership committee have remained a part of FCA because of how important the association is to the beef industry. This theme is seen in phrases like “FCA is a vehicle to tell our story, “tireless energy of the association to promote beef industry,” protection in Tallahassee and Washington.”

An important point to note is that while many on the membership committee originally joined due to personal connections, they have remained members because they feel FCA is crucial to the sustainability and longevity of Florida's beef industry.

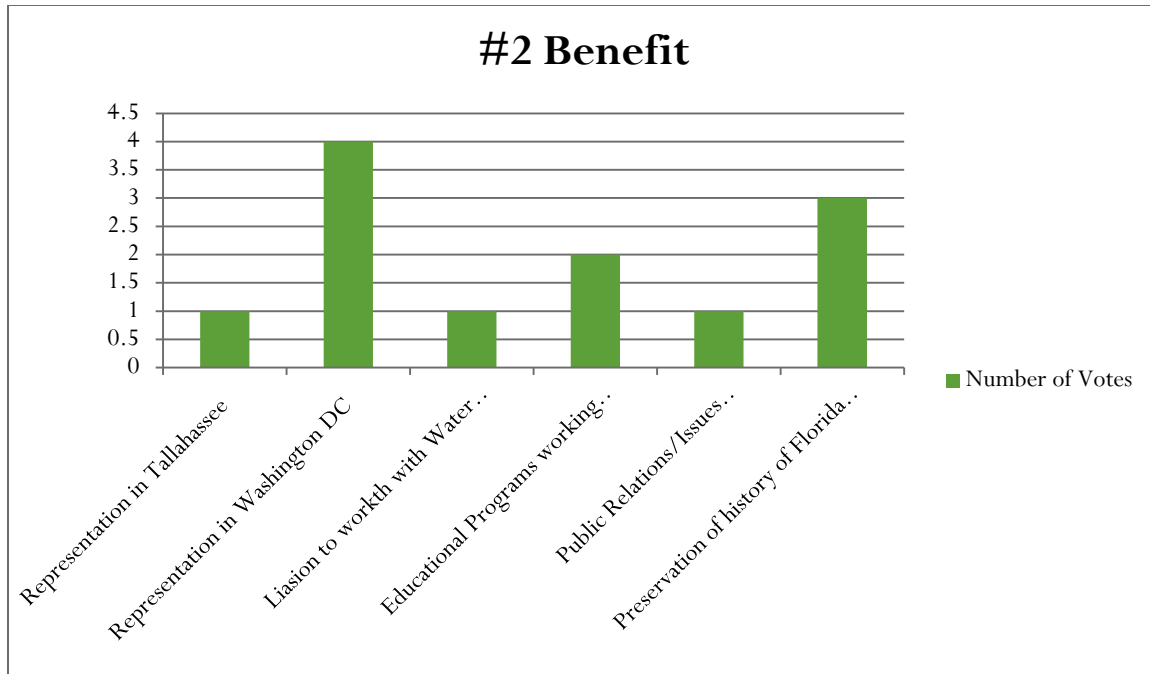
Additionally, it is important to point out that when given the opportunity, members did not discuss membership "perks," such as steak dinners or rodeo tickets, as a reason for remaining members. Members discussed tangible benefits such as lobbying efforts, promotion of the cattle industry, being surrounded by industry experts and beef education to consumers. Based on member feedback, these tangible benefits should be considered some of FCA's key messages to members.

Recommendation: Personal contact/Relationships may be the key to initially recruit members but for retention purposes, members MUST see the value of the association to the industry.

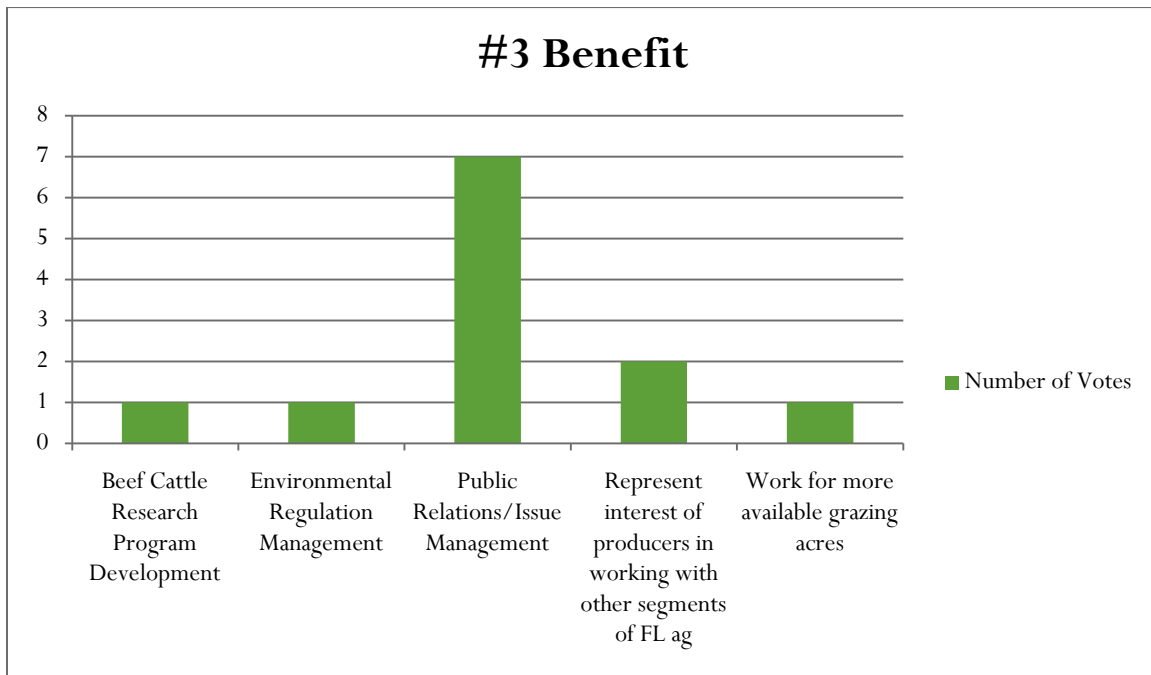
What do you feel are the most important benefits to being a member of the Florida Cattlemen's Association?



The majority of members on the membership committee felt like the most important key benefit to Florida Cattlemen's Association was representation in Tallahassee. Based on this result, representation in Tallahassee should be considered as a key message for current and potential members.

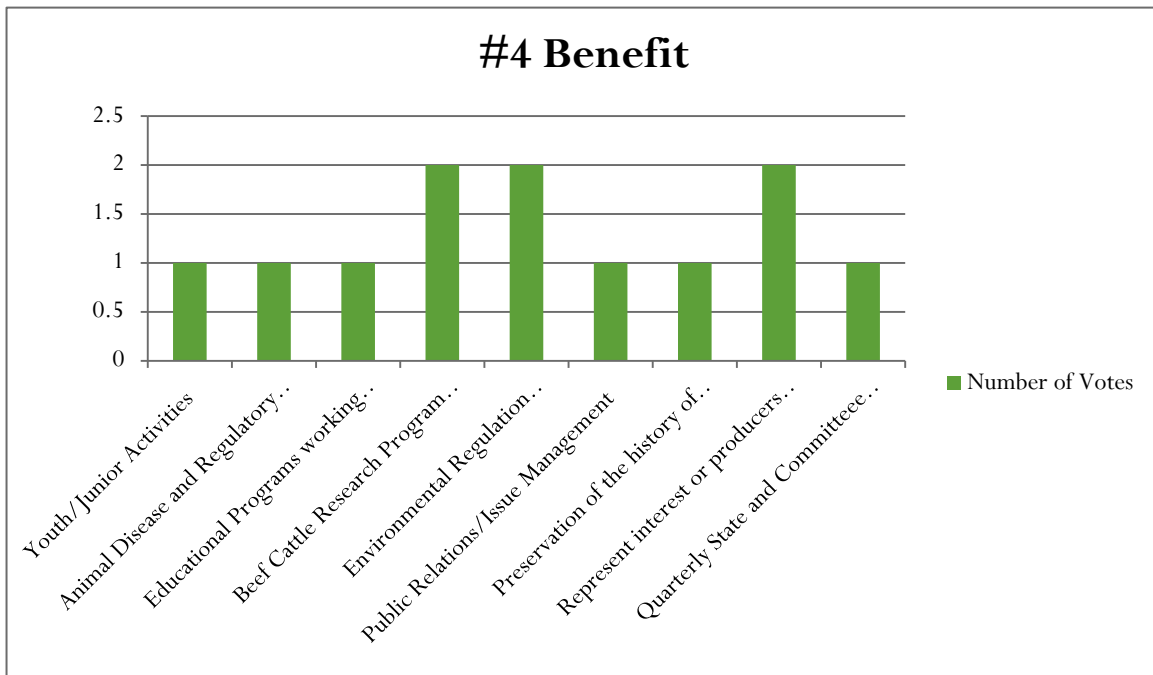


The membership committee felt that the second most important benefit to FCA was representation in Washington DC followed closely by preserving the history of Florida Ranching and educational programs working with UF/IFAS.

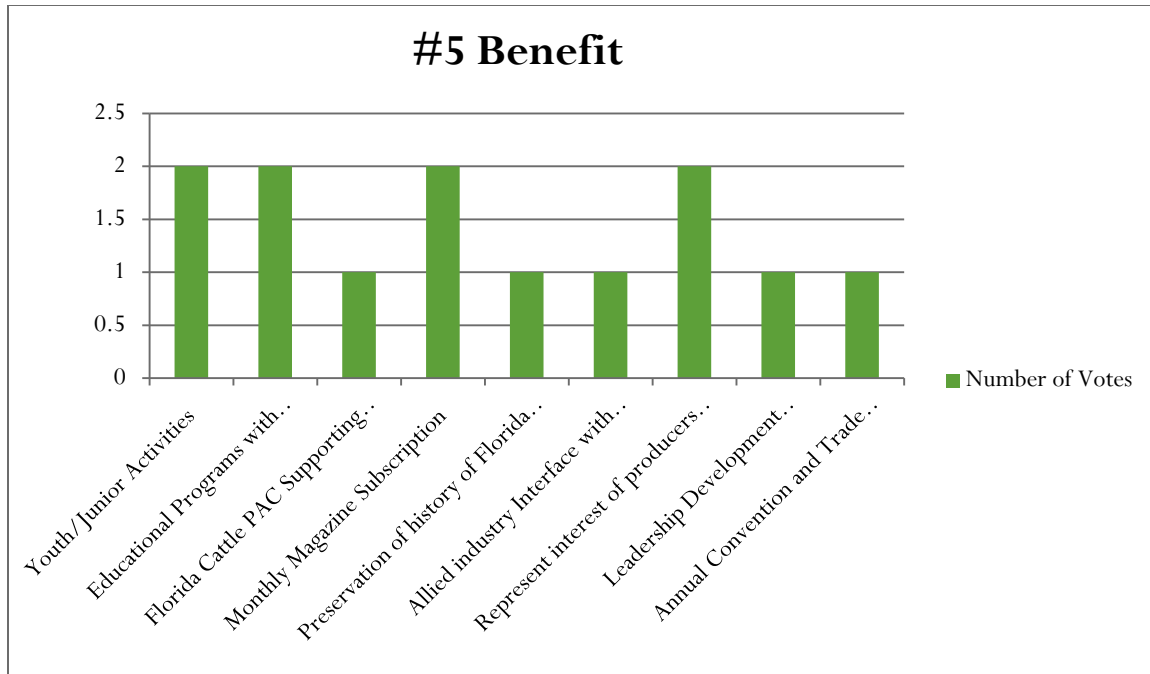


The third benefit as seen by membership committee members is FCA’s role in public relations/issues management for the beef industry. This benefit is followed closely by “represent the interest of beef producers in working with other segments of Florida agriculture.” These top two benefits in this

category seem to go hand in hand. For example if FCA is appropriately conducting public relations and issues management techniques on behalf of the membership, then a natural consequence is representing the interest of producers in working with other segments of Florida agriculture. Based on the interlocking nature of these benefits, the public relations category should be included as a top benefit for the association. FCA should determine the overlap of benefits and begin to condense “key benefits” in order that every member knows the top 3-5 benefits of the association.



The fourth and fifth benefit categories had a wider variety of individual benefits. From this benefit breakdown, it can be seen that there is consensus among the membership committee in relation to the top three most important benefits.



Again, in this fifth benefit category, opinions are spread through the benefit list. While it seems consensus can be found in the top three benefits, more work should be done to determine what specific benefits should be used in key message development.

What do you believe are the key benefits for most members who are not involved in leadership positions?

Answer	Response	%
Monthly Magazine Subscription featuring wide variety of information for producers	11	92%
Representation in Tallahassee to protect their interests	10	83%
Beef Cattle Research Program Development with Cattle Research Stations to enhance profitable production practices	9	75%
Educational Programs working with UF/IFAS	9	75%
Animal Disease and Regulatory Issue Management with FDACS	8	67%
Public Relations/Issue Management to protect beef cattle industry	8	67%
Preservation of the History of Florida Ranching Industry	7	58%
Representation in Washington, DC to protect interests at Federal Level	7	58%
Represent Interest of Beef Cattle Producers in working with other segments of agriculture in Florida	7	58%
Environmental Regulation Managements/Education with DOACS and DEP	6	50%
Annual Convention and Trade Show	6	50%
Liasion work with Water Management Districts	6	50%
Florida Cattle PAC Supporting Friends of Agriculture Campaigns	5	42%
Theft /Reward Eligibility	4	33%
Leadership Development through Young Cattlemen's tours	3	25%
Work to generate more available acres for grazing on public lands	3	25%
Allied Industry Interface with Providers of Good and Services to Beef Cattle Industry	3	25%

Interface with USDA		3	25%
Scholarships		2	17%
Sponsors of Industry Seminars		2	17%
Representation in Florida Ag Coalition		2	17%
Florida Cattlewomen, Inc.		2	17%
Youth/Junior Activities		2	17%
Quarterly State and Committee Meetings		2	17%
Other Benefit Not Listed on this List		2	17%
Pasture to Plate Program		1	8%
FCA Quality Replacement Heifer Sale		1	8%
Premier Awards Program		1	8%
Seedstock Council		0	0%

This chart reveals interesting results. Overwhelmingly, the membership committee feels that the biggest benefit to others is the monthly magazine subscription. However, in the before-mentioned questions, only one member of the membership committee listed the monthly magazine subscription as the #1 Benefit and only two members listed the magazine as a #5 Benefit. Based on these votes, the membership committee did not report the magazine subscription as being a top priority for their membership but feel that it is important for other people's membership. In order to better understand the actual priority of a monthly magazine subscription, a membership survey should be conducted with all FCA members to determine the magazine's benefit value.

Other benefits remained consistent such as representation in Tallahassee, beef cattle research development, educational programs, issues management and preservation of history of Florida ranching.

What do you think are the barriers to membership for cattle producers not involved in the Cattlemen's Association?

Text Response

Dues, I think we need to do a better job selling our County Assoc. to the membership as far as the benefits we offer. Communicate with anyone that's pro beef and develop a relationship with them even if they don't own a cow but purchase beef they're our customer and friend.

unawareness, apathy, they have not been asked, not familiar with the work done by the association, they need more local leadership to champion the association

Perception that FCA is not for small ranchers or people interested in ranching. Our lack of ability to ask anyone for anything, even if it would help us. We pride ourselves on being independent and do not like to ask for help on many levels. FCA is an exclusive club.

No one actually asking them to join and walking them through the application process. I feel the membership form is a hurdle..kind of mind boggling...too busy etc. The average guy is overwhelmed with the day to day "stuff" and this takes deep concentration. Not being able to sign up on line. Past history of perceived mismanagement.

-county president/state director failure to respond to membership requests -not knowing who to call or how to join -assumption that FCA is an elite group

Perception that they are not a big enough producer; Unaware of benefits; time;

apathy,

Many do not know anybody involved. they need someone to invite them to join/

As a cattle producer's daughter, I witnessed (and continue to witness) firsthand the work and time put into cattle operations in order for them to be successful. I think the barrier is cattle producers being so busy that they believe time spent attending local/state Cattlemen's meetings isn't worth giving up time spent focusing on their own herds. That's why our 'key benefits' should show non-active producers that FCA membership actually enhances the quality of their herd.

OLD POLITICS , ISSUES WITH PRIOR MEMBERS AND LEADERSHIP , MONEY , NON MEMBERS MAINTAIN A DIFFERENT OPINION THAN FCA BOARD

Cost of membership, not included in activities, don't feel like a member or part of the group

I feel that the lack of county involvement and activities is the biggest problem with potential members joining the cattlemen's association. They must join the county to become a member of the state. With out an attractive county program and contact from a local person encouraging membership it is hard to attract new members.

Many of these barriers focus on the perception that FCA is a closed-off, exclusive group. If members or potential members do in fact share this view, it is a detrimental barrier. This particular barrier is detrimental because personal connections were the primary reason that most of the membership committee joined FCA. Without personal connections, recruitment will continue to be an uphill battle.

What do you think are the major reasons members choose to leave the organization?

Text Response

It can become to much of a click group. They feel left out and we need to be very sensitive to them and their personalities. We need to be a team and not an island and listen to their ideas. Some people have voiced that opinion.

apathy

Sell the ranch, sell the cows, die or in a small group, economics. I cannot grasp any other issues of merit.

Some people in leadership roles are unable to motivate the membership. Perhaps being a director too long etc. Politics and favoritism within the county groups. Lack of contact on a one to one basis. General Apathy of the average person. Too busy. Let someone else do the work to keep the cattle industry going. Cutting expenses at every corner.

-forget to renew membership -inactivity

I don't know

selling out, loss of interest, financially stressed

Oversight on their part. occasional disagreement with other members

In many counties, social cliques evolve just because certain long-time farming families have always known each other. People in the cattle business are some of the nicest you'll meet, but I could see a new member having trouble truly feeling like a part of one of those groups. It can be intimidating being the new guy in a group of old friends, and I could see where a new member might leave from feeling alienated. I imagine time is probably an issue, too. FCA meetings often end with a social hour of some sort. I'm not saying this is a bad thing, but a new member who attends the Convention in Marco for the first time may view the organization as nothing more than a chance to throw a party. Why party and spend money at a resort when they could be tending to their own herd?

THEY FORGET TO RENEW MEMBERSHIP , MONEY , THEY DO NOT PRECIVE VALUE

Leave the cattle business. Cost of renewal. Fail to see value.

it seems that a large percentage of the members are members for many years without interruption. Some go out of the cow business and some pass away, Then there are those who say they cant afford it or they don't make payment of the renewal a priority and forget it. I do think that the value of membership in local counties is very important in retention.

What do you think is the most important recruitment tool to grow membership?

Text Response
Personal contact, magazine, phone, membership handouts, (like Mrs. Connells)
producers asking producers to join and make them feel a part of the organization
Show them that FCA is moving forward into the future and recognizing and using all the new tools and technologies. Honoring our past but adapting and changing to meet the times ahead while exhibiting excitement, energy to our youth and possible members. We are not our fathers FCA, but Florida today is not what our fathers had.
Present members reaching out to non members using tools fine tuned by the membership committee.
active member recruiters in each county who are equipped with necessary information
best practices to increase productivity and profitability
marketable product and personal contact
peer pressure
Cattlemen/women need 'proof to the pudding'. Maybe annual facts of what FCA has done to help the industry (in general) prosper...whether it be through legislation, research/herd improvement, PR to manage public perception, advertising to get the word out, etc. Most of these producers are 'straight shooters'. They need to be able to 'see' work in progress and how it benefits their operation before hopping on the FCA train. Flowery literature will not hold their interest.
ENGAGE THE INDIVIDUAL COUNTY ASSOC TO BECOME PRO ACTIVE IN MEMBERSHP RECRUITMENT
Youth activities
County- value to the membership

Again, as in the previous responses, the trend in this question is personal contact and tangible benefits.

Recommendation: Training should be conducted to with county recruiters to train them in key messages about FCA as well as tangible benefits of the association.

Do you have any other thoughts, suggestions or opinions that you would like to share regarding a membership campaign?

Text Response

Newer, better, changing, and exhibiting to public that we will be a force in Florida as long as there is a Florida. Florida is a special State and Ranchers and people who love Ranchers are special people. What better culture to have to work with as the FLORIDA COWBOY and families.

We need to have "cheerleaders with passion" to attract the younger segment to the Cattlemen's organization.

we are so glad you are on board to assist us!

I wish to reiterate the need for our group to have scheduled training sessions with you to be more effective in our efforts to grow the membership in our organization.

Large gifts to win by individuals. These may even be donated by members. (Hunting trip to Tx)

As I said in my answer to the previous questions, for the cattle producer type, we need clear and concise concepts. I think many of these producers do have a feel-good association with FCA because of family history and love for the lifestyle/industry. However, I don't think industry 'warm and fuzzies' will be enough to sell these folks. They need facts.

MULTI FACID APPROACH , FCA ADMIN , ALLIED , YOUTH , COUNTY DIRECTORS , MAGAZINE , FIVE STATE DISTRICS

Build on your strengths, youth program, legislative, magazine.

I think that we the state, can supply some tools for recruitment such as incentives (caps and so on) but it takes the county to do the leg work

Summary of Recommendations

- Determine how FCA can cultivate more meaningful interactions for potential members.
- Personal contact/Relationships may be the key to initially recruit members but for retention purposes, members MUST see the value of the association to the industry.
- Determine overlap of benefits and begin to condense "key benefits" in order that every member knows the top 3-5 benefits of the association.
- In order to better understand the actual priority of a monthly magazine subscription, a membership survey should be conducted with all FCA members to determine the magazine's actual benefit value.
- Training should be conducted to with county recruiters to train them in key messages of FCA as well as tangible benefits of the association.