

Research Byproduct: Quality Cattle



Experiments require consistency and attention to detail.

by Lyndee Patterson

Those qualities — consistency and attention to detail — recently helped cattle from the University of Missouri (MU) earn recognition in the second quarter of the AngusSource® Carcass Challenge (ASCC). Steers from the school's Thompson Farms research herd were fed at Irsik & Doll Feedyard, Garden City, Kan., where they took first place for the Central Region.

"With research, you have to have everything as close to the same as possible," says Missouri herdsman Jon Schreffler. "Then you get a lot of the variables out of the way."

A side benefit they've discovered? It pays to be homogeneous when the sights are set on high quality. The 38-head winning group hit 86.8% *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand and Prime.

Missouri animal scientist David Patterson has used the university's commercial Angus herd for timed artificial insemination (AI) work since 2003, sticking with Angus for accuracy.

"The whole idea was if we could increase

timed AI across the state, with an emphasis on high-accuracy bulls, we'd not only generate superior replacements, but also steers with more desirable carcass quality," he says.

So, they set out to prove it could be done, using the research herd as the example. They started out with a maternal focus, but now select for that in tandem with end-product goals.

"You can use genetics that are out of proven sires that you normally can't just go out and buy. That's the real advantage, and it's starting to show up," Schreffler says. "It's coming from both sides now because we've built the maternal and carcass traits into the cows and then we choose bulls for those benefits, too."

Of course, those genetics are only part of the equation. Management at the feedyard makes a difference in final outcome, but they're confident in the harvest results because of their relationship with the staff at CAB-licensed Irsik & Doll.

"They definitely know how to manage these higher-quality cattle, and that really needs to be highlighted and complimented," Patterson says. "They're great to work with."

Schreffler echoes that: "It works better feeding where they're used to your kind of cattle, so you can get consistent data from one year to the next."

Other second-quarter regional winners include regulars from the Northeast and North Central regions. Osborn Farms, Savannah, Mo., owned and fed 38 steers that hit a new ASCC high, making 100% CAB and Prime, with 36.8% reaching the latter.

Beller Feedlot, Lindsay, Neb., had a group of 39 heifers go 76.9% CAB and Prime.

When the calendar-year contest ends, an overall winner will receive a \$500 cash prize, according to Sara Snider, AngusSource director. Groups of 38 head or more, enrolled in AngusSource at the ranch of origin and fed at a CAB-licensed feedyard, are eligible for the contest. As long as they are harvested in one group, both mixed sex and lots with multiple owners are accepted.

For more information on the ASCC call 816-383-5100 or visit www.angus.org/angusource.



► **Above:** MU earned recognition in the second quarter of the AngusSource® Carcass Challenge. Pictured are David Patterson (left) MU animal scientist and Jon Schreffler herdsman.

Editor's Note: Lyndee Patterson is industry information intern for Certified Angus Beef LLC.