



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Scanning season is upon us

As your spring-born bulls and heifers turn a year of age, it's time to consider whether you will collect ultrasound images to help establish ultrasound-based body composition expected progeny differences (EPDs). Bulls can be scanned between 320 and 440 days of age, and heifers can be scanned between 320 and 460 days of age.

This winter, I had the opportunity to sit in on one of the sessions to train a new crop of technicians. After the training program, these individuals will have time to practice their skills before attempting to become certified this fall. It's a rigorous process, with every step calculated to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the data.

New technician list published

Last September, 103 individuals went through the Annual Proficiency and Training Certification (APTC) program conducted at Iowa State University (ISU). Walter & Associates Inc., Ames, Iowa, provided a one-day refresher training session. Then APTC tested each participant's knowledge with a written test, along with hands-on scanning.

APTC participants learned in mid-December whether they were certified. For those who passed, the certification is valid until Dec. 31, 2003.

Walter & Associates invited each technician who passed APTC to become CUP-certified by signing an agreement that clearly delineates protocols and procedures of the National CUP Laboratory & Technology Center (CUP Lab) and data



ownership. Each technician must abide by the rules in the agreement to remain CUP-certified.

Those who signed the agreement are listed on page 107. CUP-certified

technicians are the only technicians recognized by the American Angus Association as qualified to insonate (to scan using ultrasound) cattle for the purpose of establishing ultrasound-based body

composition EPDs. Push pins pictured in the accompanying map show where these technicians are located.

Your part in accuracy

Included in an Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR) mailing are barnsheets intended to be used if and when you hire a technician to insonate your cattle. You also

receive a troubleshooting guide with management tips to help you and your technician prevent rejected images. Among the breeder responsibilities are:

- ✓ Use a squeeze chute with side panel doors that will properly restrain cattle and provide access to the region of scanning;
- ✓ Make sure that the scanning area is dry and out of direct or bright sunlight;
- ✓ Provide a safe, grounded, 110-volt outlet with a clean signal for electrical supply;
- ✓ Make sure cattle are clipped and clean in the scanning region, with no more than ½ inch (in.) of hair in the scanning area;
- ✓ Weigh cattle within seven days of scanning;
- ✓ Make sure cattle are within the proper age range; and
- ✓ Provide supplemental heat for equipment and oil.

For technicians, the troubleshooting guide recommends:

- ✓ Keep equipment properly calibrated;
- ✓ Have proper gain and focus settings;
- ✓ Make sure reference points are visible on images;
- ✓ Have adequate contact or sufficient couplant (oil); and
- ✓ Have more than three intramuscular fat (IMF) images.

These tips are provided to protect you and the technician by ensuring optimal conditions to collect a usable image. For you that means not having to rescan cattle to get complete information. For technicians, it helps them maintain their CUP-approved standing.

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