

1999 Angus Pathfinder Report

A S E A R C H F O R S U P E R I O R C O W S

The Angus Pathfinder program was started in 1978 in an effort to identify superior cows in the breed based on Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR). In identifying these superior cows, emphasis was placed on early puberty, breeding and early calving, followed by regularity of calving and above-average performance of the offspring.

While outstanding cows can be identified after their first or second calves, the *Pathfinder Report* requires a minimum of three calves from a cow to determine her regularity of calving and ability to produce superior calves for weaning weight year after year. In addition, an important part of the report is the list of bulls that have sired five or more qualifying females.

The *1999 Angus Pathfinder Report* identifies a total of 6,899 cows that have excelled in production based on AHIR records of performance. To qualify for the 1999 report, a cow must have produced a calf measured through AHIR in the past 18 months.

In addition, 190 bulls that have sired a minimum of five or more Pathfinder Cows are listed as Pathfinder Sires at the end of this report.

Stress Breed Advantages

The program identifies Pathfinder Cows in herds actively involved in AHIR. First, the female must produce her first calf near the herd's average age for first calving. More specifically, the maximum age accepted for first calving of a Pathfinder Cow is the within-herd average for first calving plus 30 days. The within-herd average is determined separately for each herd on AHIR.

As a second criteria, the Pathfinder Cow must maintain a regular calving interval. The maximum calving interval is:

$$365 \text{ days} + \frac{30 \text{ days}}{\text{Number of calving intervals}}$$

Next, to qualify initially, her first three calves must post a minimum average progeny weaning weight ratio of 105. Should she fail to do this on her first three calves, she can qualify later by achieving an average progeny weaning weight ratio of 105, provided she meets the other requirements. A minimum of 10 herdmates or contemporaries must be evaluated together each year to determine the weight ratio. Additionally, her calves must be sired by registered Angus bulls. To continue to qualify each consecutive year, the cow must produce regularly and wean a calf that helps maintain the average weaning ratio of 105 or above. It is



pointed out that once a cow is designated a Pathfinder, she is always a Pathfinder, even though she might not qualify for listing each year.

Annual Report

The *Pathfinder Report* is issued each spring and printed as part of the *Angus Journal*. Outstanding females and bulls are listed in the report and, more importantly, the breeders who are keeping AHIR records of performance are identified as owners of Pathfinder Cows and Pathfinder Sires.

Studying the *Pathfinder Report* is fairly simple. An effort has been made to list important information about the Pathfinder Cow, her owner and the performance information that has

qualified her as a top female.

Angus breeders who have qualifying cows in the 1999 report are listed in alphabetical order. All cows in a herd that qualify are reported following the owner's name.

The qualifying Pathfinder Cow is listed along with her date of birth; registration number; expected progeny differences (EPDs) for birth weight, weaning weight, weaning weight maternal and yearling weight. Also reported is the number of calves she has produced and the average weaning weight ratio of her calves. These EPDs are current as of the January 1999 National Cattle Evaluation.

In some situations, AHIR information from two or more herds are used in determining a Pathfinder status. This situation occurs when cows are transferred from one AHIR performance herd to another.

Expected Progeny Differences

Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs) are reported for each Pathfinder Cow. EPD is a prediction of how future progeny of a parent are expected to perform in each of the traits listed.

As you study the *1999 Angus Pathfinder Report*, you will observe dams with varying EPDs that have conceived early, calved on a regular basis and weaned calves above the herd average. Cows with low, average or high EPDs for a trait can affect their future EPDs by excellent progeny production records.

This points out how AHIR is a dynamic program in that additional records for various traits affect EPDs of all females or bulls in the Angus breed.

For more information about the *Pathfinder Report* or AHIR, contact John Crouch, director of performance programs, at (816) 383-5100.