



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Take an in-depth look at beef cow efficiency

This July, the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) will bring together experts in academia, breed association work and cow-calf production to discuss a topic vital to every producer's survival — beef efficiency.

Complex issue

What if you could use a cow's expected progeny differences (EPDs) for mature weight and weaning weight to predict how many calories she would need to produce a pound of calf weaned? The National Research Council (NRC) provides estimates of how many megacalories (Mcal) a cow will need based on her weight. Would that be a good measure of cow efficiency?

Of course, there are lots of things to consider — average breeding interval, the age at which you wean the calf, milk level, body condition score (BCS), location and health, for starters.

What about phenotype or marketability of the calf? Should efficiency be a measure of biological performance, or should it be a measure of monetary performance if it is truly to be a measure of profitability?

It's complicated, but it is also critical to understand it to optimize profitability.

BIF focuses on efficiency

Efficiency will be the topic of the 2002 BIF Conference on July 10-13 in Omaha, Neb. Preregistration for the conference, including meals, is only \$80.

Ever since I attended my first BIF conference, it has been my favorite industry meeting of the year, bar none.

This is the meeting where research and reality intertwine for the betterment of both. Leaders in academia, breed associations and cow-calf production will address the tough genetic questions of the day.

This year industry leaders will try to define biological and economic efficiency. They'll discuss cow efficiency, postweaning efficiency and measuring cow-calf profitability, as well as genetic predictions for cow efficiency and feed conversion.

Hosted by the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska Cattlemen, the conference will include a tour of the Nebraska beef industry.

Unfortunately, the BIF Conference falls at the same time as the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Milwaukee, Wis. Because beef efficiency is so vital to profitability and because these two can't-miss events occur at the same time, Angus Productions Inc. (API) will cover both events online.

This will be the third year for online coverage of the NJAS. You can link to API's coverage from www.angusjournal.com.

www.bifconference.com
www.beefcowefficiency.com

Thanks to the sponsorship of Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc., we'll also provide online coverage of BIF Omaha 2002. We intend to have www.bifconference.com active by June 1. Visit the site now for a detailed schedule, registration information and biographies of speakers and tour hosts, as well as coverage of last year's BIF award winners (many of whom were Angus breeders). You'll also find links to BIF, the University of Nebraska, and the Nebraska Cattlemen.

During the conference, we'll provide news coverage of the speakers, tour stops, award winners and other interesting information gleaned from the meeting. Helpful links will be provided wherever possible.

One of those helpful links will be to www.beefcowefficiency.com. Also sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc., this topic site coordinated by the API Web marketing and editorial teams is intended to be a portal to information on beef cow efficiency, much the same as www.angusjournal.com/drought is a portal to information related to drought.

We'll do the research to find helpful Web sites, articles in the *Angus Journal* and other media, Extension resources, and research items that provide tips to help you become more efficient and more profitable.

We also hope the sites will be a service you, as Angus breeders, offer your customers.

We realize your information needs go beyond the scope of what any magazine can provide. Our topic sites offer a means to provide you more in-depth coverage.

We hope to see you in Milwaukee or Omaha.

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