

# MEMBERSHIP TIPS

by Jerry Cassady  
director of member services



## Individual reporting vs. inventory reporting

*Each cow on your farm or ranch is an employee, and she must earn her keep. Once a year, she gets an evaluation based on the calf she brings in. Good calf, good evaluation. Poor calf, poor evaluation. No calf, very poor evaluation.*

The membership of the American Angus Association has long recognized the importance of recording and submitting accurate performance information to characterize the genetic differences between animals for traits of economic importance. Currently, our Angus Herd Improvement Records program (AHIR®) is primarily based on submitting data on individuals born within a calf crop.

A different mindset is to report all the cows in your program by identifying your cow inventory,

reporting information from their subsequent calves and providing a reason if there is no resulting calf. Reporting on a per-cow basis compared to a per-calf basis can add validity to the database and provide insight to economically relevant traits that are difficult to characterize, such as fertility and longevity.

Additionally, inventory-based reporting allows producers to submit cow disposal codes and reason designations, which keeps an accurate record of why a cow

was culled. Those who currently participate in our MaternalPlus® program are already familiar with this type of data submission, and are practicing inventory-based reporting and benefiting from the advantages.

The objective of inventory-based reporting is to accumulate data on all your animals, not just the best ones (those good enough to register, for example). By reporting information on all calves, you ultimately give full credit to those good performers, as they are now being compared to even the poorest calves.

Conversely, by only selecting the best calves to report, you inadvertently introduce bias into the system, and limit the credit deserved by the best performers. The result is expected progeny differences (EPDs) that do not accurately reflect what is really occurring within your program.

### Whole-herd reporting

Since 2012, the American Angus Association has offered a whole-herd reporting program known as MaternalPlus. This program will remain in place for those interested in going above and beyond the basic requirements of inventory-based reporting (see sidebar to the left).

## Data collection

The MaternalPlus® honor goes to those programs willing to make the effort to report specific information required for the program. Collecting records on the production of every female in your herd allows for the calculation of unbiased reproductive genetic predictions, such as heifer pregnancy and longevity. In the simplest terms, whole-herd reporting captures the performance differences of your herd through the weaning phase and better characterizes the maternal traits that are hard to capture.

#### Individual-based reporting:

- Calf birth or weaning weight

#### Inventory-based reporting (one of the following):

- Calf reported (birth date, sex, dam)
- Reason code for no calf
- Disposal code for the cow

#### MaternalPlus


- Meet inventory-based reporting requirements
- Calf weaning weight
- Heifer breeding records

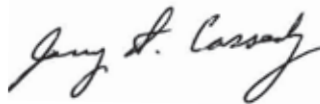


By participating in MaternalPlus, producers benefit by receiving additional information, including calving ease, birth weight and weaning weight expected progeny differences (EPDs) for calves out of inventoried cows. For more information regarding the MaternalPlus program, go to [www.angus.org/Performance/MaternalPlusInfo.aspx](http://www.angus.org/Performance/MaternalPlusInfo.aspx).

Regardless of whether you are using an inventory-based reporting system or reporting individual calves, accurate phenotypic data collection is vital to the genetic evaluation.

Collection of complete and

accurate data on calves, mature cows or fed cattle (including carcass data) is critical to making positive genetic improvement. 



[jcassady@angus.org](mailto:jcassady@angus.org)

*Editor's note: For more information regarding the new inventory-based AHIR program, contact the Member Services Department, or email me directly at [jcassady@angus.org](mailto:jcassady@angus.org).*






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