

THE DATA DIVE

by Devin Jacobs, performance programs specialist

Are You Missing Females?

Inventory Reporting helps characterize the Angus cow.

By now, many Angus breeders have heard of Inventory Reporting, and hundreds have made the commitment to participate in the program. But what value does Inventory Reporting bring to your herd and the Angus breed?

Inventory Reporting is the whole-herd reporting program for the American Angus Association and is a part of the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) program. More than 800 herds have made the commitment to report whole herd records, with nearly 110,000 females enrolled in the program.

The program has two levels: Cow Inventory and MaternalPlus®. Whole-herd reporting requires reporting of records on annual basis for every female within the herd.

These records are extremely valuable in characterizing the Angus cow for maternal traits, such as Heifer Pregnancy and Functional Longevity (FL), and ensuring entire calf crops are being reported, regardless of registration status.


What's required?

Easy calving, excellent mothering ability and consistent lifetime production have always been qualities associated with Angus females, making the Angus breed highly regarded for its maternal characteristics. Inventory Reporting is a way to highlight the productivity of Angus females through the consistent collection of data, and then use that data to provide resources, such as reports and

selection tools, for selection of the next generation of females.

Inventory Reporting requires an annual record on each female in the herd. This annual record could include a calf record, a reason code explaining why she did not have a calf, or disposal information if she left the herd.

There are many circumstances where a female may not have a calf to report for a given year. Within the Inventory Reporting program, one of the options for an annual female production record is to give a reason code explaining why a female did not have a calf. These codes would be recorded for females that did not have a calf to report but are remaining in the herd. A complete list of reason codes for no calf and



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their descriptions can be seen in Table 1.

Another option for a female production record is to report the disposal information on a female. As females leave the herd, it is important to keep accurate records accounting for when and why she left the herd. The Association has an extensive list of disposal code options that can be used to account for a female's departure from the herd.

This data is used not only to create reports for Inventory Reporting members, but also can be used in genetic predictions of how long a sire's daughter may stay in the herd and remain productive, such as with the research FL expected progeny difference (EPD). For more information about functional longevity, please see page By the Numbers on page 41.

Why record all calves?

In most cases, a female's annual production record requirement for Inventory Reporting is met by simply reporting her calf for the year. Reporting every calf born in the herd, regardless of whether the calf will be registered or not, is valuable, as it gives the female credit in the

database for having the calf and ensures entire contemporary groups of calves are being reported.

Contemporary groups are cohorts of animals raised under similar conditions. The environment and management a calf is exposed to affects its performance, but these conditions are not inherited by the next generation.

For the genetic merit of an animal as a parent to be properly estimated, it is very important for them to be grouped with all the contemporaries with which they were raised. This grouping of animals contributes to their EPD estimation by comparing their individual phenotypic performance to the other animals raised in the same environment.

For many traits, contemporary groups form at birth and follow an animal throughout its lifetime, so it is important to ensure animals are properly grouped at birth. Most traits only require a contemporary group of two animals for EPDs to be calculated. Including all the calves raised together, no matter the size of the herd, will give the best possible representation of how a calf truly performed; which strengthens the estimation of EPDs.

Even though the data submission of unregistered calves may take a little extra time, reporting all the calves born within a group will allow for more accurate comparisons to be made amongst those within the contemporary group.

When to participate?

Over the last decade, data being reported to the Association by members committed to whole-herd reporting has been vital in providing data to serve as a foundation for the development of new selection tools for maternal traits. If you want to participate in the program that provides essential data to best characterize the Angus female, the first step is to determine which females in your inventory are still active in your herd and enroll in the program.

Enrollment is open Nov. 1 to Jan. 15 for primarily spring-calving herds. If you primarily calve in the fall, your enrollment period is open May 1-July 15. [AJ](#)

Editor's note: If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact the Association at 816-383-5100.

Table 1: List of available reason codes to explain why a female may not have a calf to report

Reason Code	Description
Open Cow, Missed Calving Opportunity	Open but was kept in the herd
ET Program/Donor Dam	Will not have a natural calf due to being used in as a donor dam in an ET program
Cow Moved to Next Calving Season	Management decision to move over from spring to fall calving season or from fall to spring calving season
ET Program/Recipient Cow Aborted/Premature	Will not have a natural calf due to being used as an ET recipient Pregnancy was not full term
Multi-Owned, No Possession	Owned by more than one person and is currently in the possession of one of the other owners <i>This cannot be used for animals waiting to be transferred</i>
Calf Stillborn	Calf was not alive at birth
DNA Excluded Cow as Parent	Female raised a calf, but DNA testing determined there was a calf swap and she was unable to be matched to her natural calf