



Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

June 15 is your deadline

The June 15 deadline for submitting performance data to be included in the Fall 2007 National Cattle Evaluation (NCE) has added emphasis this year. The Board of Directors of the American Angus Association approved the initial research release of sire heifer pregnancy (HP) expected progeny differences (EPDs) this fall. And June 15 is your deadline for submitting breeding records to be included in this research evaluation, the results of which will be reported separately in a web-based special research report.

Profitability factor

Reproductive traits are undeniably the most important traits to the financial success of a beef cow operation. Increasing feed and fuel costs will only increase the importance of getting cows bred, shortening the calving interval, increasing stayability, reducing cow turnover rates and heifer development costs, and improving the overall efficiency of the cow herd.

With scrotal circumference (SC) already on the books, we can't call heifer pregnancy (HP) the first of our reproductive EPDs, but it is the first to address the cow side of the equation.

The Association now has 40,000 breeding records in house, and the subset of data for heifer pregnancy continues to grow. As noted in "Board Action" reports, the Breed Improvement Committee has been working with staff to oversee the creation and critique of a heifer pregnancy genetic evaluation for quite some time. The Board determined in February that the EPD model was ready and

that the timing was right to run a research evaluation, which will be similar to the initial research evaluations conducted for ultrasound EPDs.

Sally Northcutt, director of genetic research, gives an overview of the HP EPD in this issue's "By the Numbers," column on page 124.

The Board and staff also wanted to give producers another opportunity to submit breeding records prior to this initial evaluation to make it as inclusive as possible. June 15, the same date as the deadline for performance records to be included in the fall 2007 NCE, was selected as the cutoff point.

The release of HP EPDs will be in the format of a web-based special research report listing sire EPDs with a minimum 0.30 accuracy. To contribute data for this project, Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIRSM) participants can submit breeding records electronically through either AAA Login or the Angus Information

Management Software (AIMS) options, or by requesting printed forms.

For more information about submitting breeding records, contact the Performance Programs Department at (816) 383-5100 or send e-mail to ahir@angus.org.

Other Board action

The February Board Meeting report also includes action taken on the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) Task Force report, among other discussions. See page 52 for more information.

Faster downloads, more information

Some of the file sizes for coverage of the 2007 Cattle Industry Annual Convention, available at www.4cattlemen.com, were large enough to cause folks some grief in downloading, especially the audios and PowerPoints. We'll be going into those files between now and the time you get your issue in the mail to downsize some files to make access easier and faster for you.

We should also have several new product features and additional summaries added to the trade show area by the time you receive your issue.

Any time you have a problem, be sure to contact us and let us know so we can correct the problem. You can e-mail me at shermel@angusjournal.com. If dial-up access is causing problems, we can send you a DVD with some of the files. Letting us know what causes you headaches helps us start the problem-solving process sooner so we can improve the usefulness of our news sites for everyone.

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