



By the Numbers

► by **Sally Northcutt**, director of genetic research, American Angus Association

Last chance:

Submit breeding data now

The deadline to submit breeding data for use in the heifer pregnancy expected progeny differences (EPDs) is just around the corner. An initial research release of sire heifer pregnancy (HP) EPDs is planned to follow the American Angus Association's deadline for submitting performance data on June 15. Breeders must submit their heifer breeding records by the June 15 deadline in order to be included in this new trait genetic evaluation.

Fig. 1: AAA Login: breeding data entry page

Fig. 2: AAA Login: disposal and reason codes

What's to come

At the February 2007 Board meeting, Directors approved the release of HP EPDs on sires with a minimum 0.30 accuracy in a special research report. Sire EPDs for heifer pregnancy in daughters will be published following the June 15 deadline for submitting performance data to the Association. Heifer breeding records must be submitted by the deadline in order to be included in the heifer pregnancy genetic evaluation.

A listing of sires meeting the criteria will be available at www.angus.org as a separate web-based report. Sire EPDs and accuracies can be downloaded and sorted as desired. Breeders may also request a printed version of the report if needed.

Submit breeding records

To contribute data for HP EPDs, Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIRSM) participants can submit breeding records electronically through either AAA Login or the Angus Information Management Software (AIMS), or by requesting printed forms.

Breeding record data entry is designed to describe the event in each female's reproductive herd life. From the start, her breeding records, contemporaries, breeding dates, service sires, AI and pasture details, along with outcomes and calf performance through her last production day in the herd are tracked.

Fig. 1 illustrates the breeding data entry screen currently available in AAA Login. Data entry fields include these items, with specifics such as synchronization and disposal/reason codes (see Fig. 2). It is important to include disposal and reason codes to better identify status changes in the cow's production life.

Although heifer breeding records are in greatest demand for the project, breeding data may be submitted for the entire herd. For more details on the initial research conducted on HP EPDs, read the April 2007 and November 2006 "By the Numbers" columns.

Table 1: HP EPD example

Bull A	+13%
Bull B	+8%
Difference	5%

Use of HP EPDs

HP EPDs are to be used as a tool to increase the chance of a sire's daughters becoming pregnant during a normal breeding season. The unit of measure for this EPD is a percentage. A higher EPD is the more favorable direction for selection pressure. As with other EPDs, the relative difference among sires is of importance rather than the absolute value.

Table 1 provides an example of the use of HP EPDs. Assume there are 100 daughters for each of the two bulls, managed and treated alike in the same breeding environment. When comparing the two bulls, one would expect an average of five more pregnant daughters out of 100 from Bull A compared with Bull B. Essentially Bull A's daughters have a 5% greater chance of becoming pregnant than Bull B's daughters.

Submit data now for heifer pregnancy EPDs

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Editor's Note: "By the Numbers" is a column by Association performance programs staff to share insights with Angus members about data collection and interpretation, the National Cattle Evaluation (NCE), genetic selection, and relevant technology and industry issues. If you have questions or would like to suggest a topic for a future column, contact Sally Northcutt, director of genetic research, or Bill Bowman, director of performance programs, at (816) 383-5100.