

Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

Breeding season opportunities

For seedstock operations, breeding season may be over, but for commercial herds, it's gearing up.

Start the conversation

The last beef cow-calf survey done by the National Animal Health Monitoring System (2007-2008) indicated 49% of operations that have one calving season per year begin breeding their cows in May and June for February and March calves. Add July breeding/April calving and that percentage goes up to 57.6% and covers 61.9% of the cows. Nearly 70% of these herds complete their breeding season within three months. If seedstock operations generally calve earlier, you get a picture of the percentage of the commercial cow herd that will be bred within the next few months.

If your customer purchased bulls from only you, half of the genetics of next spring's calf crop will be from your herd. The matings you just completed this spring could supply half the genetics for your customer's next calf crop. What are you doing with that information?

As you sit down to plan matings, are you looking at maximizing the performance of your cow herd? Or, do you look further down the line to maximize the profitability

of the customer for whom you are raising bulls?

The cop-out is to say: "My customers just look at birth weight, feet and the beef value index (\$B)." Your customers are tuned in to survivability, convenience and profit. It doesn't take a lot of advertising dollars to start the conversation for what type of bull they will be needing to put on the next spring's calf crop, and who doesn't want to buy from someone who is custom-designing a product just for them?

Related meetings

Speaking of genetics and breeding strategies, two of our favorite meetings are upon us.

This year's **Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Convention** will be in Athens, Ga., May 31-June 3. The program includes a Young Producers Symposium and a symposium hosted by the National Association of Animal Breeders (NAAB) Wednesday, May 31.

Thursday will feature a general session themed "the current value and future

Breaking news

As we go to press, details are being released about China's resumption of imports of U.S. beef, scheduled to occur no later than July 16. Learn more at www.angus.media and via the *AJ Daily* email news service — sign up at <http://bit.ly/AJdaily>.

promise of genomics for beef improvement," as well as committee breakout sessions on genomics and genetic prediction, producer applications, and efficiency and adaptability. Friday's general session will consider profitability using the tools we have. Committee breakouts include emerging technology, end-product improvement and selection decisions.

Saturday's tour will feature Gretsch Bros. Angus, Partisover Ranch and Innisfail Farm.

Angus Media will be attending and covering the BIF symposium, posting coverage to www.bifconference.com and www.angus.media.

The **Applied Reproductive Strategies in Beef Cattle (ARSBC) symposium** will be Aug. 29-30 at Kansas State University (K-State) in Manhattan. Speakers and program topics for the symposium weren't yet available at press time, but you can watch www.appliedreprostrategies.com for updates. Coordinated by the Beef Reproduction Task Force, the meeting is considered the premier national event in beef cattle reproductive management.



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Angus Journal

3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506; 1-800-821-5478; fax: 816-233-6575; office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (Central) home page: www.angusjournal.com

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