



Login Lowdown

by Kasey Brown, associate editor

Cow size data

Fall is a good time to work cows. The weather is generally beautiful. It's a good time to vaccinate, deworm, check body condition and provide general maintenance to your cow herd. It's also a good time to actually weigh your cows (not just estimate). The American Angus Association receives a lot of questions about the average weight of a mature Angus cow, and cow weights are used in several different selection tools, such as expected progeny differences (EPDs) and dollar value indexes (\$Values). These reasons are why accurate weights need to be taken. Luckily, you can submit that data online with AAA Login.

Why submit data?

AAA Login gives you an opportunity to submit cow weight, hip height, temperament and condition. These measurements help with your own records, but mature cow weight adjusted for body condition score (and hip height if available) is also incorporated into the mature size EPDs in the National Cattle Evaluation (NCE) and the weaned calf (\$W) value index, says Sally Northcutt, director of genetic research for Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI).

Both cow weight and height are highly

heritable (0.37 and 0.64, respectively), indicating that selection for these traits can be effective. They are also genetically correlated (+0.75), so genes that contribute to differences in weight also affect height in the same direction. This means that heavier cows tend to be taller, though not in all cases.

With the high

input costs we see today, selecting for moderate-framed females is becoming an important selection consideration for many breeders. Accurate EPDs are helpful in making selection decisions when breeding, so, ultimately, submitting accurate cow data helps you, and the rest of the Angus breed, in the long run.

As a reminder for weaning time, cow weights with a body condition score should be taken within 45 days of a calf's weaning date. Cow hip heights may be captured at this time, also. It is important to collect this information after the cow has weaned her first calf, and then again in subsequent years.

Fig. 1: How to find Mature Cow Data

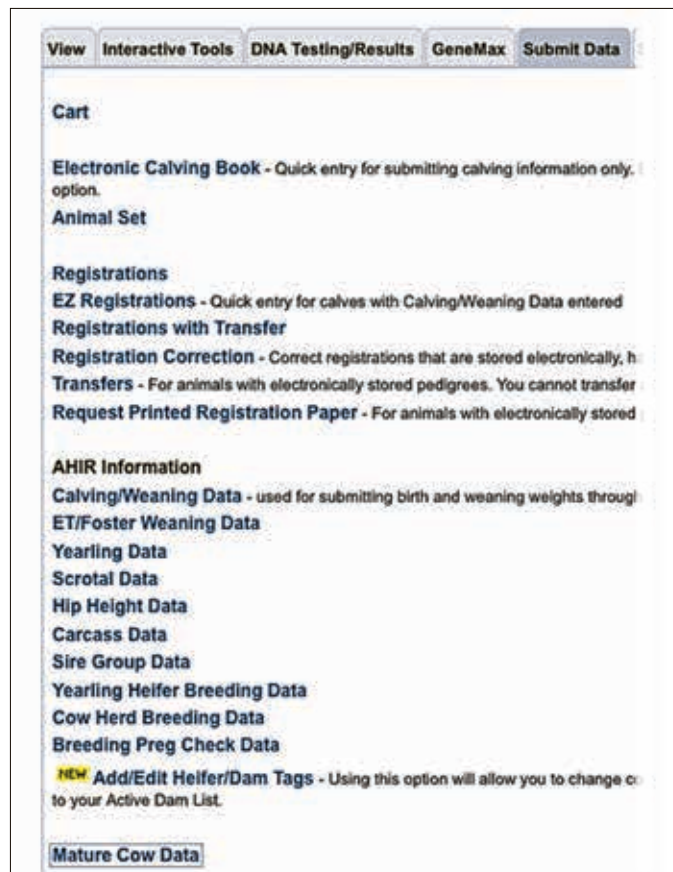


Fig. 2: Where to add/edit a mature cow's data

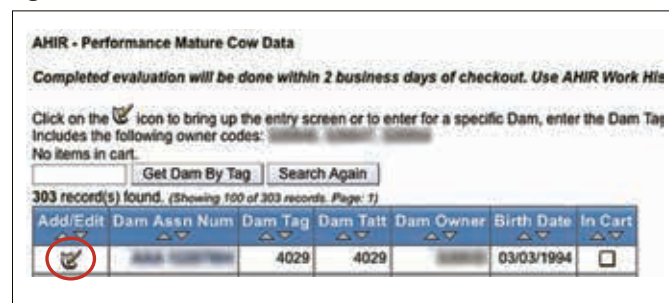


Fig. 3: Type of information to be submitted

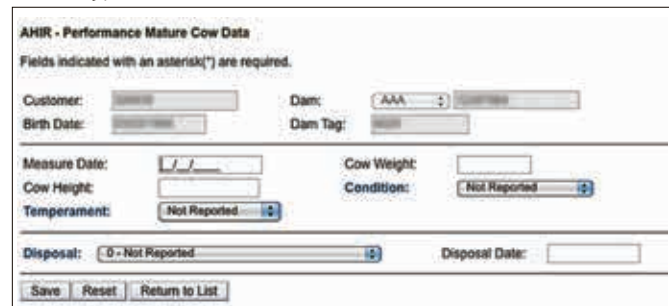
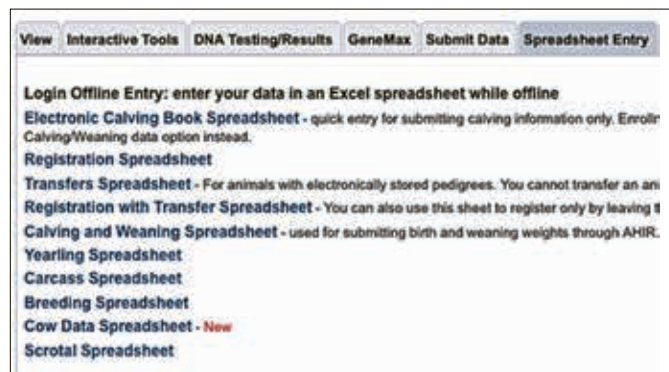


Fig. 4: Where to find spreadsheet data entry option



If you need help understanding body condition scores, there is a multitude of information at www.cowbcs.info. There is also more information on how these data are used in the December 2012 “By the Numbers” column in the *Angus Journal* (which can be found through a back issue search at www.angusjournal.com).

How to submit

Lou Ann Adams and Chris Stallo, director and assistant director of the Association

information systems (IS), respectively, explain that from the main AAA Login page, click the submit data tab. Mature Cow Data is the last option within the AHIR data section (see Fig. 1). Within Mature Cow Data, you can search for females by all eligible dams or by animal set. (For more information on animal sets, check out the March 2012 “Login Lowdown” column.) Once you get to your cow list, click the Add/Edit tab in the left column (see Fig. 2). There, you can enter the measure date, cow weight,

cow height, temperament and condition (see Fig. 3).

You can also submit a disposal code to record why a female is no longer in your herd, along with the disposal date. This is useful to the Association so a potential longevity EPD can be developed.

You can also submit your data by spreadsheet if you don’t have a fast Internet connection, or just prefer to work offline. Click the Spreadsheet Entry tab, and the Cow Data Spreadsheet is the second from the bottom, also denoted with a red New next to it (see Fig. 4). You can email the completed Excel sheet back to the Association at hostmaster@angus.org.

Additionally, cow data can also be turned in with the calving or weaning data submission. The IS department appends all those cow data fields on the weaning entry screen (and spreadsheet) (see Fig. 5). For more information on submitting weaning data, check out the June 2013 “Login Lowdown” column.

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Fig. 5: How to submit cow data when also entering Calving/Weaning data