

looking at recipient body condition, vaccination protocols, heat detection methods or transfer techniques would be logical topics for a discussion with the recipient herd owner and the practitioner doing the transfers.

The *key to improving* is working together. Making an ET practitioner or recipient herd owner defensive and angry will not improve your results. Get some data to share, and work together to make improvements.

Breeder's question:

I am in the process of administering follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) for superovulation of one of my donor cows, and the veterinarian is scheduled to begin tuberculosis (TB) testing on my whole herd today. Will the injection used for the TB test affect the embryos collected from my donor cow?

Response:

Routine field-testing of TB is done using the caudal fold tuberculin test. In this test, 0.1 mL of purified protein derivative (PPD) is injected into the skin of the caudal fold near the tailhead of each animal. The injection site is examined 72 hours later for evidence of swelling that would be caused by the animal having had an active case of TB.

The PPD is only a part of the bacterial organism that causes TB. It cannot infect the animal with TB, and therefore, should not be harmful to the response of the donor or the quality of the embryos collected from her.

Editor's Note: Bill Beal is a beef cattle reproductive physiologist at Virginia Tech. He conducts research involving estrus synchronization, AI, ET and the use of ultrasound technology. This column is designed to provide answers to questions about reproductive management commonly posed by commercial and purebred breeders. If you have questions or comments related to the reproductive management of cows or bulls, e-mail them to Beal at wbeal@vt.edu or mail them to him at the Dept. of Animal & Poultry Sciences, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0306.

Association Signs Agreement with USDA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has signed a cooperative agreement with the American Angus Association.

A ceremonial signing took place at the Association's headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo., Aug. 8 to recognize the cooperative efforts of both groups in the education of the premises registration process and enrollments.

In recent years, biosecurity issues around the world have prompted action in the United States to avoid similar outbreaks potentially threatening our food supply. It also sparked an overall effort to educate those in production agriculture on the risks and preventative measures associated with biosecurity issues. Traceability through premises registration has been identified as one key preventative component in this effort.

Under the terms of the agreement announced, the Association will utilize its resources to provide every Association member with education about the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). Educational efforts will include on-site educational discussions through the Association's Outreach Seminars and other educational programs, print advertising, direct mail and e-mail communications.

In addition, with the assistance of ABG Inc., online training programs will be available to cattle producers across the nation. The online program will describe the value and benefits of registering premises and the steps necessary to complete an enrollment.

Food and agriculture biosecurity are an important component of USDA's mission. Improving awareness through enhanced outreach and communications is a key element of homeland security efforts.

"It is critical to manage events which help prevent and mitigate the spread of diseases affecting animal health and food safety," said Marty Vanier, Manhattan, Kan., who serves as the associate director of Kansas State University's (K-State's) National Agricultural Biosecurity Center. "The consumer wants to know the product they eat is not only palatable and enjoyable, but most importantly, is safe. The American Angus Association, through the *Certified Angus Beef*® program, AngusSource® and now through this grant, is illustrating its desire to ensure the safety of the end product for the consumer."

Founded in 1883, the Association has had a significant effect on the cattle industry, having registered more than 15 million Angus cattle, with 347,572 head of cattle registered in 2006. In recent years, the organization has implemented programs such as AngusSource, a genetic-, age- and source-verification program that assists producers in the documentation and authenticity of Angus genetics that ultimately enter the food chain.

AngusSource also joined forces with Pfizer Animal Health to promote the importance of good herd health. In January, the Association released the results of *Priorities First*, the first comprehensive attempt to prioritize management and economic issues for cow-calf producers.

"This collective effort of livestock organizations and state and federal authorities is the first step in protecting the health of America's livestock industry. The American Angus Association is pleased to have the opportunity to assist livestock producers register their premises," said John Crouch, Association executive vice president.



▶From left, Bruce Knight, USDA undersecretary for marketing and regulatory programs; Association Executive Vice President John Crouch, Saint Joseph, Mo.; and Association President Jot Hartley, Vinita, Okla., sign a cooperative agreement to promote and educate beef cattle producers about the NAIS and to encourage producers to register their premises.

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Editor's Note: Release provided by the American Angus Association.