

MEMBERSHIP TIPS

by Jerry Cassady, director of member services



Verify parentage first

Parentage testing is technology that can be utilized to confirm the accuracy of ancestral information in a pedigree. When submitting calves with unknown parentage or if you use multi-sire pastures, it is highly recommended you test the calf for parentage prior to registering.

The collection of DNA samples and subsequent genetic testing can be an intimidating thought to some producers, and can be viewed as an important management tool for others. Questions regarding the process involved results in some producers not knowing where to begin. The American Angus Association through its partnership with Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) has simplified the process of genetic testing to assist those utilizing Angus genetics.

Parentage verification

Understanding the basics of DNA testing is an important first step to understand how parent verification might best be utilized by members and customers of Angus genetics.

The process of using genetic markers for parentage testing is known as parentage verification and is based on the fact that each animal receives one copy of each gene from each parent. We genotype animals to determine what markers they have inherited and then compare them to potential parents to determine if those markers are consistent with the individual in question.

The Association uses single-nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) technology to genetically

“fingerprint” each animal, and now uses more than 200 different markers for this evaluation to give us the level of accuracy necessary for confident results.

Management tool

This technology can be especially useful when there is a tight gap between artificial insemination (AI) and natural service bulls, and there would be a potential for overlap of birth dates of resulting AI and natural service-sired calves.

A parentage test can be utilized to clarify which resulting calves are AI-sired and which are sired by natural service. Other scenarios to utilize this technology in your program include embryo transfer (ET) calves to verify these costly matings, as well as for producers who utilize multiple sires within the same pasture. Some progressive producers are using parent verification on all animals born on their ranch and then using this as a marketing tool, providing an enhanced level of confidence to their customers.

Create sire groups

At the time you submit the DNA sample on the calf for parentage testing, the calf will be assigned a temporary number in our system

(BIR Number). Then the owner must provide all possible sires by creating a sire group.

This will allow the DNA to direct the system to determine the correct sire, allow us to make the correction on weight data, and then you can submit the registration application and register the calf correctly. This procedure will ultimately save you time, money and extra effort.

To create a sire group, go to Member Login > My Herd > Animal Groups > Create Sire Group. In the “Sire Group Identifier” box, type in the name for your sire group. An example would be 2022 sires, North Pasture, etc. Click on “Add New Sire,” and type in the registration numbers for your sires. Click “Save” when finished.

If you need to add additional sires, you can do that by clicking on “Add Additional Sires.” The final step includes checking out your cart, which submits the alternate parents to the Association.

Once you have checked out your cart, the process requires an overnight update of our system. Results would be available to you on the following business day and posted in your Login account.

Submit animal information


If animals have not been registered

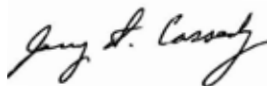
or do not have any information or weight data submitted, use the Electronic Calving Book for submission prior to ordering a DNA test. The animal being tested must have individual ID, birthdate, sex, sire (or possible sires) and dam identified with the Association prior to submission.

This initiates the animal in the system, and the animal is assigned a temporary number (BIR number). Once the animal verifies to the correct parent, the registration can be completed error-free.

Summary

The only way we can test an animal for parentage is to have a viable DNA

sample on file. Utilizing this technology can give peace of mind knowing you are providing the best information possible to your customers. 



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Editor's note: For more information go to www.angus.org/AGI for complete instructions and "how-to" videos and educational information regarding verifying parentage, contact the Member Services Department at 816-383-5100, or email me directly at jcassady@angus.org.

Things to know:

- Go to www.angus.org/AGI and click on Seedstock Producer
- Order your DNA cards or tissue sampling units (TSU)
- Collect DNA samples — blood, hair, semen or tissue (TSU)
- Submit animal information and weight data
- Order testing in member login under "DNA, Order Tests"
- Print the order confirmation email, and mail it along with the samples to AGI
- If no internet access, please contact Member Services
- Results take three to four weeks and will posted on AAA Login under DNA, Test Results, View Results

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