



The Source

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You don't need to play Go Fish when comparing bulls

Ever play Go Fish? It is a pretty simple card game and doesn't take long to figure out. You just need four of a kind and you've got some points on the board. Trying to compare different bull breeds doesn't take long to figure out either, but first you need to be using the same deck of cards. Is a heart the same as a diamond just because they are red? How do you compare different bull breeds when using expected progeny differences (EPDs)? One of the best tools to use is the U.S. Meat Animal Research (USMARC) across-breed EPD table that was recently updated. This is one government resource commercial cattlemen can use to help make decisions that doesn't make them feel like they are playing a game. This table is located on the American Angus Association website at <https://www.angus.org/Nce/AcrossBreedEpdAdjFactors.aspx>. Angus is the base on this table. If you want to compare a Simmental bull to the Angus base follow these steps:

Table 1: Adjustment factors to estimate across-breed EPDs

Breed	Birth Wt.	Weaning Wt.	Yearling Wt.	Milk	Marbling Score	Ribeye Area	Fat Thickness
Angus	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.000
Hereford	1.6	-18.2	-42.1	-14.1	-0.29	-0.06	-0.075
Red Angus	2.3	-28.3	-35.4	5.5	-0.13	0.06	-0.017
Shorthorn	4.2	-39.8	-32.8	3.6	-0.13	0.60	-0.103
South Devon	2.3	-32.5	-55.2	14.1	-0.47	0.66	-0.220
Beefmaster	4.5	21.9	-0.3	9.9			
Brahman	10.6	49.5	15.8	19.4	-0.64	0.10	-0.169
Brangus	3.3	13.9	4.5	12.3			
Santa Gertrudis	4.8	38.3	38.4	17.7	-0.46	0.04	-0.086
Braunvieh	2.4	-24.0	-43.3	4.7	-0.58	1.11	-0.107
Charolais	6.9	32.5	23.2	5.5	-0.26	1.21	-0.204
Chiangus	2.8	-19.3	-29.9	0.9	-0.16	0.57	-0.095
Gelbvieh	2.8	-22.3	-32.1	6.5	-0.25	0.86	-0.103
Limousin	1.7	-21.5	-46.9	-7.4	-0.22	1.13	-0.101
Maine Anjou	2.4	-33.3	-52.4	-7.0	-0.44	0.93	-0.184
Salers	0.9	-16.5	-46.3	8.1	-0.06	1.03	-0.179
Simmental	2.9	-8.9	-14.9	3.8	-0.21	0.51	-0.105
Tarantaise	3.4	18.5	-11.6	20.8			

Source: U.S. Meat Animal Research Center.

Joint Spring Turnout Bull and Female Sale

CK Cattle Modern Cullman Stockyard • Cullman, AL
and **Maples Stock Farm** Saturday | **March 31** | Noon

★ 60 Angus, Chiangus, & Simmental Influenced Bulls
 ★ 30 Angus Females
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Example: Note the Simmental bull EPDs from the bull stud sale book:

Birth wt. (BW)	Weaning wt. (WW)	Yearling wt. (YW)	Milk
-1.2	54.5	63.4	15.8

Determine the adjustment factors to estimate across-breed EPDs for Simmentals:

+2.9	-8.9	-14.9	3.8
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Add the adjustment factor to the within-breed Simmental EPD to calculate the AB-EPD for the Simmental bull you are evaluating:

+1.7	45.6	48.5	19.6
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Now choose the Angus bull to which you want to compare the Simmental sire's EPDs. Since the AB-EPDs are calculated on an Angus base, the adjustment factors are 0 across the board, so you can use the Angus EPDs directly for comparison.

+1.4	52.0	99.0	20
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The Angus bull in our example benefits considerably from being placed on a level playing field. Instead of "fishing" for a bull, you can tell if you are comparing diamonds to hearts. It is much easier to use one of the across-breed EPD calculators on university websites to make these calculations, but it is good to know how to find the right card in the pile. When you enroll your calves in AngusSource® the Marketing Document lists the Angus sires used to sire the calf crop. This gives potential buyers a glimpse into how your calves could gain and grade in the feedlot and on the rail. Sometimes a buyer is curious how the EPDs compare to another breed. The across-breed adjustment factors are a good way to put each bull on an even playing field. Currently the AngusSource Marketing Document is emailed to more than 800 potential buyers. It is an outstanding way for your enrolled calves to get noticed before they go in the salering. This year, before you market your calf crop, consider using AngusSource to help you put a few more buyers in the boat to increase your odds of landing a bigger payday.

Editor's Note: *Ginette Gottswiller is the director of commercial programs for the American Angus Association.*

