

# Association Introduces PathfinderPlus

The American Angus Association will soon introduce a voluntary, inventory-based reporting system designed to capture additional reproductive trait data and to ultimately expand reproductive and lifetime productivity tools, such as longevity measures. The new program,

known as PathfinderPlus, will debut in early 2012 and provide Angus breeders and their customers with additional information to make effective selection decisions.

“The PathfinderPlus program is a unique system that will allow us to

more effectively capture reproductive trait data while providing participants with additional information at weaning processing time, such as calving ease, birth weight and weaning weight EPDs (expected progeny differences) for calves out of inventoried cows,”



says Bill Bowman, Association chief operating officer (COO) and director of performance programs.

Breeders interested in participating in PathfinderPlus can enroll in the program through AAA Login, available at [www.angus.org](http://www.angus.org).

To begin, breeders provide an online inventory of breeding heifers and cows in their herd.

The primary requirement of the program is submission of heifer breeding records from the production herd, explains Sally Northcutt, Association director of genetic research. “These records will then be used in the existing heifer pregnancy evaluation and will also allow us to develop more lifetime trait measures, such as longevity components.”

Each inventoried female will be required to have either a calf record (weight, preweaning disposal reason), a disposal code for the cow or a reason code for why the cow didn't produce.

“Disposal codes will help pinpoint why an animal left the herd and will greatly aid in the development of a longevity selection tool,” Northcutt says. “The PathfinderPlus program provides us the opportunity to identify superior genetics for traits that greatly influence profit but are traditionally difficult to measure — reproduction and longevity.”

Breeders will be able to enroll in PathfinderPlus at any time during the year. Females 20 months of age and older are assessed an annual \$3-per-cow inventory fee based upon the enrollment date. The fee will cover performance reporting for the cow's calf (CED, BW and WW EPDs).

An additional fee is charged to reinstate or reactivate a cow.

Bowman says the current Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) reporting system will remain in place for non-participants, along with the traditional Pathfinder® recognition program.

Contact the American Angus Association at 816-383-5100 or visit [www.angus.org](http://www.angus.org) for more information.