

Proven Sires Create Top Calves, More Dollars

Story by
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Proven high-accuracy bulls produce calves worth more in the feedlot. A study of Thompson Farm calves sent to a Kansas

feedlot supports that conclusion. David Patterson, University of Missouri (MU) Extension beef specialist, described his study at the summer meeting of the MU Thompson Farm advisory board July 8. Patterson and MU economists tracked

the calves from conception to weaning, backgrounding, through a feedlot and to a packing plant.

Using high-accuracy sires in conjunction with fixed-time artificial insemination (AI) is creating value-added females in addition to

steers that are worth more on the rail and to the consuming public, Patterson said.

From the female, or cow, side, Missouri producers should understand that the Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer Program now recognizes heifers based on genetics of their sire and are distinguished as Tier Two replacements in the program, he added.

The advisory board received a preview of the report to be given at the MU Thompson Farm field day, Sept. 21.

Abner Womack, MU economist, analyzed the carcass cutout prices received on the Thompson Farm calves. The highest-grading steers received \$150 above market price when all grid premiums were added.

The researchers conclude that calves from quality breeding stock make carcasses that sell for more based on quality premiums by qualifying for the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand or by grading Prime. The calves were sold on the U.S. Premium Beef (USPB) market grid.

CAB is a branded beef label aimed at high-end markets. The Prime label is the top USDA meat grade, indicating superior eating quality.

Thompson Farm retained ownership through the feeding process. In return, they received the price premiums and access to the carcass cutout data.

“Most producers who never retain ownership don’t see the final value of their calves,” Patterson said. “Value is lost back on the farm because of the disconnect in the supply chain.”

The breeding program at Thompson Farm has been directed toward producing high-quality beef for the white-tablecloth trade. “We’re just beginning to analyze the results that show the added value from the breeding program,” Patterson said.

Results from marketing research by Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) indicate that while there has been a decline in CAB sales to the high-end restaurants, there has been an unexpected upturn in sales through supermarket meatcases.

“People are buying higher-quality beef and taking it home to cook, instead of going out to eat,” Womack said. “That is due in part because about 30% of the population is insulated from the current recession. Many people can still afford to buy more-expensive cuts.

“There is a strong market for Missouri producers to supply that demand,” he added.

The results of other timed AI research will be reported at the Sept. 21 field day. Visitors will see pens of 2010 calves. The manager of the Irsik and Doll Feed Yard, Garden City, Kan., and the vice president for CAB marketing will talk about the Thompson Farm cattle.

Thompson Farm is part the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station.



Editor’s Note: Duane Dailey is a senior writer for the University of Missouri Cooperative Media Group.