

# 2007 Beef Improvement Federation 39th Annual Meeting

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## Frank Baker Award Winner

Montanholi wins award examining genetic improvement in beef cattle for feed efficiency.

by **Mathew Elliott**

FORT COLLINS, COLO. (June 7, 2007) — The Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) honored Yuri Regis Montanholi with the Frank Baker Award. Montanholi, a graduate student at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, wrote his essay on “Genetic Improvement in Beef Cattle for Feed Efficiency: Increasing our Understanding of Biological Basis.”

“Feed efficiency measurements constitute one of the key approaches to study animal bioenergetics and metabolism, which represent undiscovered niches of potential traits for improved cattle breeding programs,” Montanholi noted in his award-winning paper. His study looked at residual feed intake (RFI) as a potential indicator of feed efficiency. The advantage of using RFI is that it likely reflects variation due to basic metabolic processes rather than due to levels of production.

A new technology to ‘scan’ animal’s tissues for potential biomarkers for feed efficiency is promising, but the costs associated with this would make it very expensive on a large scale.

Suggested topics like cellular studies, infrared thermography, and hormonal determinations might be examined as technologies that are more affordable, Montanholi said. He also suggested that more biological models be used to explore the variation that exists in feed efficiency.

Montanholi concluded his paper by stressing that “an era of more and more fine-tuned and comprehensive investigations in feed efficiency has emerged” and will definitely affect the beef business in the future.

Frank Baker played a key leadership role in helping establish BIF in 1968, while he was chairman of the animal science department at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. The Frank Baker Memorial Scholarship Award essay competition for graduate students provides an opportunity to recognize outstanding student research and competitive writing in honor of the man widely recognized as BIF’s founding father.



*A proceedings paper is available on the “Symposium Papers” page.*



► The Beef Improvement Federation honored Yuri Regis Montanholi (left), University of Guelph, with the Frank Baker Memorial Scholarship during an awards luncheon June 7 at the 2007 BIF Annual Meeting and Research Symposium in Fort Collins, Colo. Presenting the award is Ronnie Silcox of the University of Georgia. Montanholi won the scholarship with his essay, “Genetic Improvement in Beef Cattle for Feed Efficiency: Increasing our Understanding of the Biological Basis.”



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