

2007 Beef Improvement Federation 39th Annual Meeting

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A Carcass Standard

by **Miranda Reiman**

FORT COLLINS, COLO. (June 7, 2007) — Not all expected progeny differences (EPDs) are created equal, but that may change where carcass traits are concerned.

Dan Moser, Kansas State University (K-State) geneticist, explained the different ways these end-product predictors are calculated. He spoke to Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) conference attendees in Fort Collins, Colo., during the June 7 Genetic Prediction Committee meeting.

Some organizations use carcass and ultrasound data separately to report two sets of EPDs, he explained. Others combine both groups of information, but publish EPDs either on a carcass scale or on an ultrasound scale. For example, a marbling EPD on a carcass basis would be reported in marbling scores versus percent intramuscular fat (IMF) on the ultrasound scale.

Moser and Larry Cundiff of the Roman L. Hruska U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) at Clay Center, Neb., chaired the subcommittee that looked at options for standardizing the reporting of EPDs across breeds.

“It certainly would be a way to simplify selection by commercial producers and to increase the accuracy,” Moser said. It would also allow for across-breed evaluation of carcass traits, similar to what is already being done with growth traits. And it is a necessity

for those breeds considering joining together in multi-breed evaluation.

Proposed guidelines revision

Relative to carcass traits, prior to the subcommittee review, the *BIF Guidelines* stated:

“Carcass traits are presumed to be measured on an age-constant basis. Carcass measures could be from slaughter data, live animal data (ultrasound, etc.), or a combination of both data types.”

The subcommittee suggested that BIF make their recommendations more specific, and suggested changing the wording to read:

“Whenever possible, carcass data from harvested fed cattle and ultrasound measurements from yearling breeding bulls and heifers should be jointly analyzed with multiple trait models. Such an evaluation would provide genetic predictions for both carcass and ultrasound measurements, but since the carcass measurements are the economically relevant traits, the carcass trait predictions and their associated accuracy values should be published for use in selection. Both carcass and ultrasound measurements should be evaluated on an age-constant basis.”

Moser explained that the next step in the process is to allow input and discussion of the suggested changes. Ultimately, the guidelines revision will be offered to the BIF



► K-State’s Dan Moser presented a suggested revision to the *BIF Guidelines* that would recommend standardization of the format for reporting of carcass EPDs.

Board for approval. If the BIF board passes the proposal, individual breed associations will still have the option to adhere to the new policy or not.



Editor’s Note: The BIF board of directors did subsequently adopt the proposed revisions to the *BIF Guidelines*.

Look for the PowerPoint and audio file for this presentation in the newsroom.



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