

# 2007 Beef Improvement Federation 39th Annual Meeting

Coverage by Angus Productions Inc

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## Using DNA Markers

Luke Lind presents a feeder's perspective.

Story & photo by **Troy Smith**

FORT COLLINS, COLO. (June 8, 2007) — Luke Lind, vice president of marketing for Five Rivers Cattle Feeding, advised cow-calf producers to consider the limitations of DNA markers when applying them to genetic selection to improve carcass quality grade.

Making his comments during the June 8 general session of the 2007 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) annual meeting, he said each of the currently available DNA tests include markers for a single gene associated with marbling, but many other genes and environmental factors also influence expression of the trait. He called expected progeny differences (EPDs) more reliable tools on which to base selection decisions.

Furthermore, Lind said he believes most producers better understand how to use EPDs effectively, but they have limited understanding of DNA test rankings.

“What does ‘five stars’ mean? I don’t think many producers really know,” he said. “If you coupled the two (selection tools) together, to make marker-assisted EPDs, that would be much better.”

For use in the feedlot, Lind called DNA tests based on two or three markers for tenderness and marbling “not good enough.”



► At present, EPDs are more reliable tools on which to base selection decisions than DNA markers, said Luke Lind of Five Rivers Cattle Feeding, though he added that marker-assisted EPDs would be even better.

For successful application, tests need to be simple, comprehensive and cost-effective. For Five Rivers to seriously entertain any new practice, he said, there must be potential for a 3-to-1 return on cost.

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



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