

2007 Beef Improvement Federation 39th Annual Meeting

Coverage by Angus Productions Inc

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Audience Presents View

Technology new to the BIF meeting allowed immediate audience input.

by **Mathew Elliott**

FORT COLLINS, COLO. (June 7, 2007) — A new technology was featured at the 39th annual Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) meeting and research symposium June 6-9 in Fort Collins, Colo. Tom Field, Colorado State University, introduced the audience input system to the more than 570 cattlemen and academia in attendance.

The audience input system provided a way for all attendees at the BIF conference to share their backgrounds and opinions by voting on a keypad. The keypad wirelessly collected the information to a central database, where it computed a summary. The results were almost instantaneously shown on the screen for meeting participants to view.



Attendees were given 10 seconds to answer each question once it was read to the audience.

“You can vote as many times as you want,” Field said, “but the last thing you put in before the 10 seconds is up is what is recorded. All you have to do is match the number with the corresponding answer on the screen.”

The technology allowed audience members to input whether they were a seedstock or commercial producer, what the ideal weight for a mature cow should be, and how many BIF conferences they had attended, as well as

answers to many other questions.

“This allows us the opportunity to show results as we go along,” Field said.

As an example, when the audience was asked what their affiliation with the beef industry was, 31.1% responded they were seedstock producers; 9.8%, commercial producers; 28.9%, university, Extension or government; 15.6% affiliated industry; 9.2%, students; and 5.4% other.

The keypads also kept track of what answers an individual had input in the past. As an example, this allowed the results to be broken down into commercial producers and seedstock breeders to see how their views differed.

After some demographic questions early in the morning, Field came back later and asked questions dealing with “Defining the Ideal Beef Animal.” Due to a lack of time, all answers were recorded but not shown at the time. A quick overview of the results was presented during Friday’s morning meetings (see “Can We Build the Ideal Beef Animal?”).



PHOTO BY MATHEW ELLIOTT

► Colorado State University’s Tom Field lightheartedly reminded producers the audience input device was not a remote control to take home with them, as he introduced the system.

Speakers throughout the conference also posed questions to the audience. The complete dataset will be analyzed and summarized for distribution in the weeks following the BIF meeting. Results will be posted to www.bifconference.com as soon as they are available.

Field thanked the American Angus Association for sponsoring the technology and told attendees, “I hope you enjoy this opportunity to be part of the program without having to stand up here at this microphone.”



Look for the audio file for this presentation in the newsroom. A summation of the results of the survey will be posted to the newsroom as soon as it is available.



PHOTOS BY SHAUNA ROSE HERMEL

► Darrh Bullock of the University of Kentucky watches for results after answering one of the many questions posed to the audience.



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