

2007 Beef Improvement Federation 39th Annual Meeting

Coverage by Angus Productions Inc

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BIF Turns 40

As the Beef Improvement Federation celebrated the 40th anniversary of its formation, Ike Eller reflected on the organization's storied history.

Story & photo by **Mathew Elliott**

FORT COLLINS, COLO. (June 7, 2007) — A.L. (Ike) Eller Jr. began Thursday's session of the 2007 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) annual meeting by taking a poll of the audience to determine the age demographics of the room. After the quick poll, Eller made the point that there were several attendees who were not born when BIF was organized 40 years ago.

To help celebrate its ruby anniversary, Eller reflected on the history of genetic evaluation as well as BIF's formation and growth as an organization.

"Any look back at BIF's 40-year history has to be about three things — people, leadership and technology," Eller said.

When he was judging, cattle were evaluated by eyeball appraisal, Eller commented. Most of the scientific information is fairly recent.

"It was Frank Baker who formulated a plan to achieve some standardization and coordination of beef performance

programs," Eller said, referring to a committee report of the U.S. Beef Cattle Records Committee subtitled *Recommended Procedures for Measurement of Traits of Economic Value in Beef Cattle*. "It was the first time that someone got the breeders from various breeds, Extension members and others together to put something together."

Performance Registry International (PRI), breed associations and state beef cattle improvement associations were all making efforts at performance evaluation. Concerns mounted about who would harness technology into a system for evaluating beef cattle improvement and profitability, Eller noted. The need for standard guidelines for performance evaluation grew.

Baker and Ferry Carpenter conferred to organize an industry-wide performance meeting. The International Conference of Cattle Performance Testing Associations took place in Denver, Colo., at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) Jan. 14, 1967.

A volunteer committee was formed and met at the meeting. Committee members voted unanimously that it was necessary to correlate the present performance testing organization and agencies into a national organization.

The BIF organizational meeting was conducted in Denver Jan. 12, 1968. The fledgling organization was on its way. More details are spelled out in the proceedings paper accompanying Eller's presentation.

Eller said many young researchers "have



► "Any look back at BIF's 40-year history has to be about three things — people, leadership and technology," said Ike Eller as he reflected on the organization's formation and growth.

earned their spurs" by bringing new information and becoming active in BIF. The synergism between researchers, breeders and their associations through BIF has been truly amazing, he added.

"Is all the work done?" Eller asked. "Surely not, but stay tuned and stay involved!"



Look for the audio file for this presentation in the newsroom. A proceedings paper is available on the "Symposium Papers" page.

**"Is all the work done?
Surely not, but stay
tuned and stay involved!"**

— Ike Eller



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