

2006 Red Angus National Cattle Evaluation

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We have recently celebrated a New Year, and are happy to announce that we have new EPDs to accompany the New Year. The RAAA National Cattle Evaluation (NCE) has been completed and the new EPDs have been released. I'm sure most of you have committed to a few 'New Year's Resolutions', and I hope if you have not used EPDs in your bull selection decisions in the past, you have made a resolution to use them this year in those very important decisions.

Statistics

Through the NCE we are able to provide statistics that allow you to compare animals you own, or may purchase, to other animals of the same grouping (Proven and Opportunity Sires, Active Cows, and Non-Parents). <http://redangus.org/genetics/epd-percentiles/> details the percentile tables. From this you can determine how animals you are using, or considering using, rank for any particular trait. Another interesting statistic that results from the NCE are the genetic trends for each trait. These trends are highlighted at <http://redangus.org/genetics/epd-trends/> It is apparent that through the use of EPDs we have been able to make progress in the traits evaluated.

Sire Summary Listing Criteria

In order for a sire to be listed in the 2006 Spring Sire Summary, they must meet two criteria. First, they must have a weaning weight accuracy of .50 or higher. Second, they must be an active sire, which is defined as sires with reported progeny in one of the last two years; 1,666 sires currently meet these criteria. You will notice that we have two groups of sires in the Sire Summary, Proven Sires and Genetic Opportunity Sires. Active sires with a weaning weight accuracy between .50 and .59 are classified as Genetic Opportunity Sires (656 sires listed). Active sires with a weaning weight accuracy greater than .60 are classified as Proven Sires (1,010 sires listed).

Improved Accuracies

Noticeable changes to the Spring 2006 NCE include improved accuracy calculations for Stayability and Maintenance Energy. It is important to understand that the enhanced accuracy calculations have the potential to affect sires' accuracy; however, it will not affect their EPDs for those traits. The improvements to the Stayability accuracy mostly affected young sires, with many young sires having a noticeable drop in accuracy. On the other hand, the improvements made to the Maintenance Energy accuracy affected all animals breed-wide, with all animals having a noticeable drop in accuracy. We are constantly looking for ways to make our EPDs and accuracies better, and these improvements are a result of that effort.

Accessing the new EPDs

There are several ways to view the information derived from the NCE: printed Sire Summary, the internet, and whole-herd EPD reports. If you would like to receive a printed Sire Summary, contact Judy Edwards, judy@redangus.org, at the RAAA national headquarters. The Sire Summary only lists sires that meet the criteria mentioned above. It

also contains editorial content that explains EPDs and Accuracies, as well as EPD statistics such as averages and percentiles for each EPD. Another, and in my opinion the best, way to access the new EPDs is via the internet through our website: www.redangus.org. Not only does the website contain the electronic version of the Sire Summary, but it also features an EPD Lookup tool that allows you to search for the EPDs on any animal registered in the RAAA database, not just the 1666 sires listed in the Sire Summary. It is important to remember that every animal in the RAAA database receives updated EPDs and accuracies during every NCE. Another useful tool located on the website is the Sire Search. This tool allows you to enter EPD ranges, for several or all EPDs, that best meet your breeding strategy. The Sire Search allows you to input maximum and minimum EPD requirements, then searches all sires in the RAAA database, and returns a list of sires that meet your requirements. This tool greatly reduces the time needed to find bull(s) that will fit your breeding program. Lastly, RAAA members can view the new EPDs on the Whole Herd EPD Report that was mailed to every RAAA member in January. Additionally, commercial producers can request a Bull Buyer EPD Report that lists the new EPDs on purchased bulls. To request a Bull Buyer EPD Report contact Kenda Ponder, kenda@redangus.org

Understanding EPDs

For those of you that are new to EPDs, or just need a refresher, I would recommend that you take a look at the editorial content found in the front of the printed Sire Summary. There you will find several articles that discuss EPDs and Accuracies. You can also read the 'Ranchers Guide to EPDs' that is located on our website. If you have further questions that are not addressed in these pieces of information, feel free to contact the RAAA National Office.

Web Links:

Electronic Sire Summary

-Excel http://www.redangus.org/genpred/sire_summary.xls

-CSV http://www.redangus.org/genpred/sire_summary.csv

EPD Lookup <http://www.redangus.org/epdlook.html>

Sire Search <http://www.redangus.org/siresrch.html>

Ranchers Guide <http://www.redangus.org/newredsite/ranchersguidetoEPDs.pdf>

