



Female Sexed Semen for Beef Producers: CAN YOU AFFORD TO MAKE THE WRONG COW?

The benefits of artificial insemination (A.I.) to beef cow-calf producers are hard to deny, yet only a fraction of beef cattle are artificially inseminated annually in South Africa and around the world. Unassisted calves from first calf heifers; faster, more efficient growth rates; high value carcasses; shorter calving seasons; and heavier, more uniform calves are just a few of the well known advantages of A.I. Perhaps the biggest advantage to utilizing A.I. is the value of the replacement females you can create. Unfortunately, the economic advantage of creating the right replacement females is also the hardest benefit to quantify.

ADVANTAGES OF (A.I.) ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

- 01

Unassisted calves from first calf heifers
- 02

Faster, more efficient growth rates
- 03

High value carcasses
- 04

Shorter calving seasons
- 05

Heavier, more uniform calves
- 06

Creating the right replacement females

MATERNAL HITS YOUR BOTTOM LINE

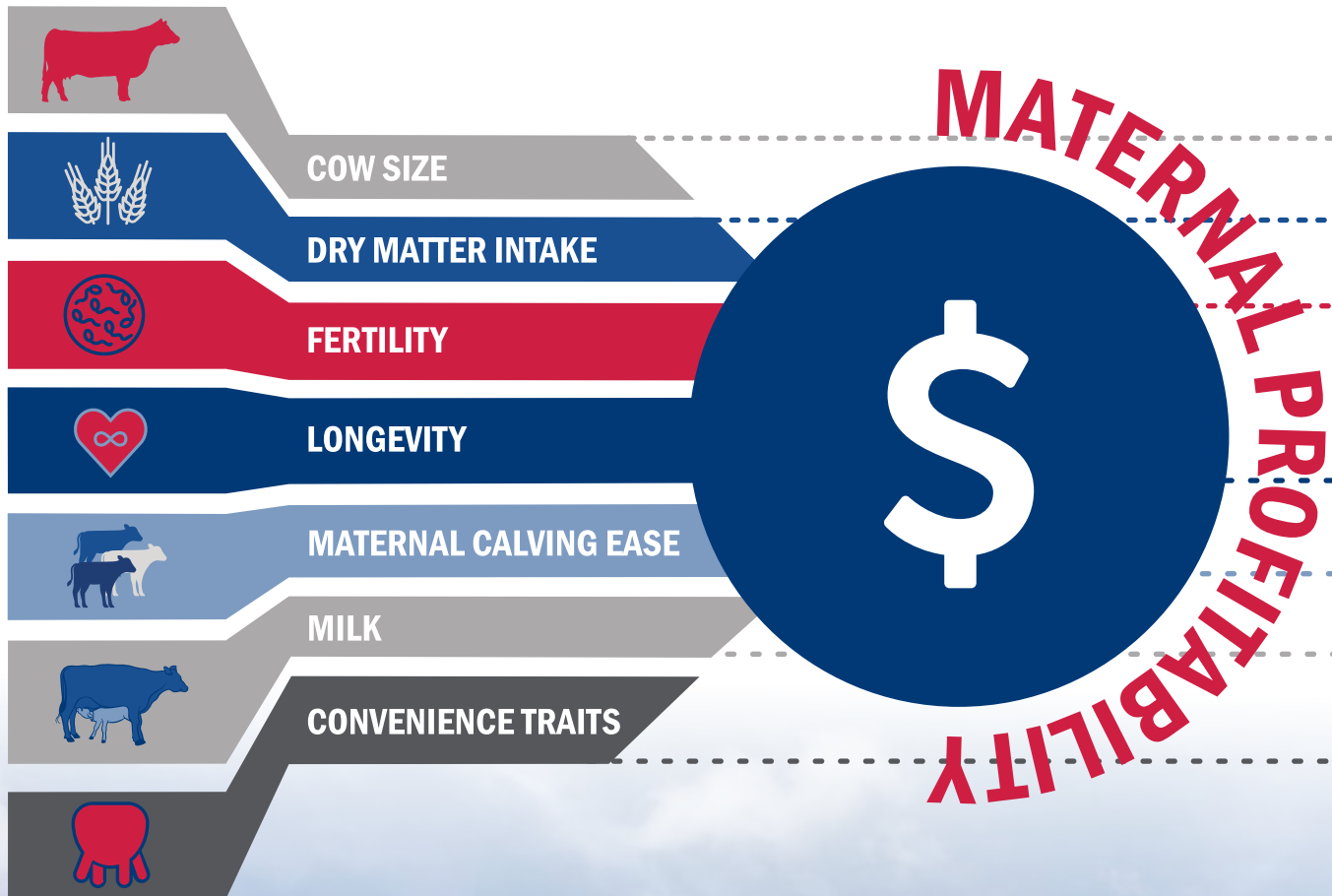
Most cow-calf producers have an image of the ‘ideal cow’ in mind. It may even go beyond a mental picture to a list of genetic traits and attributes that compose this ideal. Modern semen sexing technology provides us with a powerful tool to make replacement females from a select portion of any given cowherd. However, just because female sexed semen is available on a given bull does not mean that his daughters will make good cows. When making the decision of which bull to use in making your next set of replacement females, ask yourself: **“Can I afford to make the wrong cow?”**

Maternal profitability is complex and does vary with regional environmental differences. Admittedly, there are also numerous marketing channels and endpoints that should be considered in selection of the appropriate genetics. Nonetheless, there is a subset of traits that drive cow-calf profitability, no matter the production environment/system. Most producers operate with at least a portion of their resources fixed. For many, that is a limited amount of grazing land available for pasture and forage production. For even more, it is a limited number of hours that can be committed to the cow-calf enterprise. Optimizing the return from these limited resources should be their focus.



FACTORS IMPACTING MATERNAL PROFITABILITY

It's easy to recognize the impact of genetics when it shows up as additional money in your calf check from the sale barn or the closeout from the feedyard. However, as you consider the genetics that will be used in making your next generation of replacement females, it is important to consider the traits that impact your input costs. Cow size, dry matter intake, fertility, longevity, maternal calving ease, milk, and convenience traits significantly impact maternal profitability. Breeding decisions that move these traits in the wrong direction can quickly add up to hundreds of dollars in additional cow costs on an annual basis.



ABS has the right people, tools, and genetics to help you create the right replacements for your herd.



COW SIZE considers mature weight and mature height EPDs. Heavier, big-framed cows typically eat more to sustain the stature which causes higher input costs. However, lighter, small-framed cows are not heavy enough when being culled from the herd. Managing how big or small your cow herd is a balancing act, so you have the right sized, productive cow that will wean off heavy calves that will also manage input resources well.

DRY MATTER INTAKE (DMI) is a predictor of the amount of feed a cow needs to consume per day on a moisture-free basis. Dry matter in cattle diets is important in providing the proper nutrients to rumen microbes, thus providing nutrients to the cow. Understanding DMI is key in calculating the right diet for an animal to prevent underfeeding or overfeeding of nutrients and promoting efficient use of nutrients.

FERTILITY directly impacts a cow's ability to reproduce. Reproduction is the single most profitable thing a producer can manage in a cowherd. Poor fertility in a cowherd can result in lower productivity, increased cull rates, inferior herd genetics, and ultimately, decreased profitability for the operation.

LONGEVITY relates to the length of time a cow stays productive in your herd. It has been proven that heifers that calve in the first cycle of the calving season stay in the herd longer. Cows that stay productive in the herd longer are cows that impact your bottom line positively because they maintain themselves and produce a calf that can in turn be sold to enter the beef supply chain.

MATERNAL CALVING EASE (CEM) is expressed as a difference in percentage of unassisted births with a higher value indicating greater calving ease in first-calf daughters. This predicts the average ease with which a sire's daughters will calve as first-calf heifers when compared to daughters of other sires. Calving ease is an important trait to monitor because of its direct correlation to calf survivability and a cow's ability to breed-back post-partum.

MILK is considered the part of a calf's weaning weight that attributes to the milk provided and mothering ability of the dam. Milk production is often considered a primary influence on weaning weight of a calf. However, too much or too little milk production can affect profitability in terms of inputs and outputs of the operation.

CONVENIENCE TRAITS

- » **TEMPERAMENT** is the measure of docility or the aggression of an animal toward unfamiliar situations, human handlers, management interventions. Monitor this trait to reduce safety risk to human handlers, the animal themselves or other animals in the herd.
- » **UDDER CONFIRMATION** is one of the most important functional traits of a beef cow. This trait influences cow productivity and longevity. If udder confirmation is not considered, there is increased risk to injury and mastitis and poor calf performance which is affected by the reduction of milk flow.
- » **STRUCTURAL SOUNDNESS** relates to sound feet and legs. These traits influence the animal's ability obtain adequate nutrition. Structural Soundness should be considered for both beef cows and replacement heifers as it is important to the animal's longevity in the herd.
- » **HAIR SHEDDING** is a tool to select for cattle that are heat tolerant. Cattle that shed their hair coat well are desired in the south or in fescue country. Cattle that are cool and comfortable in the summer because they have shed their winter coats have been found to be more productive.
- » **DISEASE AND HEAT RESISTANCE** cattle are valuable to decrease extra input costs like medications or sunshades and increase output like increased pounds of weight.
- » **DOING ABILITY OR FLESHING ABILITY** is the animal's ability to gain or maintain its body condition on limited feed. These cattle adapt to their given set of resources. Cattle that do not adapt to their resources are generally more costly to maintain.

MAKE MATINGS WITH INTENT.

Creating the wrong cow can be costly to your herd. A cowherd that is trouble free, productive, and has a strong maternal base is necessary for a sustainable and profitable beef production system. With the enhancements in sexed semen production and maternal selection tool, creating the 'perfect' female for your production system is more achievable than ever before. Building your best cowherd is easy, **consider these sires to create your 'ideal' cow.**

Want more?

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maternally
focused bulls.



ANGUS



237AN2869

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BRANGUS



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FINAL CUT

Powerful calving ease and spread EPD package with built in balance through to the rail with exceptional type and kind.



29BN0048

MATERNAL POWER

Sired by POWERBALL, your lottery winner for power, body, thickness, and mass while making beautiful daughters with impeccable udders.



29HP0951

ROBERT REDFORD

The Record Setter - Robert Redford entered a league of his own in 2023! He is unmatched for combination of phenotype, pedigree, and data.

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