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NALF News

LIMS Improves Genetics

Herds enrolled in the voluntary Limousin Inventory Management System (LIMS) commit to annual reporting of complete calving and culling data. By submitting such comprehensive production information, they contribute to inventory-proven genetics with more accurate EPDs.

Participants pay an annual fee of \$15 per active cow and, in turn, can record performance for, register and transfer that year's calves. For more information visit NALF's website on the "Membership & Registry" tab. To enroll, contact Mary in the NALF office. The deadline to enroll for Spring 2011 is February 15.

Commercial Awards Presented

The North American Limousin Foundation (NALF) presented its commercial marketing awards during the 2011 Member Social at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS).

There were six nominations submitted for the Commercial Producer of the Year: H&T Cattle Co. of Rapid City, SD; Jenniges Ranch of Glenwood, MN; John and Lynn Greer of Edgar, NE; Larry Roberts of Marengo, IA; Crown S Ranch of Olpe, KS; and Sierra Valley Ranch of Knights Ferry, CA.

Sierra Valley Ranch was chosen as the Commercial Producer of the Year from the nominations. You can learn more about the enterprise from the news release on the NALF website www.nalf.org, the upcoming feature in the spring Bottom Line newsletter or the March issue of Limousin World.

GV Limousin of Garnett, Kansas, was the Commercial Marketing Booster of the Year. Jim Davis, livestock marketing representative for Superior Livestock, received Limousin Promoter of the Year. More details will be provided in the March Limousin World.

Spring EPDs Available

Expected progeny differences (EPDs) from the spring 2011 International Limousin Genetic Evaluation are available on the NALF website.

You can use the Sire Selector to specify EPD-selection criteria in searching qualified Limousin and Lim-Flex® bulls. The pedigree and EPD lookup allows you to search for information about a particular animal.

The site's "Genetics & Performance" section includes the spring 2011 EPD statistics, percentiles and trends; sire summary qualifications; general sire listing; trait leaders; possible change chart; and downloadable sire summary.

Active NALF members can view their male and female EPDs via the website's secured, members-only portion. They also can request whole-herd EPDs from the NALF office free of charge. New performance records are available for \$2 each.

New Website

Over the past five months, a new NALF website has been in the works. Designed with the assistance of EDJE technologies, the new website provides even more information to Limousin members and commercial producers. Designed to be user-friendly and informative, the new website is sure to attract your attention.

Visit the website at www.nalf.org or TodayLimousin.com and let us know what you think. For more information or assistance with the new website, contact the NALF office.

Ownership Has Its Privileges

When you buy and transfer registered Limousin and Lim-Flex bulls, you gain access to NALF's programs, services and expertise. Registrations and transfers open the door to technical support and marketing assistance for your next calf crop.

NALF helps commercial customers obtain top prices for their Limousin-influenced cattle. Services include complimentary subscriptions to NALF's Bottom Line newsletter, free use of the web-based Limousin Exchange Feeder Calf Classifieds, and the opportunity to consign cattle to special feeder-calf sales.

Limousin breeders and their customers benefit from collaboration in collecting, submitting,

AVERAGE EPDS 2008-2010 BORN CALVES													
CE Direct	Birth Weight	Weaning Weight	Yearling Weight	Milking Ability	CE Maternal	Scrotal Circum.	Stayability	Docility	Carcass Weight	Ribeye Area	Yield Grade	Marbling Score	\$MTI
7.7	1.8	42.9	80.2	20.9	4.1	0.4	18.1	16.4	19.7	0.49	-0.08	-0.04	42.5

AVERAGE EPDS 2008-2010 BORN LIM-FLEX CALVES													
CE Direct	Birth Weight	Weaning Weight	Yearling Weight	Milking Ability	CE Maternal	Scrotal Circum.	Stayability	Docility	Carcass Weight	Ribeye Area	Yield Grade	Marbling Score	\$MTI
8.1	0.2	45.6	88.8	25.3	2.7	0.3	15.7	12.1	26.3	-0.12	0.34	0.36	54.2

North American Limousin Foundation

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processing and utilizing performance data to facilitate dependable selections based on trustworthy EPDs. Buying, selling, and transferring registered seedstock supports genetic progress and service after the sale.

Contemporary Groups Negate the Environment

Contemporary grouping assures the effects of environment on phenotype are minimized in calculating a genetic measure like EPDs. This is taken into account by comparing animals that are of the same sex, same percentage blood category, born within 90 days of each other, and have had the same management in the same environment. Therefore, comparisons can be made on phenotypic performance within the group without worrying about environmental variables.

As an example, a study at the University of Nebraska indicated that an increase in temperature by 11 degrees resulted in an 11 pound decrease in birth weights. That is why EPDs are calculated using contemporary group unit deviations instead of actual or adjusted weights.

Whatever the weather holds for you this calving season, know that EPDs are still an unbiased form of genetic evaluation independent of the environment. Because of EPDs we can compare cattle from all over the country in varying environments as apples to apples. This is why NALF stresses the importance of whole herd reporting and LIMS.

Insist on Authenticated Pedigrees

Documented, accurate pedigrees facilitate genetic management. They are essential for reaping the benefits of hybrid vigor (heterosis), managing inbreeding and calculating reliable EPDs.

NALF authenticates pedigrees through its DNA-based parentage-verification program. Highly propagated Limousin animals, including all bulls used in artificial insemination (AI), must have their sires and dams verified. Random tests check the accuracy of reported pedigree data for animals entering the herdbook.

Limousin has one of the most extensive parentage-verification programs in the beef industry to ensure reliable, profitable selection and to guard against genetic defects.

Registration papers authenticate pedigrees, and credible EPDs appear on each registered animal's performance record. If profitable genetic management is important to you, look for registered bulls to ensure integrity.

Multiple-Trait Selection Is Best

Because weight affects net return, most progressive producers buy bulls with high levels of growth. To achieve that goal, NALF encourages producers to select Limousin and Lim-Flex seedstock with acceptable weaning and yearling weight EPDs.

When selecting for increased growth, producers also must balance genetics for other traits—including birth weight, calving-ease, calf survival, frame size, mature weight and maintenance-energy costs. Disciplined selection on both ends of the growth curve is required. High-ranking, high-accuracy EPDs for birth, weaning and yearling weights and direct calving-ease (CED) are the most powerful tools for improving growth and minimizing the potential for calving problems.

In addition, commercial producers should place selection pressure on improved carcass traits. The mainstream market most generously rewards carcasses that grade at least Choice and Yield Grade (YG) 2. Selection of Limousin and Lim-Flex bulls with above-average EPDs for both marbling and yield grade (or rib eye area) will help set the genetic stage to hit those targets.

Breeders Continue to Emphasize Docility

Calmer cattle are easier and safer to handle. They also offer better feedyard gains and meat quality.

Not only does the Limousin breed offer calving-ease, growth, efficiency, moderate milk and mature cow size, but it also is the industry leader in improved docility. NALF developed the industry's first temperament-scoring system and docility EPD.

The NALF database shows a substantial increase in the proportion of calm animals in recent years. Those scores provide the foundation for Limousin docility EPDs, which indicate genetic differences in the likelihood that offspring will inherit genes for calm behavior. Greater EPDs indicate higher likelihood for calm behavior in progeny, and greater accuracy values indicate more reliability. NALF advises producers to check the accuracy values for docility EPDs to assure prospective herd sires are from proven bloodlines for calm behavior.



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The year-letter code for 2011 is

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