

# “MISS PREMIUM” REPLACEMENT HEIFER PROGRAM

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## OBJECTIVES

1. To increase the implementation of heifer development practices that will result in optimum reproductive efficiency as mature cows.
2. To enhance marketing opportunities for and add value to Mississippi-raised heifers.
3. To develop reliable sources of quality beef replacement heifers throughout Mississippi.

## PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

**Enrollment:** In order to qualify heifers for the Miss Premium Replacement Heifer Program, interested producers must complete an official enrollment form for those heifers.

**Ownership:** Heifers enrolled in the Miss Premium Replacement Heifer Program may be home-raised or purchased. Purchased heifers enrolled in the program must be owned a minimum of 60 days prior to breeding. All purchased heifers must be accompanied with an affidavit indicating the name and address of the original breeder and approximate birth dates of the heifers. Heifers must be owned by residents of Mississippi in order to sell in a sanctioned Miss Premium Heifer sale.

**Animal identification:** Individual animal identification is required.

**Minimum vaccination requirements:** A comprehensive herd health vaccination program starting at weaning age or before should be administered under the advice and guidance of a veterinarian in the context of a valid veterinary-client-patient relationship.

1. Calfhood vaccination against Brucellosis (Bangs) is optional.

### *Weaning*

2. Heifers must be vaccinated and boosted against IBR, BVD, PI<sub>3</sub>, BRSV, and Clostridial (7way). Heifers must be 5 months of age or older at time of vaccinations. Follow label directions for all products used.

### *Prebreeding*

3. To maximize protection against reproductive loss, vaccinations against Leptospirosis (5-way), Leptospirosis (*hardjo-bovis*), and Vibriosis must be given between 60 and 30 days prior to breeding. A booster vaccination against IBR and BVD is required between 60 and 30 days prior to breeding. Modified-live viral vaccines for IBR and BVD are recommended. If killed viral vaccine products are used, two boosters are strongly recommended. Products used must follow label directions concerning initial and booster vaccinations.

### *Pregnancy check*

4. A booster vaccination against Leptospirosis (5-way) and Leptospirosis (*hardjo-bovis*) is required at first pregnancy examination.

**Persistently-Infected Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus (BVD-PI):** BVD-PI testing is not required, but any heifer testing positive for BVD-PI is ineligible for the program.

**Implants and MGA:** It is recommended that heifers not be implanted. If heifers are implanted, it is required that only FDA-approved products for replacement heifers be used and administered according to label guidelines. Long-term use of MGA is prohibited. Use of MGA for periods of up to 14 days to synchronize estrus is permitted.

**Pelvic measurement:** Heifers must have a minimum pelvic area of 180 cm<sup>2</sup> at the initial pregnancy exam within 90 days from the start of the breeding season.

**Sire requirements:** Heifers must be bred to eligible sires. These sires must have known ID, be registered by their respective national breed registry, and have complete EPD information. Sires will be evaluated for qualification in the program based on the EPD provided by their respective breed registry and not on EPD produced by progeny registration in any other breed or hybrid registry. Sire calving ease EPDs must be in the top 40% of the breed for breeds reporting calving ease EPD. For breeds not reporting calving ease EPD, sires must be in the top 40% of the breed for birth weight EPD. All sires used in conjunction with artificial insemination must have a minimum accuracy value of 0.6 on a scale of zero to one for calving ease EPD, or for birth weight EPD if the breed does not report calving ease EPD.

**Reproductive management:** Natural service breeding season cannot exceed 65 days. Estrus synchronization and artificial insemination (AI) are encouraged. Producers using artificial insemination must report breeding dates. Heifers marketed as AI bred may not be exposed for natural service for a minimum of 14 days following AI.

**Pregnancy examination:** An initial pregnancy examination must be performed within 120 days from the start of the breeding season. Individual animal identification, pregnancy status, and fetal age (in days) are required. Use of ultrasound for fetal aging and pregnancy determination is encouraged. Any heifer that fails to become pregnant during or loses a pregnancy following the original breeding season is no longer eligible for the program.

## **SALE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

To qualify for a Miss Premium Heifer certified sale, heifers must meet program eligibility requirements outlined previously and sale eligibility requirements outlined as follows.

**Birth date:** Actual birth dates are preferred. If actual birth date is not known then month of birth is required. Heifers must be less than 36 months old at the time of sale as determined by dentition.

**Weight and body condition:** Bred heifers on the day of sale must weigh a minimum of 800 pounds and receive a body condition score within a range of 5 through 8 using a 9-point scale. All bred heifers will be sold on a per head basis.

**Temperament:** The local sale committees reserve the right to remove heifers for poor temperament.

**Soundness:** Heifers must be structurally sound and free of injury.

**Blemishes:** Heifers with active cases of Pinkeye or scars resulting from Pinkeye are not eligible for sale. The local sale committees reserve the right to refuse any heifer that does not meet the criteria for blemishes.

**Surgery:** Horns and scurs must be removed and heifers must be completely healed by sale day.

**Parasite control:** All heifers must be treated for internal and external parasites within 30 days of sale. Products for internal parasite control must have a label claim for immature parasite life cycle stages.

**Pregnancy:** A pregnancy examination must be performed within 30 days prior to sale. Due dates reported in sale catalogs are approximate based on a 283-day gestation. The consignor guarantees bred heifers to be safe in calf at the time of sale. If a heifer is proven by veterinary exam within 30 days after sale to be open, the consignor will replace the heifer or make a financial settlement with the buyer. Settlement is between buyer and seller. In the event of an open heifer, the buyer must: 1) Contact the consignor directly; 2) Procure a signed statement of fact from a licensed veterinarian; 3) Reach an agreement with the consignor as to the settlement procedure; and 4) Contact sale management if a satisfactory settlement is not reached.

**4-H/FFA Replacement Heifer Development Contest:** Participants in the Mississippi 4-H/FFA Replacement Heifer Development Contest are encouraged to market heifers through Miss Premium Heifer sales. To qualify for the sales, these heifers must meet the same guidelines as other Miss Premium sale-eligible heifers.

## CERTIFICATION

Only heifers that meet the requirements listed here with individual data entered in the official Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association database for the Miss Premium Replacement Heifer Program will be eligible to receive certification. Certification of heifers will be publicly recognized by the Miss Premium Heifer ear tag. A certification fee of \$5 per heifer will be assessed and is due at the time Miss Premium qualified heifers receive their official tag. Misrepresentation, false advertisement, or use of the Miss Premium Heifer name or tag for heifers that do not meet the aforementioned requirements is subject to exclusion from future program participation.