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Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association

Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association—Productivity and Quality

Mississippi BCIA Seeking Bull Sale Nominations

After a very successful 2005 sale, planning is now underway for the 2006 Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association Fall Bull Sale. The Mississippi Fall BCIA Bull Sale program encourages production and identification of genetically superior bulls by purebred breeders and purchase and use of these bulls by commercial producers. The 2006 sale is scheduled for Thursday, November 9, 2006 at 12:00 noon at the Hinds Community College Sales Facility in Raymond, Mississippi. Mississippi beef breeders are encouraged to nominate quality bulls that meet all the requirements for the sale.

The Rules and Regulations for the BCIA Bull Sale along with a nomination form and current bull sale information are posted on the BCIA website at *msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/bcia_bullsale.html* and are available through county Extension offices across Mississippi. One change worth noting this year is that at least one of the following 1) ultrasound EPDs, 2) carcass EPDs, or 3) ultrasound body composition scan results will be required for bulls to meet 2006 BCIA Fall Bull Sale eligibility.

Another change for this year's sale is that it will be broadcast live from the Raymond sale site over the Extension distance education system to interactive bidding sites in the Panola County Extension office in Batesville, MS and the North MS Research and Extension Center in Verona, MS. Producers at the remote sites will have the opportunity to view video of the bulls immediately prior to the sale, view and hear the sale live, and bid on bulls from Batesville and Verona. Look for sale advertisements in the future with more details on this.

If you are interested in consigning bulls to this sale, please complete the nomination form and return it to Box 9815, Mississippi State, MS 39762 no later than September 1, 2006. Be sure to include the nomination fee, a signed registration certificate, actual birth weight, and adjusted weaning and yearling weights and ratios for each bull. If you have any questions about the sale, please call your local Extension Service office or contact Jane Parish in the MSU Animal and Dairy Sciences Department at 662-325-7466 or jparish@ext.msstate.edu.

Mississippi BCIA Bull Sale Nomination Deadline

September 1, 2006

Upcoming events:

- July 11—Cattlemen's Exchange (Winona group) - Tour of Steve Stewart and Jim Anderson Farms, Meet at EE Ranches cafeteria, Winona, MS, 3:30 p.m.
- July 18—Oktibbeha/ Webster County Beef Tour, Leveck Animal Research Center, MSU Beef Unit, 5:30 p.m.
- August 4—Brown Loam Branch Experiment Station field day, Raymond, MS
- August 7—Cattlemen's Exchange (Simpson/ Copiah County) - Commodity Feeds for Beef Cattle, Copiah County Extension office, Crystal Springs, MS, 6:30 p.m.
- **September 1—Nomination deadline for the 2006 Mississippi BCIA Fall Bull Sale**
- September 6—Getting Back on Track After Katrina Beef Short Course, Forrest County Multipurpose Complex, Hattiesburg, MS
- November 9—Mississippi BCIA Annual Fall Bull Sale, Hinds Community College Bull Sale Facility, Raymond, MS, 12:00 noon

Inside this issue:

2005 BULL SALE HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ High selling bull brought $4,400
- ✓ High yearling bull sold for $2,600
- ✓ Average sale price $2,042
- ✓ 5 breeds of bulls in sale
- ✓ 74 buyer cards issued
- ✓ Bulls sold to buyers in 4 states

New Websites Now Available to Assist Producers


The Mississippi Hay Directory is now available to assist producers

Mississippi Hay Directory
msucares.com/livestock/beef/mshay.html

A Mississippi Hay Directory is now online available to assist Mississippi livestock producers in locating hay supplies. The list provided includes information from individuals and businesses who have submitted a Mississippi Hay Directory Listing Submission Form indicating that they have hay for sale. Listings expire after 30 days.

Also included on the site are links to forage testing information and forage quality standards. Hay-related publications and other hay and feed sources links are linked on the site as well.

Mississippi Drought Information Resources
msucares.com/livestock/beef/drought.html

A new drought information resources website is now available to assist Mississippi beef cattle producers. It provides answers to frequently asked questions, useful contact information, and links to publications and websites with helpful resources.

An example of a frequently asked question and answer on the website is as follows:

Question: I am running out of forage. Is early weaning a good idea?

Answer: Early weaning is often used to improve cow condition for rebreeding, particularly when forage is limiting. The nutrient requirements of a dry (non-lactating) cow are approximately 50% lower than the nutrient requirements of a lactating cow nursing a calf. Research shows that when the stress of lactation is removed by early weaning, cows gain body weight and condition. A Florida study reported that early weaning thin cows resulted in a significant reduction in the amount of total digestible nutrients (an indicator of dietary energy often referred to as TDN) needed to support cow body weight gain. Early weaning also effectively initiated postpartum estrus in these cows. Improved pregnancy rates in cows with early-weaned calves have been documented by numerous researchers. Early weaning may be most beneficial in years when pasture production is inadequate to support herd nutritional needs. Do not wait until the cowherd has lost significant body condition and forage availability is very limiting to early wean.

Calves can achieve dry matter feed conversion rates of 5 to 8 lbs. of dry matter per 1 lb. of gain. Because early-weaned calves can gain weight efficiently, it may be advantageous to retain calves and feed them for a period of time. This allows for more flexibility in calf marketing. By feeding early-weaned calves a concentrate-based diet from weaning time until the time they would be conventionally weaned, research consistently shows that their body weights will be equal to or greater than the body weights of calves nursing their dams up to conventional weaning age. Operations developing heifers for replacements may want to consider less aggressive preweaning nutritional management strategies to prevent negative impacts on long-term productivity. Choosing the most appropriate early weaning diet should take into account whether or not calf ownership will be retained through the feeding period and feed cost and availability. Steers weaned at approximately five months of age versus seven months of age have been shown to have lower feedlot feed intake and better feed conversion. Research indicates that early-weaned calves tend to gain less in the feedlots, have lower carcass weights, and have similar yield grades compared to calves weaned at traditional ages.

One of the challenges with early weaning is getting calves started eating and drinking. In situations where calves are weaned at a very young age (less than three months), intensive management may be necessary. These extremely young, lightweight calves are highly stressed from weaning and may display a wide variation of eating and drinking behavior. It is critical to get these young calves trained to a feed bunk and water trough as quickly as possible to reduce the risk of illness. To both lower the risk of health problems and promote calf growth, implementing proper vaccination programs in consultation with a veterinarian and getting calves accustomed to concentrate feeds is essential prior to weaning. Furthermore, low-stress weaning techniques such

"...Early weaning is often used to improve cow condition for rebreeding, particularly when forage is limiting…"

New Websites (Cont.)

as fenceline weaning or fitting calves with anti-nursing devices may be valuable in early weaning programs. Increased labor and feed costs are typically associated with early calf weaning and subsequent backgrounding along with the need for a separate feeding or pasture area. These increased costs may be easily justified during drought conditions or when herd females are thin and run the risk of low rebreeding rates.

With seedstock cattle, make sure that breed association weaning age windows are adhered to for performance reporting purposes when considering early weaning. Contact the respective breed association for weaning age requirements. Early weaning just part of the herd could be a good option as well. Start by early weaning young, pregnant cattle.

"…Make sure that breed association weaning age windows are adhered to… when considering early weaning."

National Animal Identification System Questions and Answers

Question: How is a premises defined, such as when a farm or ranch has a primary farm or home place and several other distinct locations in which livestock are reared?

Answer: A premises is defined as a location where animals are raised, held, or boarded. Sometimes, a livestock production enterprise contains multiple locations. Some of the locations are permanent facilities such as feedlots, permanent pastures with animal handling facilities, breeding farms, or nurseries. Other sites are used only on a temporary basis such as stalk fields, wheat pastures, and public lands for grazing purposes. In the event of a disease outbreak, premises that are epidemiologically linked with the source herd or flock will need to be found. As these premises are identified and located on a map, a "picture" of the outbreak is generated. The more premises that are identified prior to the outbreak, the more quickly the size and scope of the outbreak can be estimated, the more quickly adequate resources can be determined, and the more quickly the disease will be contained. In this way, the economic impact of the outbreak will be lessened.
Ideally, each distinct location would be identified with a unique premises number. At a minimum, the "home place" in which animals are raised needs to be registered for the operator to obtain a unique PIN. Additional locations are not required to be registered at this time, although it is highly encouraged.

Question: When a cow is sold to another producer, does the cow now acquire another premises tag for the new location?

Answer: No, the cow will have one official tag with the Animal Identification Number (AIN) printed on it. When the animal is sold, the animal's movement will be reported, allowing the database to associate the AIN to the buyer's PIN. Let's say Rancher A lives at Premises A12345D and his bull is assigned AIN 840123456789012. Rancher B owns Premises Z54321A.
If Rancher A with Premises A12345D sells bull 840123456789012 to Rancher B, Premises Z54321A, the bull's AIN will remain the same (840123456789012). However, the PIN associated with the bull will change on the date of the movement. For example, the information system could have information similar to this:

Animal: 840123456789012
Date: February 2, 2004
Premises: A12345D
Event: Tag applied

Animal: 840123456789012
Date: October 1, 2004
Premises: Z54321A
Event: Moved in

Source: Questions and Answers about Cattle and the National Animal Identification System (NAIS)

www.usda.gov/nais

Premises Registered in the United States as part of the National Animal Identification System

265,414
as of 06/14/06

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Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association
Box 9815
Mississippi State, MS 39762

Phone: 662-325-7466
Fax: 662-325-8873
Email: jparish@ads.msstate.edu

Send questions or comments about this newsletter to Jane Parish, Extension Beef Specialist, Mississippi State University Extension Service

Visit MBCIA online at http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/

MBCIA Membership Application

Name:_____

Address:_____

City:_____

County:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____

Phone:_____ Email:_____

(Check one) Seedstock:____ Commercial:____

Cattle breed(s):_____

Completed applications and $5 annual dues payable to Mississippi BCIA should be mailed to:

Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association
c/o Jane Parish, Extension Beef Specialist
Box 9815, Mississippi State, MS 39762

BCIA Management Calendar—July 2006

GENERAL

Fill out a premises identification form for your farm or ranch from the Mississippi Board of Animal Health if you have not already done so. Stay on top of summer weed and brush control. Rotationally graze summer pastures, clipping overgrown pastures or harvesting excess for hay. Watch dallisgrass pastures for ergot contamination, and clip seedheads if necessary. Avoid grazing heavily nitrogen fertilized sudangrass, sorghum-sudan hybrid, or pearl millet pastures during drought or cool, cloudy weather. If cattle are grazed on these pastures, they should be observed carefully for signs of nitrate poisoning. Continue harvesting bermudagrass hay at 4-5 week intervals for optimum forage maturity and quality. Fertilize hay fields between cuttings or on a regular interval to replace soil nutrients removed by hay production and improve hay yield and quality. Continue recording hay yields and forage testing each cutting. Store hay to minimize storage losses and allow matching of forage test results with individual lots of hay for use in hay feeding and supplementation decisions. Keep proper free-choice minerals, adequate shade, and fresh water available for cattle at all times. At 90°F a mature cow needs about 20 gallons of water per day. Continue fly control program keeping a close eye on fly numbers. Remove fly tags as they become ineffective, and implement additional fly control methods. Check cattle for cancer eye, pinkeye, and foot rot. Maintain a complete herd health program in consultation with a veterinarian including internal and external parasite control and vaccinations. Continue good production and financial record keeping. Consider nomination quality bulls to the Mississippi BCIA Fall Bull Sale by the September 1, 2006 deadline.

SPRING CALVING—January, February, March

Remove bulls from breeding pastures if not done already. Keep bulls in a small pasture traps on an adequate nutritional program, and market bulls that will not be used in future breeding seasons. Maintain lactating cows on the best pastures. Consider creep feeding calves depending on marketing plans and pasture conditions. Plan to pregnancy check herd females about 60 days after the end of the breeding season. Establish permanent identification (tattoos or brands) for bred heifers that will remain in the herd, and make plans to market open heifers.

FALL CALVING—October, November, December

Wean calves based on market and pasture conditions using weaning strategies that minimize calf stress. Monitor herd performance and nutritional status by recording weights and cow body condition scores at weaning. Assess weaning percentage (calves weaned/cows exposed to breeding) and cow efficiency (calf weight/cow weight). After weaning, cull cows based on pregnancy status, soundness (eyes, udders, feet, legs, teeth), and performance records. Market cull cows based on market conditions and cow body condition. Select replacement heifers based on performance. Put a heifer development program in action to reach target breeding weights by the start of the next breeding season. Implement calf preconditioning, marketing, or retained ownership plans as appropriate.