



- June 7-8—Angus Boot Camp, Starkville
- June 20-23— BIF Conference—Loveland, CO
- July 13—Deep South Stocker Conf., Starkville
- August 6—Homeplace Feeder Calf Board Sale, Hattiesburg
- August 25—Southern Producers Replacement Heifer Sale, Hattiesburg,
- October 18-20 - Mississippi State University Artificial Insemination School, MSU
- November 3—Fall BCIA Bull and Heifer Sale, Raymond

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# MISSISSIPPI BCIA

BEEF CATTLE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

## Geared Up for a Full Summer

Summer break has finally started for students at Mississippi State. For Starkville locals summer break is welcomed, the lines at restaurants are already remarkably shorter, traffic appears to be a tick lighter, and it is easy to get a parking spot on campus. While students are basking on the beaches and taking in summer break, your Beef Extension Team is gearing up for a full summer of events trainings, and sales.

Our first big event of the summer will hosting the American Angus Association for their Boot Camp. If you are an Angus breeder or utilize Angus genetics in your operation, you will want to attend this information packed short course.

The following week is jam packed with beef events. We're assisting with the Mississippi Junior Cattlemen's Association's Making Tracks Leadership Camp and assisting with the Mississippi Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom. We're excited to have the chance to teach our future industry leaders and educators!

The very next week we will be traveling to Loveland, Colorado for the Beef Improvement Federation Annual Meeting and Research Symposium. To us, it is a chance to hear about some of the latest beef industry research findings, but it is also an opportunity to network with our peers all around the country. Every year, we bring back something that benefits the entire Mississippi cattle industry.

Upon our return, we'll begin getting organized for the Homeplace Feeder Calf Board Sale. During June, we like to get a

handle on who wants to consign. That way, we can begin assembling loads. If you are interested in consigning feeder calves to the board sale, contact Dr. Karisch.

Summer will wrap up with some of the

*17th Annual Southern Producers Replacement Heifer Sale*

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 2018 AT 1:00 P.M.**  
*Southeast Mississippi Sale Place / Hwy 49 N. Hattiesburg, MS*

*Photo credit to Kyle Anderson - MSU Times*

**VIDEOS OF SALE HEIFERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING AT**  
[WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/MSUBEEFCATTLE.COM](http://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/MSUBEEFCATTLE.COM)

**250+ TOP QUALITY 3-8 MONTHS BRED HEIFERS**

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**HEIFERS WILL BE PELVIC MEASURED, VET CHECKED, & QUALITY SCREENED**

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MARCUS & MICHAEL LADNER  
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MG FARMS  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
MIKE KEENE  
(601) 606-7382  
BOB ROBINSON  
(601) 906-1796  
COBIE RUTHERFORD  
(256) 476-4676

**SALE DAY PHONE**  
(601) 268-2587

state's best genetics selling in the Southern Producers Replacement Heifer Sale. Look to our YouTube, [youtube.com/MSUBeefCattle](http://youtube.com/MSUBeefCattle), to see consignment videos for each sale.

As always, it is never too early to begin thinking about what you would like to consign to the Fall Bull and Heifer Sale.

*Cobie Rutherford*

# Improving Cow Herd Reproduction Via Genetics—Part 1

Wade Shafer, Ph.D., American Simmental Association Executive Vice President (This article was originally published in March 2008 issue of the SimTalk written by Wade Shafer, Ph.D. Drs. Lauren Hyde and Jackie Atkins provided updates for this reprint)

A beef cow's job is not an easy one. She is expected to conceive at slightly over one year of age, to calve by the time she is two, and rebreed shortly after that while weaning a healthy, viable calf. Furthermore, we demand that she consistently repeats this cycle for the rest of her life — one stumble and, *hasta la vista*, baby!

To be sure, producers are best served when the cow successfully performs her task for many years, as the longer her productive life, the more profitable she is to the enterprise. Is there anything that can be done to help her out? Certainly, there are environmental factors we can manage that will give her a leg up. For example, by providing adequate nutrition and a proper vaccination regimen and mating her to easy-calving sires (particularly when she is young), we increase the odds of her success. While a cow's environment has a substantial impact on her reproductive performance, her genetic makeup can too. This article explores the genetics of female reproduction and offers suggestions on how to improve the reproductive performance of your cow herd via genetics.

## Crossbreeding

The obvious place to start a discussion about the genetics of female reproduction is the factor that far and away has the greatest affect on it — crossbreeding. It has long been recognized that crossbreeding enhances virtually all aspects of reproductive performance. Studies too numerous to list here have established the reproductive superiority of crossbred over straightbred cows.

In one of an abundance of studies with similar findings, scientists at the Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) concluded that two-breed rotational cross cows produced 20% more calves over their lifetime than straightbreds due to the favorable impact of heterosis on dam fertility/longevity and calf survivability brought about by the improved calving and mothering ability of the dam (Cundiff et al., 1992). Furthermore, they estimated that when mated to a bull of another breed, the two-breed cross cows would wean 36% more weight over their

lifespan than straightbred cows raising straightbred calves. The dramatic increase is attributable to the positive influence of heterosis on reproduction and production in the dam and well as increased growth and survivability in their calves.

Given the overwhelming evidence of the crossbred cow's reproductive supremacy and the fact that reproduction is a major piece of the profitability puzzle (by most accounts exceeding all other functions by a wide margin of relative importance), it is difficult to conceive of a situation where a commercial enterprise would not benefit financially from a crossbred cow herd.

Are we implying that selecting animals within a breed for reproductive performance is not a worthwhile endeavor? No! Reproductive progress can be made via selection (which we will address later); however, it would take years of intense selection within a breed to yield the kind of improvement that can be achieved in one fell swoop by simply crossbreeding.

Therefore, crossbreeding makes a logical cornerstone in any effort to enhance cow herd reproductive performance. With crossbreeding as the foundation, the selection of superior animals of multiple breeds as inputs to the crossbreeding system can be considered a supplemental means of further boosting reproductive function; however, identifying reproductively superior animals has its challenges, as we will explain.

###

***This article will be continued in the June edition of the BCIA Newsletter.***

## eBEEF Webinars

eBEEF partnered with National Cattlemen's Beef Association to present a series of webinars in 2018:

January 18, 2018, 7 p.m. CT "Fake News: EPDs Don't Work", Dr. Alison Van Eenennaam and Dr. Matthew Spangler

February 22, 2018 "Show me the money! Are there EPDs for profit?", Dr. Darrh Bullock and Dr. Jared Decker

March 22, 2018 "The 4 S's of crossbreeding: simple, structured, successful, and sustainable", Dr. Robert Weaver and Dr. Megan Rolf

April 19, 2018 "Putting the tools to use: buying your next bull", the eBEEF team



**Visit eBeef.org to view the archived series!**

## Save the Date!

The 2018 Deep South Stocker Conference will be held on July 13, 2018 at the Hale County College and Career Academy in Greensboro, Alabama. This program is a longstanding partnership between the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Mississippi State University Extension Service and University of Georgia Extension. The conference rotates between hosts. Last year, MSU hosted the conference as part of the Stockmanship and Stewardship program. As Greensboro is only 80 miles East of Meridian, we hope a large Mississippi delegation will be in attendance. For more information about the program visit [www.deepsouthstocker.org](http://www.deepsouthstocker.org) or call Dr. Kim Mullenix, at 334-844-15446.

**JULY 13, 2018**  
**HALE COUNTY COLLEGE AND**  
**CAREER ACADEMY**  
**GREENSBORO, ALABAMA**

**2018 DEEP SOUTH**  
**STOCKER**  
**CONFERENCE**  
**8 A.M. TO 4 P.M.**

**Topics:**  
 Forage and Supplemental Nutrition  
 Receiving Calf Health Management  
 Market and Weather Outlook  
 Producer Panel

**Register at:**  
<http://www.deepsouthstocker.org/registration/>  
 Contact:  
 Dr. Kim Mullenix: (334) 844-1546 or  
 Brenda Glover: (334) 624-8710







# May 2018 – Management Calendar

## GENERAL

Fertilize warm-season pastures (bermudagrass, bahiagrass, etc.) according to soil test recommendations. Stay on top of weed control. Sprig hybrid bermudagrass before moisture becomes limiting. Plant summer annual forages. Graze sodseeded ryegrass pastures to prevent shading of warm-season forages. Manage pastures to graze young growth and harvest excess for hay. Check hay equipment to make sure it is ready for operation. Record hay yields, forage test each cutting, and develop a hay storage program that will minimize storage losses and allow matching of forage test results with individual lots of hay for use in hay feeding and supplementation decisions. Provide proper free-choice minerals and fresh water at all times. Make sure adequate shade is available for cattle going into the summer months. Watch for flies, and implement a fly control program when needed. Maintain a complete herd health program in consultation with a veterinarian including internal and external parasite control, calfhood (Bangs) vaccinations for heifer calves four to eight months of age, and blackleg (7-way) vaccinations for all calves over three months of age if not done earlier. Keep good production and financial records.

## SPRING CALVING—January, February, March

Calving should be done. Complete management practices for late calves, and castrate and dehorn any calves missed at birth. Implant calves that will not be retained as breeding stock. Read implant product labels to determine when

calves that were implanted at birth may be re-implanted. Monitor condition of bulls during the breeding season, and hand feed if necessary. Be ready to remove bulls from heifers after a 45-60 day breeding season. Observe breeding herds to make sure that cows are settling. Maintain good breeding records including heat detection records, artificial insemination dates, dates bulls turned in and out, identification of herd females and breeding groups, dates bred, returns to heat, and expected calving dates.

## FALL CALVING—October, November, December

Maintain bulls in small pasture traps and provide a nutritional program designed for starting the next breeding season in good condition. To precondition calves, vaccinate for respiratory diseases (IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV, and others upon veterinary advice), and wean for at least 45 days before shipment. Implement weaning strategies, such as fenceline weaning, that minimize calf stress. Train calves to eat from a bunk and drink from a water trough during the preconditioning period. Pregnancy check herd females about 60 days after the end of the breeding season. Cull cows based on pregnancy status, soundness (eyes, udders, feet, legs, teeth), and performance records. Develop plans for marketing cull cows based on market conditions and cow body condition.

## Contact Information:



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EXTENSION**

We are an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

## Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(Check one) Seedstock: \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial: \_\_\_\_\_

Cattle breed(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Completed applications and \$5 annual dues or \$100 lifetime dues payable to Mississippi BCIA should be mailed to:

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