The American Gelbvieh Association (AGA) announces the release of the Maternal Edge Female Profile for producers to use on commercial females.

The AGA has long been focused on promoting the maternal superiority that Gelbvieh and Balancer cattle possess. Today, they are the leader in helping producers improve profitability through maternal efficiency. Producers using Gelbvieh and Balancer cattle have access to tools such as Heifer Pregnancy and 30-month Pregnancy (PG30) EPDs, the $Cow index and now the new Maternal Edge Female Profile to help gain maternal efficiency in their herd.

This DNA profile, offered by Geneseek®, is a low-density panel to be used by producers as a sorting tool for Gelbvieh and Balancer® influenced commercial females. Traits included in the panel are calving ease, maternal calving ease, weaning weight, yield grade, marbling, and carcass weight. These traits are measured for the female against the entire Gelbvieh population with Molecular Breeding Values (MBVs). Each female tested with the Maternal Edge Female Profile will receive a score of 1 to 10 for each of the six traits.

The Maternal Edge Female Profile has heavy emphasis on maternal characteristics but also includes end-product traits as well. Because the majority of steer calves and a portion of heifers out of a cowherd end up in a feedyard, it is beneficial for more than just maternal traits to be evaluated in a commercial female panel.

Parent verification is also included in the panel, if the option is selected on the order form and sire and dam have parentage markers on file with the AGA.

“We are excited to offer this tool to members and commercial producers as a way to choose superior females in their herd and gain a competitive maternal edge in the beef industry,” says Kari White, American Gelbvieh Association breed improvement data analyst.

The Maternal Edge Female Profile was developed to help commercial producers track and manage the impact Gelbvieh and Balancer females have on profitability. These females offer maternal superiority through several traits such as added fertility, increased longevity and the ability to wean more pounds of calf per cow exposed. In today’s competitive beef industry, high quality females are a must for any successful operation. This new DNA profile helps assure producers are choosing the best females to keep in their herd.

To learn more about the Maternal Edge Female Profile and how producers are gaining an edge on profit, visit www.gelbvieh.org.
Crossbreeding. A Profit Building Tool That Can’t Be Denied.

Put crossbreeding to work for your cow-calf operation with the help of Gelbvieh and Balancer® genetics and watch the benefits add up.

The bottom line, that's what matters to commercial cow-calf producers. The advantages of crossbreeding positively influence the bottom line, and that's not a secret. For decades progressive cattlemen have utilized crossbreeding to increase profits and efficiency. To see maternal benefits in their commercial cowherd, producers have been choosing Gelbvieh or Balancer® genetics.

The crossbred female is 30 percent more productive over her lifetime. The heterosis, or hybrid vigor, advantage is known as the increase in performance of the crossbred animal compared to the average of the straightbred parents. That increase in performance results in increased profitability to an operation.

The influence of heterosis is greatest for traits that have low heritability but ones that have huge economic impact on profitability. Reproduction in beef cattle is a trait with low heritability. Heterosis resulting from crossbreeding has significance for commercial breeding programs as it improves and enhances reproductive efficiency. Getting more cows bred is the first and biggest profit center in all cow-calf operations. A producer cannot build too much reproduction and longevity into a cowherd. Heterosis from crossbreeding enhances both reproduction and longevity.

Do the math in your own herd. It's proven that with a crossbred cow you get an advantage of: +38 percent cow longevity; +25 percent lifetime productivity; +8 percent calf crop weaned; +5 percent weaning performance and +4 percent in calf yearling performance. Collectively, those advantages don't come along in any other package.

How does heterosis work? There are three main types of heterosis:

Individual heterosis is the improvement in performance by the individual crossbred animal above the average of its parents. Examples of individual heterosis in crossbred calves include:

- Calving Rate +3.2%
- Survival to Weaning +1.4%
- Birth Weight +1.7 lbs.
- Weaning Weight +16.3 lbs.
- Yearling Weight +29.1 lbs.
- Average Daily Gain +0.08 lb./day
- Longevity +1.36 years

Maternal heterosis is the combined improvement in traits from the dam that cause increase in performance of her progeny. Examples of maternal heterosis in a beef cow include:

- Calving Rate +3.5%
- Survival to Weaning +0.8%
- Birth Weight +1.6 lbs.
- Weaning Weight +18.0 lbs.
- Yearling Weight -
- Average Daily Gain -
- Longevity +1.36 years

Paternal heterosis is the improvement in the productive and reproductive characteristics of the bull. Examples of paternal heterosis in a herd sire include:

- Calving Rate -
- Survival to Weaning-
- Birth Weight-
- Weaning Weight-
- Yearling Weight-
- Average Daily Gain-
- Longevity +1.36 years

Lifetime Productivity of Crossbred Cows = +0.97 Number of Calves and +600 lbs. Cumulative Weaning Weight

For assistance in marketing or purchasing Gelbvieh, Balancer® or Southern Balancer® bulls, females and feeder cattle, contact:

William McIntosh
Commercial Marketing Specialist
williamm@gelbvieh.org • (502) 867-3132 (C)
Improved Genetic Selection Tools

Providing the best and most reliable tools for genetic evaluation of Gelbvieh and Balancer® animals is a key principle of the American Gelbvieh Association. The AGA has completed several research projects, giving producers the opportunity to use these calculations more consistently for selection of breeding animals.

Genomic-Enhanced EPDs

Genomic-Enhanced EPDs (GE EPDs) are now available on Gelbvieh and Balancer animals. GE EPDs combine pedigree, individual performance and genomic information to save time and money, reduce risk, and accelerate the rate of genetic progress.

The information from the genomic data can be as informative as a bull’s first calf crop or a cow’s lifetime production record. Since the genomic data is incorporated directly into the EPDs, cattle producers will not have to learn how to interpret the new data.

Economic Selection Indexes

Three new economic selection indexes are available to measure maternal traits, feed efficiency, and feedlot and carcass merit. Indexes allow you to select for several EPDs at once, making selections more efficient than selecting on one trait at a time. Indexes weigh traits based on their importance to a producer’s bottom line by using a trait’s economic and genetic value. Indexes are a good way to put selection emphasis on traits that are economically relevant.

$Cow

$Cow represents the genetic value in dollars of profit of an animal when retained as a replacement female relative to other animals in the herd. A higher number represents more profitable genetics for maternal productivity.

The $Cow index includes several traits. The most essential of these traits are heifer pregnancy, 30-month pregnancy, and stayability. $Cow incorporates other traits that affect the profitability of a female in a production system. These traits include milk, calving ease, moderate mature weight, and the ability of calves to gain. A female’s genetics also influence the performance of her calves in the feedlot and at slaughter so traits such as feed efficiency and carcass value are also included in $Cow.

Efficiency Profit Index (EPI)

The Efficiency Profit index (EPI) aids producers in selection for more feed efficient cattle that still have acceptable amounts of gain. The EPI provides marginal negative pressure on intake, while keeping gain at a constant value. By selecting on this index, producers will be able to find those animals that gain the same amount as their contemporaries while eating less.

Feeder Profit Index (FPI)

The Feeder Profit Index (FPI) is designed to aid producers in selecting sires whose progeny will perform in the feedlot and when sold on a carcass merit basis. FPI is expressed in dollars of profit, with a higher number representing more profitable genetics for performance in the feedlot and at slaughter. Well-ranking sires for FPI have higher marbling and carcass weight than their contemporaries. As a terminal index, little emphasis is put on maternal traits such as stayability and calving ease.

Multi-Breed Genetic Evaluation

All of the AGA EPDs are backed by the industry’s largest and most robust multi-breed international genetic evaluation in the world. Growth and carcass EPDs for Gelbvieh and Balancer animals are directly comparable to Simmental, Red Angus, Shorthorn, and a growing number of other breeds.

The multi-breed EPDs combine pedigree, performance, ultrasound, carcass and genomic data into one easy to use set of numbers. Seedstock breeders and their commercial customers can have confidence in the AGA’s EPDs to evaluate the genetic merit between breeds for both purebred and hybrid seedstock.

### Gelbvieh and Balancer® Breed Average EPDS (For active sires, as of the Fall 2014 International Cattle Evaluation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Growth and Maternal EPDs</th>
<th>Intake and Carcass EPDs</th>
<th>Index Values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CED BW WW YW MK TM CEM HP PG30 ST</td>
<td>DMI YG CW RE MB FT</td>
<td>$Cow FPI EPI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gelbvieh</td>
<td>8 1.2 66 91 29 62 6 2 0 6</td>
<td>0.004 -0.29 25 0.44 -0.21 -0.07 55.62 61.51 126.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balancer®</td>
<td>11 0.1 65 98 27 59 7 2 0 4</td>
<td>0.027 -0.18 28 0.42 0.23 -0.03 46.94 73.38 180.65</td>
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Gelbvieh genetics bring many vital traits to the table, including growth, muscling, milk production, and fertility. These traits are in high demand, particularly to help improve the efficiency of beef production and to reduce the cost of beef for consumers. Balancer cattle offer the option of having a bull battery made up only of Balancer bulls, allowing producers to take advantage of retained heterosis.

– Dr. Jason Ahola, Colorado State University

Open cows are costly. The younger they exit the herd for not getting pregnant the more they cost a rancher. It’s expensive to replace opens. Our Gelbvieh and Balancer cows get bred and continue getting bred compared to our other breeds. That helps us make money.

– Scott Starr, Stapleton, NE

$Cow will serve producers in selecting bulls that will sire daughters with stayability and reproductive efficiency as well as other traits that lead to profitability in a production system. By selecting on $Cow, cattle producers will make genetic improvement on economically relevant traits leading to improved maternal productivity.

– Kari White, American Gelbvieh Association

We believe Gelbvieh bulls and females are the complete package for commercial producers, offering calving ease, growth, milk, and retail yield.” – Dave Judd, Pomona, KS

“Commercial cattle producers must realize that no single breed excels in all areas that affect profitability. Breed combinations can be engineered to accommodate environmental constraints and meet marketing objectives.” – Matt Spangler, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

“Growth and carcass merit equal profitability. On average, our Balancer steers will grade 85% Choice or better with an 854 pound carcass weight.” – Dustin Rippe, Hubbell, NE

“At Spade Ranch, we use Balancer females because of their tremendous stayability and maternal traits, allowing those females to thrive on limited resources. We believe in the advantages and necessity of crossbreeding to capitalize on maternal heterosis.” – Wesley Welch, Lubbock, TX

“Using Balancer bulls has really worked well for us. The Gelbvieh x Angus breeds complement each other very well. By using Gelbvieh influenced genetics, we have increased our weaning weights, added value to our heifers and still get a premium from our steer calves.” – Gale Rippey, Galax, VA

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