

# Pork Checkoff Funds Study On Determining Carcass Value

DES MOINES, IA — A new study funded by the Pork Checkoff to help producers find the highest value for their pigs compares carcass measurement systems to show which type of carcasses are overvalued or undervalued.

Dr. Rodger Johnson, University of Nebraska, presented the information recently at the Estimating Whole Hog Value Symposium in Des Moines.

"Understanding carcass measurement systems is valuable in matching types of pigs with the system that best evaluates their amount of lean," said Johnson. "Marketing pigs is a major challenge for pork producers. Carcass weight, backfat and/or loin depth measurements typically determine the value of their pigs."

This Pork Checkoff-funded study developed new fat-free lean

prediction equations for procedures used in the industry. With more producers involved in cooperative marketing groups and producer-owned packing plants, the need for unbiased lean meat yield predictions is crucial to plan meat sales, according to Johnson.

The study evaluated more than 1,000 carcasses via six different procedures that packers use to value carcasses. Fat-free lean

composition was evaluated by: carcass 10th rib backfat and loin area; last rib backfat; Fat-O-Meater, an optical probe measuring backfat and loin area; the Carcass Value Technology System, an automatic and computerized backfat and loin ultrasonic scanner, Ultraform, a non-invasive ultrasonic scanner; and live 10th rib backfat and loin area scan. Estimations from these procedures were compared to actual fat-free lean as measured and calculated from 10 carcass separation end points, then expressed as a percentage of carcass weight.

Through the procedures, regression equations were developed to predict fat-free lean from the six different carcass measurement systems used in current harvest systems. The most accurate equations include backfat and loin area carcass measurements at the 10th rib, and the live animal scan that also includes 10th rib backfat and loin area, giving a fat-free lean estimate within 3.1 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively, when compared with actual calculations.

Measurement systems using loin depth were less accurate than those using loin area. Measurements of mid-line carcass backfat were the least accurate.

"The project includes carcass separation data from numerous Checkoff-funded programs, from the National Barrow Show Sire Progeny Test in 1996 and 2000, to the Quality Lean Growth Modeling Project and the Genetics of Lean Efficiency Project," said Phil Howerton, a producer from Chilhowee, Mo., and chair of the Pork Checkoff Industry. "This study can really become a benefit to a number of producers, should they decide to take a heightened interest in the value of their hogs. Understanding packer value matrices can lead to improved marketing strategies, and perhaps improved profits."

Proceedings from the Estimating Whole Hog Value Symposium will soon be available from the National Pork Board. Contact 800-456-PORK for details, or go to [www.porkboard.org](http://www.porkboard.org).

## American Angus Association Sees Growth In 2002

ST. JOSEPH, Mo. — The American Angus Association's fiscal year, which ended September 30, showed growth in all major areas of business for 2002, including its entities Angus Productions Inc. and Certified Angus Beef (CAB) LLC. Registrations of Angus cattle totaled 281,965 and CAB estimates 540 million pounds of fresh and value-added products sold.

Registrations of Angus cattle reached 281,965, an increase of nearly four percent for the year. Transfers for the same period, which represent sales of cattle to new owners, were 164,603, a 3.5 percent increase from fiscal 2001 as well.

Sales of Angus cattle for the year were steady or up in all areas. Reported figures include a total of 553 Angus sales, including consignment, production and dispersal, which were attended by regional managers representing the Association. Average prices included females, \$2,474 per head, and bulls, \$2,358 per head, with a total average for all lots of \$2,402.

A total of 2,663 new regular members joined the Association during the year, an increase of 3 percent from fiscal 2001. New junior memberships for the year totaled 1,450.

For the third year in a row, sales of Certified Angus Beef products passed the half billion pounds mark, maintaining the CAB position as the largest breed-specific branded beef program in the world. Projected annual sales of 540 million pounds were reported. O

f that total, retail licensees sold a projected 292 million pounds, which represents more than half of the total volume for the program, while food service licensees sold a projected 167 million pounds. International licensees contributed a projected 70 million pounds to total sales.

Value-added products accounted for nearly 12 million pounds of total sales, an increase of 25 percent from fiscal 2001.

More than 12 million head of cattle were visually identified as being eligible for CAB. Of those cattle, 2.1 million head met Certified Angus Beef product specifications for a 17.1 percent acceptance rate.

Association members continue to build upon the world's largest database of beef cattle per-

### Brazilian Angus Association Launches Angus Plus Program

DENTON, Texas — The Brazilian Angus Association (ABA) has successfully launched Angus Plus in Brazil. Following the Red Angus Association of America's (RAAA) introduction of Angus Plus in the United States, the ABA announced plans to incorporate a similar program into their registry.

The two associations have launched an advertising campaign targeted at central Brazil that promotes crossbreeding Angus Plus and Red Angus on Nelore cows, which are the predominant breed in the region. In addition, the RAAA and ABA have funded research aimed at developing EPD base and scale adjustments, which will give the two associations the ability to directly compare EPDs.

Angus Plus are Angus/Zebu derivative cattle that are a minimum of 50% Angus (red or black), with the remaining percentage being Zebu.

According to Dr. Bob Hough, Executive Secretary of the RAAA, "By not having a fixed percentage of Zebu influence, Angus Plus can be custom blended to meet customers' needs with the goal of having as little ear as necessary. The ABA and the RAAA are extremely excited about the Angus Plus program, and believe that it will help spread Angus genetics into regions that require Zebu influence in the cattle to achieve the necessary level of heat tolerance."

formance records by submitting data at record levels. The breed improvement department received records from more than 8,000 herds. The total number of records received was up 3.4 percent, which included 291,320 birth, 283,816 weaning, and 141,807 yearling weights.

The use of ultrasound technology to gather body composition measurements on cattle continued to increase as well, with records on more than 85,000 animals reported, a 24 percent increase from fiscal 2001. These records were submitted by more than 2,000 herds, which reflects a 19 percent increase in participation.

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