

# Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association

Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association—Productivity and Quality



### Upcoming events:

- January 12, 14, 19, 21—Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Program Webinar Internet-based Certification and Live Chat, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.
- January 20—Mississippi BCIA Spring Bull Sale nomination deadline
- February 12—Mississippi BCIA Annual Membership meeting, Jackson, MS, 1:00 p.m.
- March 4—Hinds CC Bull Test Sale and Mississippi BCIA Spring Bull Sale, Hinds Community College Bull Sale Facility, Raymond, MS
- March 18-20—MSU Artificial Insemination School, Mississippi State, MS
- April 6—Cattlemen's Exchange Feeder Calf Board Sale, Winona, MS
- April 16—Beef Cattle Boot Camp, Prairie Research Unit, Prairie, MS, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- April 17—Beef Cattle Boot Camp, Brown Loam Station, Raymond, MS, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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## Mississippi BCIA Seeking Bull Sale Nominations for Spring Sale

Mississippi remains an excellent local source of quality herd sires. The Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association (BCIA) Bull Sale program encourages production and identification of genetically superior bulls by purebred breeders and purchase and use of these bulls by purebred and commercial producers. It promotes the advantages of purchasing breed-leading genetics and environmentally-adapted bulls locally.

Starting in 2008, Mississippi BCIA hosted a Spring bull sale on the first Thursday in March in conjunction with the Hinds Community College Bull Test Sale. The Mississippi BCIA is pleased to continue to offer this spring bull marketing opportunity. The Hinds Bull Test/Spring Mississippi BCIA Bull Sale partnership has been a great success.

Preparation is now underway for the Spring 2010 Mississippi BCIA Bull Sale to be held on March 4, 2010 at 12:00 noon at the Hinds Community College Sales Facility in Raymond, Mississippi. This sale will once again be held in conjunction with the Hinds Community College Bull Test Sale on the traditional Hinds Bull Test sale date.

Current bull sale information is posted on the BCIA website at [msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/bcia\\_bullsale.html](http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/bcia_bullsale.html).

The Rules and Regulations and nomination form are available on this website.

The Spring 2010 sale 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. In addition, a live Internet streaming video of the sale will be available on sale day along with a sale preview video posted the day before the sale.

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 **January 20, 2010**. 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 requirements or past results, please call your local Extension Service office or contact Jane Parish at 662-325-7466 or [jparish@ads.msstate.edu](mailto:jparish@ads.msstate.edu).

**Mississippi BCIA  
Spring Bull Sale  
Nomination  
Deadline**

**January 20, 2010**



**Two Traditions of Excellence  
One Premier Bull Source  
Hinds CC Bull Test Sale  
MBCIA Spring Bull Sale  
Thursday, March 4, 2010 • 12:00 Noon**



*"...Bull selection presents an important opportunity to enhance the profitability of the beef production enterprise. For several reasons, bull selection is one of the most important producer decisions and, as such, requires advance preparation and effort to be successful."*  
— National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium, Beef Sire Selection Manual

## Master Cattle Producer Online Training Available



The Master Cattle Producer training is available online at <http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mcp>

The Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Program began in 2006 as a comprehensive training offered by the Mississippi State University Extension Service in major beef cattle production topic areas. The 8-session interactive course is designed for persons interested in learning more about improving beef cattle production and marketing practices. This training complements in-depth subject matter trainings such as short courses. Training focuses on improving overall management and decision-making skills and developing a broad beef cattle production knowledge base.

The Master Cattle Producer Program was updated in 2009 with new course materials and format including Internet-based training modules to meet the needs of persons wanting to complete the training at their own pace and schedule. Training currently consists of 8 modules in beef cattle production subject areas. Producers must successfully review all course materials and complete the exams for all 8 training topics to be eligible for Master Cattle Producer certification. Beef cattle producers enrolled in the Master Cattle Producer program complete approximately 24 hours of training in the following subjects: 1) beef cattle nutrition, 2) forage systems, 3) beef cattle reproduction, 4) breeding and genetics, 5) economics and marketing, 6) herd health and handling, 7) beef end product, and 8) Beef Quality Assurance (BQA).

The Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Program Internet-based training modules are online at [msucares.com/livestock/beef/mcp](http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mcp). Course participants can view online training modules and download training materials free of charge. Alternately, participants completing the program can receive printed course materials, a metal farm sign, Master Cattle Producer cap, and certificate of completion for a course fee of \$75.

Each online module consists of a pdf file with approximately 70 to 80 slides with associated scripts. The BQA training module is additionally offered as a video-based training via MediaSite. The BQA video training consists of 5 MediaSite presentations including: Mississippi BQA Program introduction, targeted breeding, responsible culling,

proper management, and Mississippi BQA Program conclusions. These video presentations include a speaker addressing Mississippi BQA Program topics utilizing the BQA program display booths. A Microsoft PowerPoint slide show runs simultaneously on the computer screen and corresponds to the video presentation. In January 2010, all 8 training modules will include the video-based training option.

The training materials cite current Mississippi State University Extension Service publications as supporting references and contain information on how to access those publications on the Internet at [msucares.com/livestock/beef/beefpubs.html](http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/beefpubs.html). These reference materials contain detailed information beyond what is covered in the Master Cattle Producer training slides. Contact information for the Extension Beef Cattle Specialists is also included in the training materials to encourage course participants to seek answers to any questions they may have when reviewing training materials.

The examination for each training topic is an interactive pdf form containing 15 multiple-choice questions derived from the training materials. The examinations can be e-mailed directly to the Extension Beef Cattle Specialist administering the program by clicking the "E-mail form" button on the form. These forms can also be saved and then e-mailed or printed and then faxed or mailed to the program administrator. Participants must answer a minimum of 12 out of 15 (80 percent) questions correctly to successfully complete a particular examination and receive credit for the associated training module. Examinations may be taken multiple times if needed to pass them.

Though the majority of past and present participants in the Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Program are Mississippi beef cattle producers, Mississippians from other segments of the beef cattle industry, such as feed retailers, as well as out-of-state beef cattle producers participate in the program. A live Internet-based Master Cattle Producer webinar training is scheduled for 4 evenings in January 2010 for anyone interested in the program. The webinar schedule is:

*"...The Master Cattle Producer training focuses on improving overall management and decision-making skills by developing a broad knowledge base."*



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Send questions or comments to Jane Parish or Justin Rhinehart, Extension Beef Specialists, Mississippi State University Extension Service



Mississippi State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or group affiliation, age, disability, or veteran status.

**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 or \$100 life-time dues payable to Mississippi BCIA should be mailed to:

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

## It Takes Good Bulls to Produce Good Feeder Calves

It should be no mystery that bull selection can “make or break” a calf crop and the genetic future of a cow herd. Buying a bull should not be considered as just another operating cost but rather as an investment in product quality. So, when selecting new sires, think more about what is needed rather than what can be afforded. Then, look for bulls that will provide what is needed at a reasonable price.

The best way to think about sire cost is to consider it in terms of cost per pregnancy rather than focusing on the initial lump-sum value paid for the bull. Most estimates for **cost per pregnancy** for differently valued bulls, including maintenance costs and depending on the number of cows exposed per year, are as follows:

Cows Exposed Year	Purchase Price (\$)					
	1,500	1,700	2,000	2,300	2,500	3,000
15	53.27	58.24	65.69	73.13	78.10	90.51
20	39.96	43.68	49.26	54.85	58.57	67.88
25	31.96	34.94	39.41	43.88	46.86	54.30
30	26.64	29.12	32.84	36.57	39.05	45.25
35	22.83	24.96	28.15	31.34	33.47	38.79
40	19.98	21.84	24.63	27.42	29.29	33.94
50	15.98	17.47	19.71	21.94	23.43	27.15

Purchase price certainly has an effect on the price per pregnancy but it is also dependent on the number of cows that bull can service per year. More importantly, the added cost of each pregnancy from a more valuable bull is only as high as \$38 and as low as \$11 (depending on the number of cows exposed). Assuming that the more valuable bull carries that higher purchase price because it is genetically superior for traits that increase the value of feeder calves, the added cost per pregnancy should be offset by increased revenue from an improved calf crop.

Consider an example where two bulls differ in the expected average weaning weight of their calves (as projected by their weaning weight EPDs) by 20 pounds. The bull expected to sire heavier calves costs \$2,000 while the bull with a lower weaning weight EPD costs \$1,500. This difference in purchase price translates into an extra \$5.32/pregnancy if the bulls are to cover 35 cows per year. However, the expected return for the improved genetics (all else being equal) would be more than \$19 more per calf at weaning on a \$1/pound market (adjusted for price slide). That leaves a net gain of about \$14/calf for improved weaning weight genetics at an initial extra cost of \$500.

These types of examples are plentiful in popular press and should only be considered “cow math”, albeit very precise cow math, that can give an idea of how purchasing a better bull can increase the value of feeder calves. The real proof can be seen on the ranches and farms of progressive cattle producers that have made the decision to invest in superior genetics that can be sourced from Mississippi seedstock producers.