



- June 16—Warm Season Forage Field Day, Starkville
- June 16—Beef Cattle Health Field Day—Brown Loam Exp. Station, Raymond
- August 3-4—Stockmanship & Stewardship Conf., Starkville
- August 7—Homeplace Feeder Calf Board Sale, Hattiesburg
- August 26—Southern Producers Replacement Heifer Sale, Hattiesburg,
- October 26-28 - Mississippi State University Artificial Insemination School, MSU
- November 4—Fall BCIA Bull and Heifer Sale, Raymond

#### Inside this issue:

Genetics of Horns	2
Deep South Stocker Conf.	3
Management Calendar	4
MBCIA Membership	4

# MISSISSIPPI

# BCIA

BEEF CATTLE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

## The Road to Improvement

**T**he 2017 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Meeting and Research Symposium was held on May 31-June 3 in Athens, Georgia. The conference began with the 3rd Annual Young Producers Symposium—an idea that came to reality at the BIF Conference that we hosted in Biloxi. Attendees heard from Kevin and Lydia Yon of Yon Family Farms, our very own Dr. Curt Lacy, and Beef Magazine’s Amanda Radke. The message was clear, there are many opportunities for young people to enter the cattle industry. The Yons’ discussed how it takes a lot of grit, determination, and persistence to be successful in the beef business. My favorite quote was from Kevin, “Where you need to be, might not be home.” Dr. Lacy reminded us all to know your costs of production and budget accordingly. He talked about several tools that producers can utilize to create a farm plan. One in particular that I cannot wait to try out is from

the University of Minnesota—check it out at [agplan.umn.edu](http://agplan.umn.edu). I had the opportunity to hear Amanda Radke at the 2016 Mississippi Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference. Her enthusiasm and passion for the beef industry is contagious. The Young Producer’s Symposium reminded me that there are many opportunities in our industry to be involved. Whether its production, education, service, or simply consuming beef, we all play a vital role.

The theme for Thursday morning centered around the “Current Value and Future Promise of Genomics for Beef Improvement”. For me the take home

message is that we have several tools in our toolbox to breed better animals. As a breeder, you can be more efficient in your predictions if the tools are used together. We can improve the accuracy on young bulls with genetic analyses, but phenotypic information is still very pertinent to genetic evaluations. A big highlight from Friday was the Awards Ceremony. Megehee Cattle Company, owned by Jacob and Martha Megehee of Macon, was selected to be added to the BIF Commercial Producer Honor Roll of Excellence. Congratulations!



Pictured (L to R): Cobie Rutherford, Maria Megehee, Jacob Megehee, Martha Megehee, and Brandi Karisch.

As the program continued on Friday, the General Session revolved around putting our methods into practice. The principles of record keeping, data collection, selection of sires and females, and crossbreeding systems were among the topics discussed.

Over the next few months, look to the BCIA Newsletter to recap some of the more important sessions from the conference. It was a pleasure to be able to represent the Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association at these meetings. You can find proceedings from the 2017 BIF Conference at [www.bifconference.com](http://www.bifconference.com).

# The Economic Benefits of Synchronized Artificial Insemination

by Troy Smith, Angus Media field editor

The disciplined application of estrus synchronization and artificial insemination (AI) can have a lasting economic advantage. University of Tennessee Reproductive Physiologist Justin Rhinehart thinks these complementary technologies would be more widely used if commercial cow-calf producers understood how adoption could impact profitability.

“Estrus synchronization and AI can improve both short-term and long-term profitability,” Rhinehart told an audience gathered for the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Research Symposium and Convention hosted May 31-June 3. Rhinehart’s presentation was part of the National Association of Animal Breeders (NAAB) Symposium convened in conjunction with the BIF Convention in Athens, Ga.

Rhinehart lamented the fact that fewer than 10% of all beef producers utilize estrus synchronization and AI. Among the reasons many producers say they shy away from the reproductive technologies are perceptions regarding labor, time and facility requirements, as well as the overall cost. There was a time that synchronized AI typically was more expensive than natural service. However, considering current bull purchase and maintenance costs, Rhinehart advises producers to re-evaluate the alternative.

“With an 85% pregnancy rate (about the national average) using a \$5,000 bull, natural service costs \$60 to \$70 per pregnancy — about the same as synchronized AI,” stated Rhinehart. “The cost is similar when calculated on an equivalent production basis.”

Rhinehart said producers implementing synchronized AI can realize a short-term economic impact of up to \$50 per cow as a result of having more calves born early in the calving season, increased uniformity in the calf crop and a heavier average weaning weight. The postpartum interval for cows can also be reduced.

Long-term profitability can be improved through disciplined application of synchronized AI over time. Rhinehart said it usually takes five years to see the impact of maternal genetics through retention of AI-sired heifers. At the same time, producers can work toward the realistic goal of increasing the pounds of calf weaned per pound of cow exposed.

Rhinehart cited case studies illustrating how producers

using synchronized AI over a period of nine years, applied selection pressure to increase the average adjusted weaning weight of their calves while, at the same time, selecting for reduced mature weight of females retained as replacements.

“It is possible to select for heavy calves at weaning and lower mature cow weights, simultaneously,” stated Rhinehart. “That results in increased pounds of calf weaned per pounds of cow exposed. It is a realistic goal.”

This article is reprinted with permission from [www.BIFconference.com](http://www.BIFconference.com), the Angus Media’s online coverage site of the 2017 Beef Improvement Federation Research Symposium and Annual Meeting.

## HERD HEALTH FIELD DAY Brown Loam Experiment Station June 16, 2017

### Schedule

8:30 – 8:55	Registration
8:55 – 9:00	Welcome Remarks – Dr. Sherry Surette, Head, CMREC
9:00 – 9:30	Veterinary Feed Directive Regulations – Dr. Carla Huston, MSU
9:30 – 10:00	Advantages and Disadvantages of Artificial Insemination – Dr. Melissa Mason, ASU
10:00 – 10:20	Break and transport to corral area
10:20 – 10:50	Herd Health BMPs – Dr. Carla Huston, MSU
10:50 – 11:20	Cattle Market Valuing – Cobie Rutherford, MSU and
11:20 – 11:50	Bull EPDS – Cobie Rutherford, MSU and Dr. Rhonda Vann, BLBES
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 1:30	1. Grazing Management and Managing Legumes in Pastures.
	2. Soil Health in Pastures and the Role of Cover Crops – Mac Macoon, BLBES
1:30 – 2:30	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Technology in Beef Production - Dennis Lott, HCC

*The field day is free, but preregistration is required for a lunch count. MSU partnered with the Alcorn State University Extension Program and Hinds Community College for the event. To register or for more information, call 601-857-5952.*

# STOCKMANSHIP STEWARDSHIP

## AUGUST 3-4 STARKVILLE, MS

*Join us for hands-on demonstrations, an industry trade show, and stocker tour!*

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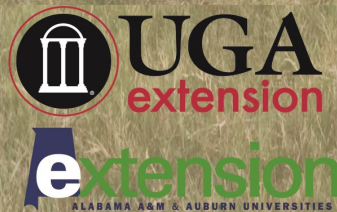


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# June 2017 – Management Calendar

## GENERAL

Control summer weeds and brush. Manage pastures to rotationally graze young growth and harvest excess for hay. Overgrown pastures may need to be clipped. Target the production of high quality hay by harvesting bermudagrass hay at 4-5 week intervals, weather permitting, to keep standing hay crops from becoming too mature and fibrous. Fertilize hay fields between cuttings or on a regular interval to replace soil nutrients removed by hay production and improve hay yield and quality. Have proper free-choice minerals and fresh water available for cattle at all times, checking them often. Make sure adequate shade is available for cattle in the summer months. Continue with fly control program, and watch for cancer eye, pink-eye, and foot rot. Maintain a complete herd health program in consultation with a veterinarian including internal and external parasite control and vaccinations. Keep good production and financial records.

## SPRING CALVING

Spot check cows and heifers to see if most are bred. 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. Remove bulls 283 days prior to the end of the desired calving season (before June 20 to end the calving season in March). Keep bulls in a small pasture traps with

effective fences. Feed bulls to start the next breeding season in good condition. Complete management practices for late calves, and castrate & dehorn any calves missed at birth.

## FALL CALVING

Make sure fences where weaned calves will be placed are in good shape, and repair fences where needed. Wean calves based on market and pasture conditions using weaning strategies that minimize calf stress. Record weaning weights and cow body condition scores as measures of animal and herd performance and nutritional status. Calculate and evaluate 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. Develop plans for marketing cull cows based on market conditions and cow body condition. Select replacement heifers based on performance. Plan a heifer development program based on nutritional resources and gain needed to reach target breeding weights. Explore various calf marketing options to determine what best fits your operation. Prepare for special feeder calf sales. To precondition calves, vaccinate for respiratory diseases (IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV, and others upon veterinary advise), and wean for at least 45 days before shipment. Train calves to eat from a bunk and drink from a water trough during the preconditioning period. Maintain bulls in small pasture traps with adequate nutrition to be in good body condition at the start of the next breeding season.


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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*