

Bull Management

By

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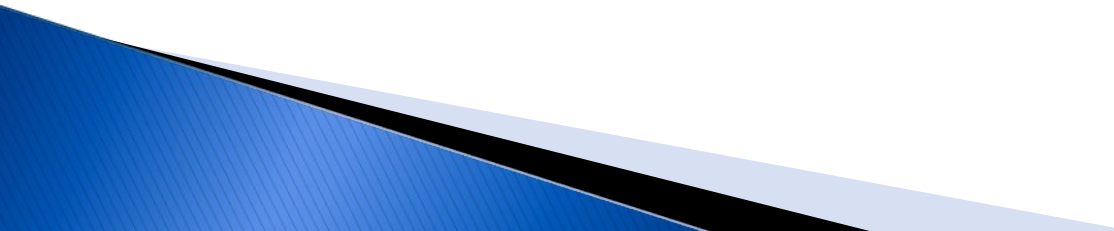
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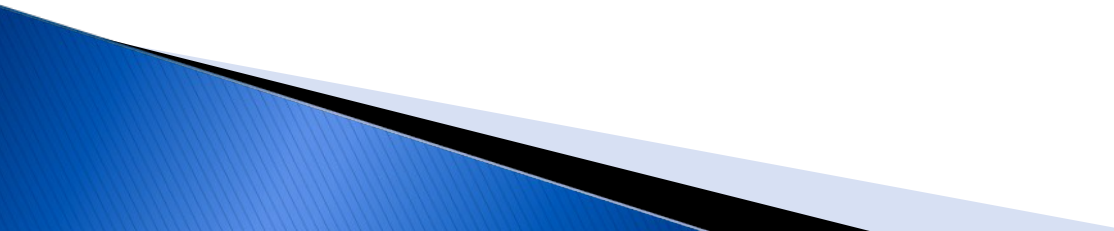
Points to Consider for Selecting a Bull

- ▶ 1. Structural Soundness
- ▶ 2. Performance Records
- ▶ 3. Expected Progeny Differences
- ▶ 4. Acclimation to the Environment
- ▶ 5. Other Selection Considerations
 - ▢ **Temperament**
 - ▢ **cow's mature bodyweight and frame size**
 - ▢ **Breed type**
- ▶ 6. Breeding soundness evaluation (BSE)

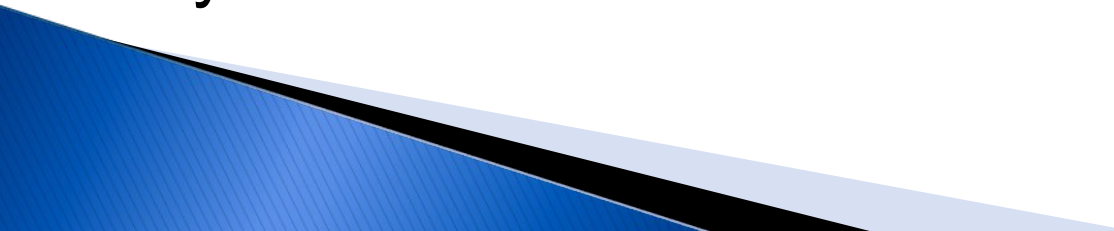
1. Structural Soundness

- ▶ Structural soundness and conformation is an important factor because the bull must be physically able to service cows during breeding.
 - ▶ Therefore sound feet and legs, particularly hind legs, are critical for a long service life of the bull.
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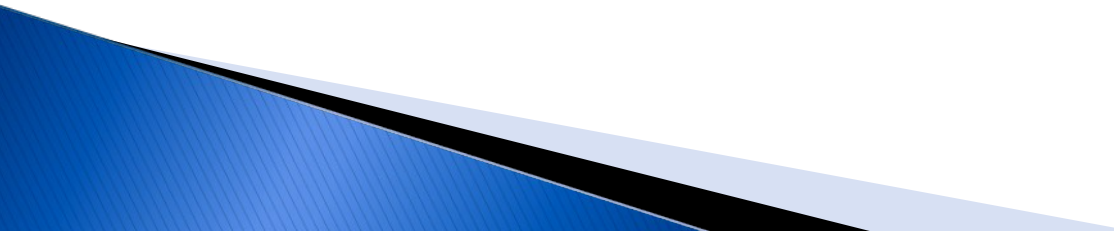
2. Performance Records

- ▶ If the bull is purchased through a bull test sale, how well did he perform
 - ▶ What is the performance or record of the bull's siblings or half-siblings?
 - ▶ This information can be gathered by examining his pedigree.
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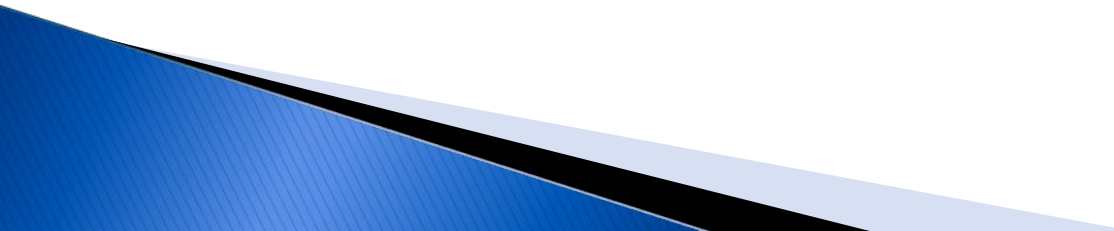
3. Expected Progeny Differences

- ▶ The EPD's that should be considered most highly when selecting a bull are calf growth and potential carcass traits.
 - ▶ Growth trait EPDs include calf weaning and yearling weight.
 - ▶ Carcass traits are important because they are used to determine the value of a carcass.
 - ▶ Carcass trait EPDs that are carcass weight, backfat thickness, ribeye area, marbling, and retail yield.
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4. Acclimation to the Environment

- ▶ Find a bull that is acclimated to your ranch's climate and management conditions.
 - ▶ The lack of adaptation leads to poor performance of bulls both physically and during the breeding season.
 - ▶ However during the off-season they should be able to maintain their condition without additional supplementation.
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5. Other Selection Considerations


- ▶ Temperament is an important trait . Calves should be calm and even tempered so that they will not be concerned with human interaction or equipment in their environment.
 - ▶ Consider the cow's mature body weight and frame size and the desired calf characteristics when selecting a bull.
 - ▶ Breed type is an important consideration for the bull and the resulting mating with the cow herd.
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Breeding soundness evaluation (BSE)

- ▶ Breeding Soundness Examination (BSE) performed at least 60 days prior to turning bulls in with the cow herd.
- ▶ All purchased bulls should have passed a BSE prior to sale.
- ▶ After the first breeding season, a BSE is not necessary again until the bull is approximately 6 to 7 years of age.

A BSE consists of four basic steps:

- ▶ Visual assessment of the feet, legs, eyes, teeth and external genitalia;
 - ▶ Palpation of the accessory sex glands (prostate and seminal vesicles);
 - ▶ Measurement of the scrotum as well as palpation of the testis and epididymis; and
 - ▶ Collection and microscopic evaluation of a semen sample.
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- ▶ Reproductive organs should be examined for abnormalities and indications of disease.
 - ▶ Both testicles should be normal in size and consistency, and hang freely from the body.
 - ▶ In younger bulls, there is a direct relationship between testicular size and sperm production, testicular firmness, semen quality, and age of puberty of female progeny.
 - ▶ This is important for selection of younger and sexually earlier maturing replacements.
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Factors determined No. of bulls needed:

- ▶ Bull maturity and development
- ▶ Breeding management program.
- ▶ The bull's temperament, health, and body condition at time of breeding
- ▶ The area size, topography, carrying capacity of pasture
- ▶ Size of the herd .
- ▶ Bulls should be at least 15 months old and well-grown for their age (1100 lb) before being placed into service.
- ▶ Yearling bulls should not be exposed to more than 12 to 15 cows during the breeding season.
- ▶ Bulls should be 24 to 30 months of age and well-grown before they are allowed to run with 25 to 30 cows during the breeding season.