

eBEEF Newsletter

No. 8: June 2023

What's happening with eBEEF?

Since the last newsletter (September 2021), we have had a few changes in the make-up of the eBEEF team. We welcomed Dr. Troy Rowan, University of Tennessee and Dr. Randie Culbertson, Iowa State University (See bios below) and a few of our founding members (Drs. Bob Weaber, Jared Decker and Megan Rolf) have moved into the emeritus category. We have continued to be busy in our roles with the Beef Improvement Federation with several members serving on the board and providing leadership for several technical groups. The eBEEF team is also a major contributor to the BIF Guidelines Committee and was instrumental in the transition of the guidelines to a wiki format. As a reminder, all the information on the eBEEF.org website is meant for the public and we encourage its duplication and usage. We are continually trying to expand our library of videos that deal with frequently asked questions (FAQs), conference videos and tools; your ideas and suggestions are certainly welcome!

In this newsletter you will find:

- New Members
- Current Event
- Fact sheet update
- Video update
- Beef Improvement Federation Review



Adding to the eBEEF Team

Dr. Troy Rowan, University of Tennessee



Troy Rowan is an Assistant Professor and State Extension Specialist at the University of Tennessee's Department of Animal Science. Troy grew up in Southwest Iowa on a small seedstock Charolais operation. He received an undergraduate degree from Creighton University in Omaha, NE, and a Ph.D. in Genetics from the University of Missouri. He joined the faculty at UT in January of 2021, where his research uses genomics to understand and predict complex traits in beef cattle. He is particularly interested in local adaptation, heterosis, novel phenotype creation, and genetic approaches to increasing beef cattle sustainability. His work aims to deliver tangible solutions to U.S. beef cattle producers while answering fundamental biological questions.

Troy's extension work supports the Tennessee Master Beef Producer Program and other national organizations (BIF, NCBA, US Roundtable for Sustainable Beef). Troy is excited to contribute to the eBEEF team and serve as a resource for producers in Tennessee and across the U.S.

Dr. Randie Culbertson, Iowa State University



Originally from New Mexico, Randie Culbertson spent her childhood on the family's cattle ranch located in Northern New Mexico. She later attended New Mexico State University, obtaining a bachelor's degree in Animal Science. After completing her degree at NMSU, Randie moved to Colorado, where she worked in the equine industry for over ten years. In 2011, Randie pursued her graduate degrees at Colorado State University, earning her M. S. and Ph. D. in Animal Breeding and Genetics. While pursuing her graduate degrees, Randie's research interests

focused on addressing questions facing the beef industry. Her doctoral research focused on feed intake in beef cattle and, specifically, the implementation of genetic improvement. During the last nine months at CSU, Randie managed and coordinated a USDA grant project examining late feedlot death in cattle. This project examined the effects of pulmonary arterial pressure (PAP) on the performance and survivability of fed steers and began to answer some questions about this growing concern. Upon completing her Ph. D. in 2019, she accepted a position as the lead geneticist with the American Simmental Association and International Genetic Solutions (IGS), where she worked on challenges to conducting the largest multi-breed genetic evaluation for beef cattle and was involved in the development and validation of new EPDs. Last November, Randie joined the faculty at Iowa State University as the Cow-Calf Extension Specialist.



Helping the Beef Industry make Profitable Selection Decisions

Matt Spangler

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Economic selection indexes provide a means of comparing animals based on their genetic potential for profit. These tools are not new. The first published research paper on the topic in animals was published in the 1940s and U.S. beef breed associations began publishing selection indexes in the early 2000s. Despite their availability to beef producers, the uptake of selection indexes has been slow. Additionally, there are circumstances that vary among beef producers (breed choice, current herd performance, planning horizon, etc.) that can create differences on how traits should be optimally weighted in an economic index. Given this, a team of scientists developed a web-based decision support tool to construct economically optimal selection indexes using user inputs. This tool, iGENDEC, is now available through the Beef Improvement Federation (<https://beefimprovement.org/igendec>). Since BIF began hosting iGENDEC there have been over 30 users spanning 4 countries and including beef breed associations, commercial producers, seedstock producers, extension personnel, and classroom instructors. There is currently an annual fee for some users, but use for extension personnel is free and there is also a free 30-day trial version.



We have added 5 fact sheets to our library since the last newsletter, bringing the total number of available fact sheets to 35. Dr. Troy Rowan has written factsheets on [Total Herd Reporting](#), [Foot and Leg Trait EPDs](#) and [Beef Cattle Genetics Value-Added Programs](#), Dr. Randie Culbertson wrote a timely factsheet on [Beef on Dairy](#) and Dr. Darrh Bullock updated the breed comparison tables first created by Dr. Larry Cundiff which can be found in the factsheet [Comparison of Production Levels among US Beef Breeds](#). Please feel free to use any of these factsheets in your educational programs.



We currently have 173 videos of various formats in our YouTube library. These include answers to FAQs, introductions to factsheets, extension educational presentations and scientific presentations. These videos can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCw8zZL_EaBRC6Pa-4V0OYrA/videos.



Beef Improvement Federation Update

I hope you noticed that BIF has a new logo and they have also implemented a major change to their website (www.beefimprovement.org). The 2023 BIF Research Symposium will be held in Calgary, Alberta, Canada July 3-6 and details can be found at: <https://beefimprovement.org/2023-symposium/>. The major theme of this year's symposium is Precision Breeding. For information from past BIF Symposia please access the [Symposium Archive](#). BIF continues to update their [Guidelines for Uniform Beef Improvement Programs](#) in a wiki format.

More

Additional information continues to be added to the [website](#) so please come back often and see what is new!

