



## **AICA Spring 2025 Board Meeting Recap**

### **AccuSire Program**

The American-International Charolais Association (AICA) recently introduced the AccuSire Progeny Testing Program for 2025. This program offers AICA members the opportunity to enhance the accuracy of their genetics & EPDs through the collection of standardized ranch-level, feedlot, and harvest data. In collaboration with West Texas A&M University (WTAMU), sire owners can nominate bulls by contributing frozen semen, which will be used to breed cows in the WTAMU research herd in May. The resulting calves will undergo genotyping and be measured for a comprehensive range of phenotypic traits throughout their lifecycle, including:

- Birthweight, Weaning Weight, Yearling Weight, Carcass Ultrasound, Feed Intake, Foot Structure, Docility, Calf Vigor, Complete Harvest Records

By participating in this program, members can significantly increase the accuracy of their registered Charolais sires while gaining valuable insights into how their genetics perform throughout the beef production process. Data collection fees will apply, and the program will be limited to ten bulls in its inaugural year.

### **Pedigree Estimate EPD Policy**

The board reviewed and took input from the membership on the current policy, in which no EPDs will be displayed for traits in the case where both parents have pedigree estimate EPDs. It's important to note that data, either genomic or recorded phenotypic data, is essential to creating EPDs with the highest possible predictability; and that breeding cattle over multiple generations without data erodes predictability. For this reason, either genomic or submitted data is required on at least one of the parents before an animal can have EPDs displayed.

### **Genomic Credit Program**

Staff provided an update on the GCP, in which members can receive up to a \$20/sample rebate in exchange for contributing data records in properly formed contemporary groups in their choice of 8 traits. Each data submission creates a \$5 rebate, limit 4 per animal.

### **Skunk Tail Testing**

Staff provided an update on the Skunk Tail research project, including the genetic markers identified and modes of inheritance. Further validation across multiple bloodlines of cattle is currently being conducted, which will be followed by a test offering through AICA's genomic testing services.

### **Docility EPD**

A report was provided on the new docility EPD, which will be released in the next fall evaluation. Board and staff discussed more ways to collect additional records, noting that contemporary groups which all carry the same score are being excluded due to the need for describing the variance between genetic lines of cattle.

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### **Website Redesign**

Proposals were provided and a budget allocated to redesign [www.charolaisusa.com](http://www.charolaisusa.com). This project will take place through the summer, with a new site being launched this fall.

### **Branded Beef Initiative-Co-op Model**

A review was provided of a business model to create a branded beef program which is centered around a toll processing model & co-op model approach. The board voted to fund a feasibility study by Yield Solutions, which will include identifying co-op members such as breeders, cattle feeders, and commercial producers. This study will be completed mid-summer, and pending co-op member involvement, will launch shortly after.

### **Nutritive Value Project**

An overview was given of the Nutritive Value Project, including a finalized scope, traits measured, and timeline expectations for results. This planning and approach was well supported by retail consumer research conducted by the Ranch 2 Retail group, and can be utilized in an AICA branded beef initiative, established to supply cattle to retail beef programs, and to position the breed with a younger age demographic of beef consumer.

### **Grant Funding**

Updates were providing on non-traditional revenue, including grant funding, used to establish new projects and research to promote the breed.

### **EPD Modeling Projects**

This spring, AICA launched the Power of Yield study, in which EPD averages were used to create a profitability model comparison of the advantage of Charolais red meat yield in projected boxed beef and retail cut-out value. Updates were given on additional studies that will identify the profit projections of Charolais genetics at the cattle feeder, stocker operator and ranch level, as well as noting the value of heterosis and breed complementarity in terms of 2025 market economics.

### **USDA Live Animal Specs**

Staff provided updates on the progress since the inclusion in the RAAA Angus Live Animal spec, including communication with feeders, packers, and retail partners. Additionally, staff created a Live Animal Spec to create Charolais branded label claims, which centers on CharAdvantage enrollment to solidify the genetic verification of a Charolais feeder cattle supply-no matter is a Charolais dilution gene is present or not.

### **Profit Driver Program**

Staff provided an update on the Profit Driver program at Hy Plains Feedyard, noting the feed intake, water intake, conversion records during heat stress, nutritive value of product, and other research aspects of this program which also adds genomic and data records to increase sire EPD accuracy.

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### **Ranch 2 Retail Producer Program**

Plans were discussed for an additional feeder calf procurement program, which provides market premiums and the ability to forward contract calf pricing a year out from delivery.

### **AI Tools Pilot Phase**

Staff provided an overview of the pilot phase for this AI-driven feeder calf value pilot project, increasing premiums, harvest data, efficiency, and performance data-ultimately tying value back to AICA evaluation, securing the need for AICA registered bulls & providing operations revenue through CharAdvantage. Additional items in development are Carbon insetting premiums, health diagnostics, and future AI tools aimed at the seedstock sector as well as commercial.

### **Area Realignment**

The board reviewed and accepted a subcommittee report to make adjustments to the current area representation map, as well as set a policy to revisit this planning every 6 years. This realignment was based on representation of membership numbers, WHR enrollments and registrations on a state-by-state basis.

### **Legacy Breeder Award Program**

Staff highlighted a new membership program, which highlights membership milestones of 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60+ year dedication to the breed. Certificates will be mailed to award recipients, and a list was highlighted at the awards dinner.

### **AICA Commercial Producer of the Year**

Dearmont Ranch of Basett, Nebraska was awarded the AICA 2025 Commercial Producer of the Year. Nominated by the Nebraska Charolais Association, the Dearmont family has been utilizing Charolais bulls to add performance and power to their herd since the 1980's. Annually purchasing 20-30 bulls, they retain ownership as well as market calves through the Burwell Livestock Auction. Additionally, they market beef "direct to consumer" including NHTC, grass and corn fed lines of product. When asked why Charolais was selected for their operation, Wade Dearmont stated, "We really feel that the power, performance, and added weight per day of age that the Charolais breed adds to our calf crop is a big deal for our bottom line." He went on to state their belief in the breed was supported by seeing the benefits for feeders including better feed conversion, yield grade advantages, greater dispositions and a reduction in health problems. Congratulations to the Dearmont family, look for future videos highlighting their operation and the role of Charolais genetics in their profitability.

### **Summer Strategic Planning**

As a part of our efforts to maximize AICA membership value and the relevancy of Charolais genetics in the industry, staff will plan a summer strategy session with the members of the Long Range Planning Committee and Board. Membership ideas and input are always welcome, please contact staff to share any ideas on how we best position the breed for future growth.

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### **Other Membership Items**

AICA proudly inducted Bill Nottke and Floyd Wampler into the Hall of Fame, and will provide additional information about this honor in the Charolais Journal. Hall of Fame submissions are now being requested through the summer of 2025, please provide your nomination to your respective board member. Fall board meetings are scheduled for October 22-23, to be held in Kansas City.

More information on these and other meeting items will be provided in the next issue of the Charolais Journal, as well as posted at [www.charolaisusa.com](http://www.charolaisusa.com)