CHARACTERIZING FOOT SCORES IN MONTANA'S REGISTERED ANGUS CATTLE

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A research project in coordination with the American Angus Association and the Montana Angus Association

About the Project

BY: TAYLRE SITZ

Proper foot structure is crucial for cattle productivity and longevity. In coordination with the American Angus Association and the Montana Angus Association, our goal is to perform foot scores on 4000 head of cattle. We will ask breeders for electronic versions of registration numbers, tattoo numbers, and birthdates. We will work with producers to foot score cattle using the American Angus Association guidelines at normally-scheduled cattle working events such as collecting yearling weights, freeze branding, or AI-ing. Information will be given to producers upon completion of the evaluation for their personal use and submission to the Angus Association. All analysis will uphold the utmost confidentiality and anonymity. For example, if we were to compare sire lines, we would simply compare Sire Line A to Sire Line B. The implications of this research are that foot and claw EPDs will likely be affected by the increased number of foot score submissions associated with this project. We also believe that there are many opportunities with this project to educate producers on efficient methods of foot scoring, teaching producers who are not familiar with the AAA guidelines and foot scoring how to properly score feet, to provide data to Montana producers to make important management decisions, and to improve accuracy of foot and claw EPDs on Montana sire lines.

Highlights:

Foot and claw EPDs will likely be affected by the increased submissions due to this project.

25% of foot structure is heritability due to genetics, 75% due to environment

Scorers will follow the guidelines set forth by the American Angus Association

There is no charge to submit foot scores to American Angus Association

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

How to get involved with this project!

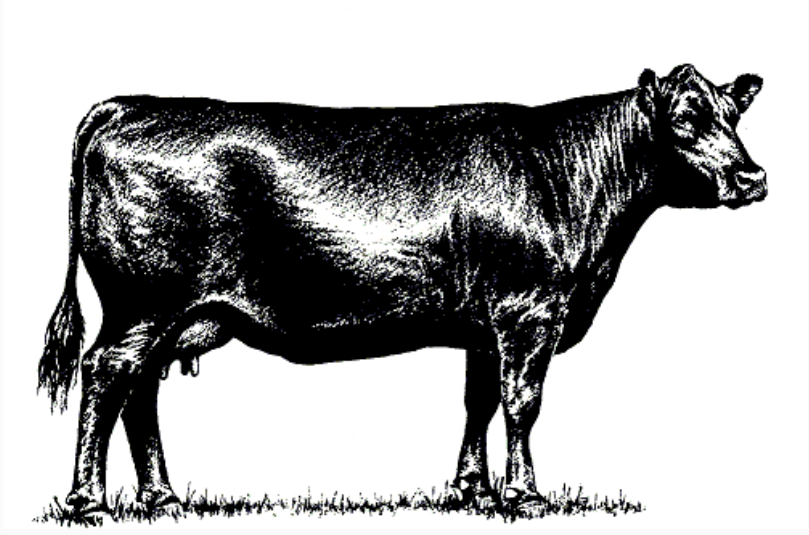
- Coordinate scheduling with Taylre Sitz
  - Taylre or a trained undergraduate student will work hard to find a time that works for you to come score feet.
  - Taylre's data collection period is Fall 2021 & Spring 2022 for her Master's program. Our goal is to continue this project into the future for new graduate students so if we cannot catch you this year, we will put you on the list for next time.

- Please send in registration numbers and tattoo numbers electronically ahead of time (at least 1 day prior) so that information can be formatted into the proper spreadsheet for the American Angus Association to receive scores and for the ease of the scorer

- Plan an area with a hard surface for animals to stand on for foot evaluation; scoring should NOT be done in the chute (animal should be standing naturally)
  - This can be ground that is sufficiently hard enough, rubber mats ahead of the chute, a concrete leadup, etc.

- Once data collection is complete, we will save a copy for the purpose of this research project and send a copy to you.

- Data will be formated for easy submission into the American Angus Association. We would be happy to help producers submit these scores if needed.



Contact Information:

To schedule a date for foot scoring or for more information, please contact Taylre Sitz.

Taylre Sitz
(406) 641 0807
taylreesitz@gmail.com

For further information, scheduling, and to speak with the advising professor, please contact Dr. Tim DelCurto.

Dr. Tim DelCurto, PhD
(406) 994 3708
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Opportunities:

- To determine efficient methods for conducting foot score evaluations on working registered Angus ranches
- Potential for teaching registered Angus producers in Montana how to properly analyze foot structure and score feet
- Improve EPD accuracy on Montana sires by providing additional phenotypic data
- Provide foot score information to producers such that they can make informed management decisions regarding foot structure
- Research into the future