Guide to Dairy Cattle Evaluation and Bull Selection
Building a Better Herd
Dairy Cattle Evaluation
Udder Depth

- Extremely Shallow
- Well Above Hocks
- Udder Above Hocks
- Udder At Hocks
- Extremely Deep
Rear Udder Width

- Extremely Wide
- Wide
- Intermediate Width
- Narrow
- Extremely Narrow
Rear Udder Height

- Extremely High
- High
- Intermediate Height
- Low
- Extremely Low
Teat Placement

- Teats on Inside of Quarters
- Close Teats
- Centrally Placed
- Wide Placement
- Teats on Outside of Quarters
Udder Cleft

Extremely Strong Cleft
Strong Cleft
Intermediate Cleft
Weak Cleft
Extremely Weak Cleft
Fore Udder Attachment

- Extremely Snug & Strong
- Strong
- Intermediate Strength
- Loose
- Extremely Loose, Broken
Teat Length

3 ¼ Inches or longer

≈2 ¾ inches

≈2 ¼ inches

≈1 ¾ inches

1 ¼ inches or shorter
Legs Side View

- Extremely Sickled
- Slightly Sickled
- Intermediate
- Slightly Posty
- Extremely Posty
Legs Rear View

- Extremely Straight
- Nearly Straight
- Slight Hock-in
- Definite Hock-in
- Extreme Hock-in
Foot Angle

Extremely Steep
Steep
Intermediate
Slightly Low
Extremely Low
Openness of Rib

Extremely Open Ribbed
Moderately Open Ribbed
Intermediate

Moderately Tight Ribbed
Extremely Tight Ribbed
Openness of Rib

Deep, Open Rib

Shallow, Tight Rib
Depth of Body

Extremely Deep Body

Deep Body

Intermediate Body Depth

Shallow Body

Extremely Shallow Body
Angularity

Extremely Dairy

Dairy

Intermediate

Coarse

Extremely Coarse
Strength

Extremely Strong & Wide

Strong

Intermediate

Narrow & Frail

Extremely Narrow & Frail
Rump Angle

Extremely Sloped  Moderate Slope  Slight Slope

Level Rump  High Pins
Rump Width

Extremely Wide

Wide

Intermediate Width

Slightly Narrow

Extremely Narrow
Bull Selection
WMS Audits

- Use the information from the genetic audits to evaluate the herd’s current status.
- Determine if the traits that are of greatest value to the customer are trending in the right direction.
- Set goals for future generations.
WMS Audits

PTA Fat

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Herd Trait Profile

Herd Trait Profile (Compared to Breed Average)

- Stature: 89.79
- Dairy Form: 93.20
- Strength: 91.70
- Body Depth: 89.71
- Rump Width: 95.90
- Rump Angle (Mid-Range Trait): 93.66
- Legs Rear View: 110.68
- Legs (Mid-Range Trait): 79.79
- Foot Angle: 108.50
- Fore Udder: 113.13
- Rear Udder Height: 111.99
- Rear Udder Width: 112.71
- Udder Support: 103.65
- Udder Depth: 101.79
- Front Teat Placement: 108.19
- Rear Teat Placement (Mid-Range Trait):
- Teat Length (Mid-Range Trait): 93.97
Herd Walk Through
How much time and money should you spend on each cow?

*Cow A

*Cow B
Breed each cow to the best available bull to improve the next generation!

Cow A
- Obvious mastitis problem (three quartered)
- Deep udder
- May not make it to next lactation
- Almost any bull will improve the next generation

Cow B
- Youthful udder
- Great production
- Good feet and legs
- High likelihood that this cow will calve again
- A good bull is needed to improve the next generation
Use the information from the herd walk through to identify physical strengths and weaknesses of the herd.

Some problems could be a result of management, while others could require genetic attention.

Discuss observations with the customer and sales rep!
So What is Ideal?

- This will be different for every market and every dairy.

- While you may not see a big change in one generation, keep in mind that these traits are cumulative and the impact of continued selection will become apparent over time.
Expanding and Targeting Sales Opportunities: Bull Segmentation
Creating Demand

- Most customers and sales reps will ask for:
  - Top bulls
  - Lower prices
- Are the top bulls the same for every herd?
- What can we do to get customers the genetics that they need?
Discover Genetic Goals

- Ask the right questions!
  - How is the farm paid for it’s milk?
  - What type of facilities do the cows live in?
  - How comfortable is the farmer with risk?
    - Genomic vs. proven vs. 97% reliable
  - Is there a market for surplus heifers?
  - What are the farmer’s breeding objectives?
  - Who is the best cow in the herd?
  - Why is she the best cow?
Design a Unique Herd Index

- Establish genetic goals with the farmer.
- Use or modify one of the existing indexes
- Create an index based on customer goals
- [www.wwsires.com](http://www.wwsires.com)
- Try different indexes until you get a group of bulls that makes sense for the herd.
Customized Sire Selection
# Selection Index

## Trait Selection and Weighting %

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Developing and Presenting a Targeted Genetic Package
Developing a Genetic Package

- Step 1 – Know what tools are available and how to use them so you do not miss key bulls.
- Step 2 – Understand the CUSTOMER’s goals.
- Step 3 – Focus on the CUSTOMER’s goals, not your own!
- Step 4 – Use the tools to identify bulls that will help the customer reach his/her goals.
Presenting a Genetic Package

- Step 1 – Become a trusted advisor for the customer and get buy-in from the sales rep.
- Step 2 – Prepare in advance.
- Step 3 – Present the genetic package.
  - Be ready for push-back!
    - Amend if necessary
- Step 4 – Follow-up!
Practice Makes Perfect

Assignment:

- Develop a bull package for the example customer.
- Use all of the tools available to you
  - WMS
  - WWS Indexes
  - Bull File
  - Create a Catalog
- Present your genetic offering to the group.
THANK YOU