AGRITECH ANALYTICS

5545 Avenida de los Robles
Visalia, CA 93291

Tel: (559) 738-5300 Fax: (559) 738-5321
www.agritech.com

Beef Sires included in ATA Service Sire Fertility Summary

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The use of beef sires on dairy cattle has become an integral part of the reproductive strategy in the management of many dairy herds. In almost a million breedings in the ATA dairy database from October 2018 through January 2019 over 20 percent of the A.I. breedings were to beef bulls.

Sexed semen has contributed to an excess of replacement heifers, so the popular approach has been to breed the poorer genetics in the dairy herd to beef semen. Various strategies exist including breeding older animals or younger animals of lower genetic merit to beef.

The markets for the dairy/beef cross tend to favor a black calf over the black and whites or colored breeds. But as producers gain experience in working with these beef sires, they come to realize that there is more to breeding with a beef sire than getting the cow pregnant and having a black calf.

Conception rates vary on beef sires as much as they do with dairy sires. And while there are many major factors that contribute to a successful pregnancy, the fertility of the service sire is part of that success.

With that in mind, ATA has received a number of inquiries about the fertility of beef sires used on dairy cows. In April 2019, ATA ran the first analysis of fertility of beef sires used on dairy cows. The same edits used on dairy bulls were applied to beef sires. While the April beef fertility summary was not published, it allowed us to evaluate the data.

With that in mind, AgriTech Analytics offers its first Service Sire Fertility Summary based on using beef sires on dairy cattle. While all beef breeds were a possibility, only Angus and Simental sires are included in the summary as they were the only ones that met the minimum number of services and herds to be included in the report.

We trust that you will find this data informative and we welcome your comments and/or suggestions to improve the quality of the data that we provide.