

Building a Better Steak



Sean McGrath, P.Ag.

What is Better?

- Tasty
- Tender
- Juicy
- Eye Appealing
- Consistent
- Safe
- Value for Money
- Profitable

Costs

- Variable Costs
 - Cow Maintenance (estimated at 60% of cost of production)
 - Feed
- Fixed Costs
 - Infrastructure
 - Processing

Value

Does it fit the box???

- Carcass Weight
- Yield
- Marbling
- Byproducts
- Tenderness?
- Others?



Carcass

- Age/Maturity
- Muscling
- Meat Quality (colour / texture)
- External Fat
- Marbling
- Yield – REA x Fat

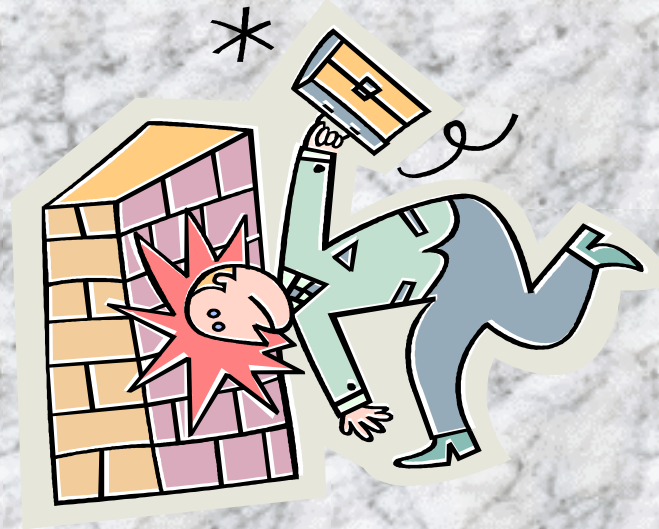


872G



Genetic Component

- h^2 is moderate to high (0.3 – 0.5)
- This means we can change carcass characteristics through selection
- Determines the upper potential of any steak
- Fat and Yield strongly associated
- Fat and Marbling moderately associated



Ultrasound and Carcass Testing

- Carcass Testing
 - Progeny test
 - Association
 - Breeder
 - Non select cattle
- Ultrasound Testing
 - Replacement females
 - Sale bulls

Carcass EPD

- Carcass Weight (pounds)
- REA (sq. in.)
- Fat (inches)
- Marbling (Marbling Score Units)
- Yield Grade (Yield Grade)
- Tenderness (pounds of shear force)

Challenge – increase / maintain yield and marbling

Matching Breed Strengths

- Quality grade
- Yield grade
- Crossbreeding
 - British
 - Continental

Know Your Market

- Target your future market
- Using sires with known carcass characteristics can reduce future risk
- Balance
 - Reproduction / Production / Product
 - Yield / Quality Grade
 - Breed complementarity

