

Bull selection for artificial insemination

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A breeder must have definite ideals concerning the kind of cattle he wants. When selecting a bull for artificial insemination (AI) purposes there are three questions you must ask yourself:

- **What are breeding values?**
- **What are my breeding goals?**
- **How do I decide which bull best suits my goals?**

Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) are the expected breeding values of an animal, in other words, what kind of calf can we expect. These values are estimated by using sophisticated animal models that includes the parentage and offspring of the animal. By using EBVs it is possible to predict whether an animal will contribute positively or negatively towards factors of economic importance, such as growth, production and Type.

Beef and dairy farmers have different breeding goals. Beef breeders focus on the following factors when selecting: calving ease, weaning weight, maternal characteristics (milk), growth and growth test. Dairy breeders look at the volume of milk, butterfat percentage, protein percentage, Type and calving ease.

Deciding which breed best suits your goals, you have to take environmental factors into consideration, for example the breed that you choose have to adapt well to the area that you live in. A very important point is that the bull has to have a good temperament. The most important factor in selecting a bull is FERTILITY. If you select a bull that is fertile then you know you will have a high conception rate in your cows. If you inseminate ten cows and you get nine calves, then you will know you have done your homework in selection.

At Taurus we help cattle farmers achieve their goals by giving advice in terms of selection of bulls and inseminations of cows. We have a wide variety of breeds that you can choose from. On the beef category we have twenty-eight (28) breeds and dairy we have eight (8) breeds that you can select from. Don't hesitate to call us if you need any assistance in selecting a better performing bull for your AI programme. Our telephone number is 012 671 1122. Ask for Joel Nkuna. **UM**