

Beef Business



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Top Ten Rankings

As I was reading through another breed publication, I found an article highlighting the top ten sires for calves registered in that breed in 2021, and how they ranked as a group for an EPD profile. The author used the average of the ten bulls for various EPDs and where that average figure would rank in the breed on a percentile basis. I'm not one to steal a man's ideas, but I am known to use them to guide my own inspiration. I conducted the same exercise for the top ten Shorthorn sires by number of registrations, but also added information from our friends and competitors in some other British breeds. If we don't look at those we share a market with, it's hard to know where we are and where to go.

Below you will find a table that compares the top ten sire for calves registered in the Angus, Hereford, and Shorthorn breeds. You will also find the ranking of each of those ten sires for various EPDs within their breed. Also included are the percentile ranking where

the highest and lowest individuals in the breed's top ten lands on their individual genetic merits. Angus and Hereford both have a maternal index (\$Maternal in Angus and Baldy Maternal Index for AHA) and a terminal index (\$Beef in Angus, \$Certified Hereford Beef for Hereford) that while not mirror images of our \$British Maternal or \$Feedlot, they are good comparative tools that give an idea of where breeders are placing emphasis in their genetic selection.

What stands out to me in this exercise is that the heavily used Shorthorn bulls do not necessarily stand out from the breed population for their genetic merits. They are ranking lower across the board for their genetic predictors than the other British breeds' top-used sires. In each of these EPD and index rankings, the average percentile for the Shorthorns ranks third of the breeds being compared. While there are some individuals that do rank near the top of the Shorthorn breed in each category, there are also bulls who rank very poorly

in the population that are siring a good number of calves. Outside of CED, the low-ranking Shorthorn for each trait is consistently in the very bottom of the breed population. There are certainly low-ranking Angus and Herefords being used heavily, but they do not seem to have bulls that are in the very bottom of the breed as often as we do.

I believe the EPDs of the top ten sires in each breed show a direction in which breeders are wanting to take their livestock. You realize that the Angus and Hereford cattle are looking for a bit more growth, and the black hided bulls are certainly headed in a more terminal direction (as indicated by their lower ranking for milk and maternal index and top of the chart for terminal index). The Herefords are also pushing for more terminal merit, but don't appear to be taking it as far or straying away from their maternal roots. When you look at the Shorthorn figures, what trend do you see? Is there a direction that things appear to be going based on these

Percent Ranks for Top Ten Sires by Registrations in British Breeds

	CED	WW	YW	Milk	REA	Marb	Mat. Index	Term. Index
Shorthorn								
Avg %	35	50	45	55	45	35	35	40
High %	4	5	10	10	10	2	1	2
Low %	70	99	95	99	90	99	85	99
Angus								
Avg %	25	25	15	40	20	15	40	10
High %	5	2	1	15	5	1	4	1
Low %	75	75	55	65	45	65	95	75
Hereford								
Avg %	33	13	19	24	18	26	16	18
High %	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Low %	95	60	65	55	55	90	85	80