

Timeline

Recommended



What is Docility?

- Docility is the way an animal behaves when being handled by humans or put in an unusual environment such as being separated from the group in a small pen.
- Docility Scores are a measure of an animal's temperament.
- It is exhibited as flightiness.
- More docile animals have a better temperament.

Why Record Docility?

- Docility EBVs can assist beef producers to identify those animals with poor temperament and can lead to improved ease of handling, safety and performance.
- It is a highly heritable trait and can easily be improved genetically.
- Recording Docility enables BREEDPLAN to calculate Docility EBVs.

Docility EBV

- Estimates of genetic differences between animals in temperament.
- Docility EBVs are expressed as a percentage increase or decrease in the number of progeny that will be scored with acceptable temperament.

Interpreting Docility EBVs

- Higher, more positive, Docility EBVs are more favourable. For example:
 - A bull with a Docility EBV of +20 would be expected to on average produce 15% more progeny with acceptable temperament than a bull with a Docility EBV of -10;
 - Difference between the bull Docility EBVs = $(+20) - (-10) = 30$
 - Half of the difference is contributed to the progeny = $30/2 = 15\%$

When to Record Docility?

- It can be recorded up until 400 days of age.
- It is however recommended to score Docility at weaning or shortly thereafter.
- Temperament is strongly related to previous handling experiences and handling frequency, therefore it is best to record docility scores before too much human interaction has occurred.
- Recording Docility at weaning has the additional benefit of minimising variation in handling between animals that are being scored.

How to Measure Docility Scores

- Animals can be scored for Docility on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is the most docile and 5 is the least docile (most aggressive) using either of the following:
 - Yard Test - The calves are individually put into a small square pen and the handler should attempt to hold the animal in one corner for approximately 30 seconds.
 - Crush Test - The calves are put up a race and individually held in the crush for approximately 30 seconds.

More Information

Scan the QR code below or click [here](#) for the BREEDPLAN Help Centre.



Recommended further reading (search in the BREEDPLAN Help Centre):

- Recording Docility Scores (with video)
- Understanding Docility EBVs