



Quality TimeTM

Quality news and features for farm broadcasters from Certified Angus Beef LLC
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Sorting for quality

30-second story

Sorting cattle for harvest may increase their quality grades.
Iowa State University's Dan Loy says most feeders sort to avoid outliers.

Actuality, Loy :09: "The more times you can market the cattle, the more uniform that group of cattle will be, or the more close to their optimum market weight they will be."

(LINK: http://www.cabpartners.com/news/radio/loy_sorting_qt2_14_1.mp3)

Q: ...point they will be."

Sorting lets lighter calves stay on feed longer, which can increase marbling, the animal scientist says. According to Certified Angus Beef data, there's a direct correlation between sorting and brand acceptance. Cattle marketed as a single harvest group had a 23-percent acceptance rate. Those sorted three or more times increased 10 percentage points to more than 33-percent C-A-B acceptance.

60-second story

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The animal scientist says getting the heavyweights and over-fat cattle out sooner makes marketing easier for the rest of the pen.

Actuality, Loy :08: "That allows you to feed the remainder slightly longer, which may help elevate the quality grade."

(LINK: http://www.cabpartners.com/news/radio/loy_sorting_qt2_14_2.mp3)

Q: ...the quality grade."

Data from Certified Angus Beef-licensed feedlots shows a direct correlation between sorting and brand acceptance. Cattle marketed as a single harvest group had a 23-percent acceptance rate. Those sorted three or more times increased 10 percentage points to more than 33-percent C-A-B acceptance. With C-A-B premiums at \$40 per head, that could mean an extra \$400 for a sorted pen of 100 head.

222-word story

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Loy has some tips for producers who want to start sorting: Take a first draft when half the cattle in the pen are between four-tenths and five-tenths of an inch of backfat. Then sell the second half five weeks later.

From there, feeders can adapt the program to their own operations.

Keys to being a successful sorter include good working facilities and well-trained help, Loy says.

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