



NEWS

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Registrations, members on the rise reports American Gelbvieh Association

Despite the economy of the beef industry, the American Gelbvieh Association (AGA) reports growth during the last fiscal year. During 2008-2009, the association had an increase in total animal registrations and new memberships.

“While sectors of the beef industry have been affected by the down-turn in the economy, the American Gelbvieh Association is on the up-swing as evident by an increase in the number of animals registered during the past year,” said Vaughn Thorstenson, President of the American Gelbvieh Association.

During the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the American Gelbvieh Association reports total animal registrations are up six percent from the previous year. The most significant increase is in the Gelbvieh-hybrid program, which shows a 12.8 percent increase in Balancer™ animals registered with the association.

Recognized throughout the industry for progressive programs, the AGA was the first breed association to trademark and document Gelbvieh-Angus cross animals. The Balancer trademark combines the growth and yield of high performing Gelbvieh cattle with the ability to reach industry desirable Quality and Yield Grade standards when crossed with Angus or Red Angus.

“The increase in Balancer™ registrations indicates the wide acceptance of the use of hybrid bulls in rotational crossbreeding. Commercial cattlemen throughout the country are returning to crossbreeding and the use of hybrid bulls is on the rise,” commented Thorstenson. “The Balancer™ program has grown every year since its initiation almost ten years ago. The Gelbvieh-Angus cross female is quickly becoming known as the beef industry’s best brood cow, based on her size, fertility and milking ability.”

In addition, the Gelbvieh association shows an increase in new memberships for both adult and junior members. New adult memberships are up four percent from the previous year.

“The American Gelbvieh Junior Association is experiencing significant growth with a 28 percent increase in new junior members,” says Dana Stewart, Director of Member Services for the American Gelbvieh Association. The AGJA offers several opportunities for its members to increase their knowledge and skill through educational contests and shows at regional and national levels and rewards deserving members with scholarships.

As other segments of the seedstock business contract, the AGA is expanding programs and services. The association recently released a Residual Feed Intake (RFI) testing initiative and plans to develop an RFI EPD or Index for producers to use when selecting Gelbvieh genetics to add to their programs. Also, the AGA expanded staff with the addition of two regional Area Coordinators working in commercial marketing. The AGA-sponsored commercial female sale, the Maternal Edge Female Sale, has established demand for Gelbvieh-influenced females in the southeast, averaging well-above market prices. The model for this sale has been duplicated to create more regional commercial female sales across the country.

Gelbvieh breeders have been working hard to make progressive steps in keeping Gelbvieh at the top of the list for today's beef breeds.

“Looking at genetic trends, the Gelbvieh breed is one of the few breeds that while showing an increased genetic trends for weaning and yearling growth can continue to show a decreased genetic trend for birth weight and a favorable trend for calving ease,” said Susan Willmon, Director of Breed Improvement for the American Gelbvieh Association.