

New Igenity® product line ramps up heifer selection accuracy

LINCOLN, Neb. — Neogen GeneSeek has introduced a new line of highly accurate Igenity® DNA profilers just as cow/calf producers are looking to grow their cow herds.

Producers use Igenity profiling to select heifers, manage their herd and market cattle of verified genetic merit, said Dr. Stewart Bauck, general manager of Neogen's GeneSeek operation.

"Previously we screened for hundreds of gene markers. Now we target thousands, and are focusing on the most powerful genes that affect profits in commercial cow herds," Bauck said.

While screening for many more gene markers, the new Igenity Gold and Igenity Silver profiles also zero in on gene-marker variations that play important roles in cattle development and performance.

"Neogen has invested in world-class genotyping and built new products that detect gene variations which emerging science has linked to major effects on beef cattle profitability," Bauck said. "These new Igenity profiles are built on an analysis of tens of thousands of animals genotyped with high-density markers. The product design, while using the latest in advanced genomic technology, is made easy for producers to access, understand and apply."

The new Igenity Gold profile ranks cattle on 13 maternal, performance and carcass traits, plus verifies parentage. This full-power profile provides more insight for producers. The reports are useful for improving maternal lines, profiling bulls that lack EPDs, marketing bred heifers or growing high-quality beef, he said.

The new Igenity Silver profile ranks heifers in six maternal, performance and carcass traits, Bauck said. It is useful for routine screening large numbers of crossbred or straight-bred heifers that are intended to produce feeder calves.

New Igenity products designed for Black Angus cattle also have been added to the portfolio. The Igenity Angus Silver product covers six maternal, performance and carcass traits, while the Igenity Gold product covers 15 six maternal, performance and carcass traits.

Both versions of the Silver product can be upgraded to Gold, if a producer wishes to learn more about specific heifers they are retaining.

Test results from the products rank cattle using an Igenity Production Index that allows producers to put selection pressure on multiple traits at the same time. The rankings make it easy to sort heifers. Producers also can look at details for each trait in the test, and use the simple 1-to-10 scoring system to pinpoint specific issues in their herd.

"The cost to develop a replacement heifer is in the \$1,000 to \$1,500 range. Profiling helps you be confident you are raising mother cows that have quality calves and breed back well," Bauck said. "Using Igenity profiling makes it easy to use the very latest in DNA testing. You can be make more confident decisions about the long-term investments you are making in these livestock.

"Profiling and selecting heifers early in life helps you sort and focus resources on your best breeding stock," he said. "You also can make timely management decisions if you are developing them as replacements or as feeder heifers."

Both profiles offer free parentage verification when sire DNA is provided or on file, and continue to be supported with online custom sorting and benchmarking tools.

“At Igenity.com, you can set selection index criteria that helps you emphasize traits that match your climate or intended market. And, you can also benchmark your cattle against the records we have in our database. We are making both these systems easier to use,” Bauck said.

Neogen Corporation (NASDAQ: NEOG) develops and markets products dedicated to food and animal safety. Neogen’s animal genomics businesses, GeneSeek and Igenity, provide value-added services to leading agricultural genetics providers, large national cattle associations, companion animal breed registries, university researchers, and numerous commercial cattle producers. For more information, visit www.neogen.com/genomics.

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