



Hereford breeder Matt Chisum says participating in a PVP earned him an extra \$4-5 premium, and when he combined it with a VAC45 program, he realized a \$10-12 premium per head.

Producer Survey Says Age and Source Verification Pays

Tri-Merit® users earn additional \$10 per cwt.

A survey of more than 150 cow-calf producers across the country revealed that producers using age and source verification systems, like Tri-Merit®, earned an average of \$10 more per hundredweight (cwt.) than producers with generic calves. Age and source verification certifies

the accuracy and integrity of animal information and helps assure customers they're receiving a consistent product supported by a documented quality management system.



The survey, sponsored by Global Animal Management, was conducted during January 2008 and asked producers about prices earned for

calves sold during 2007. Survey participants represented herd sizes ranging from less than 50 to more than 5,000. More than 75% of participants sold their calves through a sale barn, about 6% sold calves direct to the feedlot, and just 2% of respondents sold direct to the packer.

Producers like Matt Chisum from Stinnett, Texas, says age and source verification provided substantial value with little additional work. The certificate

earned Chisum an extra \$4-5 per cwt. premium, and when he combined it with the VAC45 program, he realized a \$10-12 premium per hundred.

"Both days I sold my calves this year, they topped the market. I'm convinced it's that certificate that made a difference," Chisum says.

"Clearly the results indicate there is a market for calves with an age and source process verified program (PVP) certificate," says Jim Heinle, president of Global Animal Management. "Interestingly, while certified calves earned an average of \$10 more per cwt. than their counterparts, most producers using a verification program don't realize the extent of the value they're receiving. In fact, 50% of Tri-Merit users thought they earned \$3 or less per cwt."

About 95% of Tri-Merit users surveyed said they believe age and source verification and health certification will be important to the sale and export of their cattle in the future. Further, three in four non-users also deem age and source important for the future sale of their cattle. However, only 11% of non-users suggested they were considering implementing an age and source verification system.

"A lot of producers think getting their operation approved as process verified for age and source is a long, difficult process," says Rick Sibbel, technical services veterinarian for Schering-Plough Animal Health. "However, many producers are already recording the critical information needed for such certification. Recording birth dates of each calf born or the birth dates of the first and last calf, as well as individually identifying these animals, are the most important factors needed for certification, so it's a lot easier than most producers realize."

Tri-Merit offers the cattle industry a single-source solution to manage all its compliance and value-added animal information, whether it be certifying animal health processes, verifying an animal's age and source through the Tri-Merit PVP, satisfying National Animal Identification System (NAIS) requirements or purchasing unique animal ID tags. Tri-Merit is powered by Global Animal Management, a wholly owned subsidiary of Schering-Plough Animal Health.

To learn how to access Tri-Merit to meet age and source verification needs, visit www.tri-merit.com to find a facilitator near you, or call (800) 235-9824. A producer can access the system on his own or through one of the 1,500 local veterinarian facilitators. **HW**

Editor's Note: This article was provided by Schering-Plough Animal Health.