

Understanding Herd and Phenotype Numbers

Daily versus weekly analysis can create short-term differences.



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Fall is always an exciting season when you wean calves and see how they have performed. It's the same for your bull customers. With pregnancy checking likely complete in most spring-calving herds, this is a good time to call customers and find out how your bulls worked for them and how their baldy cows compared to straightbred peers. Based on the reports I receive, performance has been powerful.

Reporting differences explained

I often get questions about the difference in numbers when comparing statistics in the “Traits Observed” section of the animal search page (Figure 1) to those in the Performance Pedigree (Figure 2).

The statistics in Figure 1 show how many herds and how many phenotypes have been included in the genetic evaluation. In this example, 31 herds submitted 173 birth weight (BW) phenotypes, which are reflected in the BW expected progeny difference (EPD).

This young animal has been used moderately in several herds.

Look at Figure 2. There were 174 BW phenotypes submitted for the same animal. The 99.6% ratio means this animal performed below average compared to other animals for BW progeny phenotypes. Most would consider that positive.

Why are there 173 BW phenotypes in Figure 1, but 174 in Figure 2?

Often, the difference has to do with the timing associated with weekly genetic evaluation. For instance, data extraction is midnight Nov. 6 for the genetic evaluation that is released Nov. 15. Data submitted in between these two dates go in the following genetic evaluation release. So, the likely explanation for the difference in BW phenotypes for the animal illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 is that the extra record in Figure 2 came in between the data cutoff for one weekly genetic evaluation and its release. The additional phenotype will show up in the next genetic evaluation.

In this example, the reason the extra BW phenotype shows up on the performance pedigree (Figure 2) is because the American Hereford Association uses a real-time registry program — MyHerd — that enables members to submit data any time they choose. Once data is submitted and analyzed successfully, the phenotypes are included in the ratio. This analysis occurs at midnight each day. Real-time registration is an incredible luxury, but the daily update versus the weekly one for genetic evaluation means there can be some short-term discrepancies.

The most important thing to note is that EPDs in Figure 1 reflect all phenotypes contributing to that genetic evaluation. **HW**

Figure 1: “Traits Observed” section of the animal search page

Traits Observed: 

Statistics:
Statistics: BW:31/173, WW:9/46, YW:1/3, SC:1/3, SCAN:13

Figure 2: “Performance Pedigree” section of the animal search page

		INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE	PROGENY	
			NUMBER	AVERAGES
Animal	Birth Wt.		174	99.6 %
	Weaning Wt.		53	100.6 %
	Yearling Wt.		3	111.0 %
	Yearling Ht.			
	Yr. Sc. Cir.		16	39.0 Cm.
	Fat Depth		20	97.0 %
	Ribeye Area		20	101.2 %
	IMF		20	102.2 %
Daughters: -				
Calves: -				
Ratio: -				