

VA Premium Assured Heifers Open and Bred Heifer Program Requirements

Premium Assured Level

Heifers must meet all of the following requirements

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Age –

Bred Heifers

Stated birth date with projected age at calving being:

22 to 26 months of age (Spring calving heifers)

22 to 26 months of age (Fall calving heifers).

Open Heifers

Stated birth date with age at sale between 11 to 17 months of age.

Frame size – All heifers must be frame score 4.5-6.5.

Structure – All heifers must be deemed structurally correct by the local VA Premium Assured Heifer Committee which includes the local Animal Science Extension Agent.

Muscling – All heifers must possess adequate muscling without being extreme. Muscling score 2.5 to 1.0 (upper half of 2 muscling and better).

Body condition score – All heifers must be BCS 5 to 7 (1=emaciated; 9=obese).

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Vaccinations - All vaccinations given in accordance to label directions including booster if required.

- IBR-PI3, BRSV, BVD (type 1 & 2 – MLV w/Fetal Protection)
- 7-way clostridial.
- 5-way leptospirosis (2 doses for bred heifers).

Parasite controls

- Fall sales – Endecticide within 60 days and before November 1.
- Spring sales - Endecticide within 30 days and after February 1.
- Endecticides are products that control both internal and external parasites.

Defects

- Heifers with bad eyes, horns, rat-tails, bob tails or frozen ears will not be accepted.
- Any lame animals will not be accepted.

Tests

- Tested negative for BVD-PI.
- No Brucellosis tests required.
- All service sires must be BVD-PI negative.
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Identification

- An EID Tag is required.

GENETIC REQUIREMENTS

Breeds – Any heifer breed or breed combinations are eligible, but breeds must be specified.

Service sires – *Bred Heifers*

- Service sire must be identified.
- All service sires must be in the best 40% for both calving ease (CE) and birth weight (BW) EPDs and meet VQA requirements for growth EPD. See Table 1 and Table 2. No requirement for milk EPD, but milk EPD must be listed.

REPRODUCTIVE REQUIREMENTS

Open Heifers – All open heifers must have a reproductive exam by an approved professional. Heifers may not have received any growth implants.

Pelvic area – All heifers must have a yearling pelvic area of 150 cm² or greater at prebreeding (presale) examination. Heifers with pelvic areas <150 cm² may not be sold. Pelvic areas need to be reported but will not be listed in the sale catalog.

Reproductive tract score – All open heifers for sale that are 12 months old or older must have a RTS of 3 or better. (Colorado State reproductive tract scoring system).

Open guarantee - All heifers will be guaranteed open on sale day (except heifers sold as exposed). If a heifer sold as open is proven pregnant by a veterinarian within 30 days of the sale, the consignor will replace the heifer or refund the sale price of the heifer and take possession of the heifer.

Bred Heifers

Conceived within restricted time period - All heifers must have conceived within the first 50 days following initial artificial inseminations and/or natural mating.

Pelvic area – All heifers must have a yearling pelvic area of 150 cm² or greater at prebreeding examination or a pelvic area of 180 cm² or greater at pregnancy examination. Heifers not meeting this requirement may not be sold as VAPAH. Pelvic areas need to be reported but will not be listed in the sale catalog.

Pregnant guarantee - All heifers will be guaranteed pregnant on sale day. If a heifer sold as pregnant is proven open by a veterinarian within 30 days of the sale, the consignor will replace the heifer or refund the sale price of the heifer and take possession of the heifer.

Certification requirements – In order to be tagged and sold as VAPAH, heifers and data need to be certified by the Animal Science Extension Agent or Beef Specialist.

Table 1. Service Sire Birth Weight and Calving Ease EPD Requirements

Service Sires for Commercial Heifers (top 40th percentile Angus equivalent)

Breed	Angus
CE EPD (min.)	+8
BW EPD (max.)	+0.8

Note: Registered heifers bred to sires of same breed- service sires require CED/BW EPDs in top 40th percentile of their respective breed.

Table 2. Service Sire Minimum YW EPD Requirements (Specification also applies to Sire of Heifer for Premium Assured Plus Designation)

Bulls born 2024 and later: VQA standard will be minimum terminal index EPD (top 70th percentile of applicable breed), see Table 2a
Bulls born 2023 and prior: VQA standard will be minimum terminal index EPD (Table 1) or minimum YW EPD (Table 2b). Note that only one EPD requirement needs to be met to qualify for bulls born 2023 and prior (not both).

Table 2a. Sire Terminal Index EPD Values (applies to bulls born 2024 and later)

Breed	Index EPD	Minimum Index EPD (top 70 th percentile) Bull Birth Year		
		2026	2025	2024
Angus	Beef Value (\$B)	+131	+128	+122
Braunvieh	Terminal Index (TI)	+62	+62	+62
Charolais	Terminal Sire Index (TSI)	+256	+254	+243
Gelbvieh (PB)	Feeder Profit Index (FPI)	+87	+72	+71
Gelbvieh Balancer	Feeder Profit Index (FPI)	+108	+78	+77
Hereford	Certified Hereford Beef Index (CHB\$)	+107	+106	+104
Limousin	Terminal Profit Index (\$TPI) ^a	+87	+80	+46
Lim-Flex	Terminal Profit Index (\$TPI) ^a	+99	+86	+58
Red Angus	GridMaster Index (GM)	+38	+37	+23
Shorthorn	\$Feedlot (\$F)	+44	+43	+45
Simmental (PB)	Terminal Index (TI)	+75	+75	+75
Simmental Hybrid	Terminal Index (TI)	+77	+75	+75

^a Limousin- Mainstream Terminal Index (\$MTI) applies 2024 and previous

Table 2b. Sire Yearling Weight EPD Values (applies only to bulls born 2023 and prior)

Breed	Minimum YW EPD (top 70 th percentile) Bull Birth Year						
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Angus	+95	+92	+90	+88	+85	+78	+76
Charolais	+95	+94	+49	+49	+47	+43	+40
Gelbvieh (PB)	+90	+89	+87	+87	+82	+86	+85
Gelbvieh Balancer	+100	+98	+96	+95	+88	+92	+93
Hereford	+80	+80	+79	+78	+78	+75	+74
Limousin	+81	+81	+85	+85	+77	+80	+78
Lim-Flex	+101	+99	+96	+95	+95	+90	+89
Red Angus	+89	+88	+88	+87	+87	+77	+78
Shorthorn	+60	+60	+69	+69	+69	+68	+68
Simmental (PB)	+107	+106	+105	+105	+93	+86	+83
Simmental Hybrid	+108	+106	+106	+105	+89	+86	+83

Premium Assured Plus Level

In addition to all previously described requirements

Sire of Heifer

- Sire of heifer must be identified.
- Minimum EPD requirements- Sire of heifer must meet VQA requirements for EPDs (Table 2)

For additional information on the VAPAH program, contact Dr. Scott Greiner at 540-231-9159.