

WHAT IS A SUPERIOR SETTLER?

By Cliff Marshall, vice president production

Some A.I. organizations currently are attempting to make quite an issue of semen fertility, as if measuring fertility were a new concept. They are right in saying you should buy the highest fertility semen that you can. However, the system to which they are pointing for comparison - Estimated Relative Conception Rates (ERCR) - was not designed to compare bulls between studs. Too many regional management factors can make comparison by ERCR between studs rather unreliable.

For decades Select Sires has published information about the fertilizing capacity of semen from our bulls. Just as there are differences in genetic-transmitting ability between bulls, so are there differences in the fertilizing capacity of spermatozoa from different bulls. Select has created the SUPERIOR SETTLER™ listing to recognize those bulls that have achieved a superior fertility index that ranks them among the elite fertility bulls in the Select Sires lineup. Only the top 25 percent of Select's active lineup is designated with SUPERIOR SETTLER status. This does not mean that 75 percent of the lineup has semen that is poor quality. It simply means that they don't rank among the top 25 percent of Select's lineup.

The standards that each and every bull must meet illustrate why SUPERIOR SETTLERS are truly elite fertility bulls among a very competitive group.

First, each bull housed at Select Sires has been given the very best housing and health care available. Few humans have had as many complete physical examinations as a Select sire.

Second, semen has been collected, processed, packaged and frozen using the latest scientific technology. Then a sample is thawed and

re-evaluated to determine whether the proper numbers of motile spermatozoa for optimum fertility are present. The sperm are also evaluated to see whether they are morphologically normal. If the quality standards are met, then the semen is released for sale.

Next, cows are inseminated and fertility information is sent back to Select Sires. This information is computed and analyzed, and a non-return rate is generated. The non-return rate is the percentage of cows that Select Sires representatives have reported for first-service insemination and not reported for a second-service insemination within a defined period of time.

The SUPERIOR SETTLER designation is based on six months of historical semen-quality data (including post-thaw motility, incubated motility, incubated intact acrosomes and spermatozoa morphology) combined with current non-return data in a model to provide an index. The highest 30 to 40 bulls in the lineup are considered further. If an individual bull has a lower-than-average non-return rate, he is removed from the SUPERIOR SETTLER list. Bulls that have a six-month history of above-average non-return rates, even though they do not place in the top 40 percent of the index list initially, are elevated in status.

Because great emphasis is placed on semen quality traits during the previous six-month period, SUPERIOR SETTLERS can be considered more of a "predictive" estimate of what fertility will be on bulls in the next few months. As the program has developed, there are usually about 16 to 18 bulls identified as SUPERIOR SETTLERS that have non-return data of their own. Plus, there are about six to eight bulls that have no non-return data, but have significantly

high semen quality values that earn them the SUPERIOR SETTLER designation.

Select Sires always strives to keep you updated on the fertility status of our bulls. We will also use articles like this and "A Reproductive Moment with Mel" to discuss factors that may affect pregnancy rates. If you have a concern about fertility, Select Sires offers the most well-trained field staff and a team of reproductive specialists that can be a tremendous resource to you. ♦



The mark of higher fertility!

	Milk	Type	Yield Rel.
7H04213 INTEGRITY	+1,073	+2.06	99%M
7H04364 ROAD MARK	+364	+1.74	99%M
7H04794 DANON	+290	+1.57	82%M
7H05157 DURHAM	+523	+2.88	98%
7H05192 WAHOO	+1,783	+0.48	89%
7H05211 BLACKBART	+787	+2.09	96%
7H05253 CALEB	+2,126	+0.61	89%
7H05300 MAGNUM	+1,620	+1.00	95%
7H05375 MARSHALL	+2,067	+2.60	86%
7H05379 BEACH	+1,555	+0.70	88%
7H05386 CHIL	+910	+1.65	86%
7H05491 MOZER	+1,883	+1.78	86%
7H08419 APPROVAL	+688	+2.76	87%
9H01708 JUDGE	+270	+0.80	99%M
9H01729 PATRON	+1,017	+1.15	99%M
9H01878 WINDSOR	+1,089	+1.93	99%
9H02207 COOL KID	+946	+0.87	92%
9H02299 BAILY	+1,367	+1.42	85%
9H02325 JOKER	+1,297	+1.37	88%
9H02344 COOPER	+912	+1.53	86%
7JE342 PITINO	+71	+1.6	98%M
7JE395 CHOICE-P	+782	+2.1	95%
7JE424 FREEDOM	+1,727	+1.7	86%

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