

Understanding Net Feed Intake EBVs

Feed efficiency is recognised as one of the most economically important production traits, both in grazing enterprises and feedlot operations. Research has shown that large variation exists in feed efficiency between animals, and that a proportion of this variation is due to genetic differences.

What Net Feed Intake EBVs are Available?

BREEDPLAN produces two EBVs relating to feed efficiency - Net Feed Intake (Post Weaning) and Net Feed Intake (Feedlot Finishing). Both EBVs are calculated from information collected in feed efficiency trials. Whilst there is a positive relationship between the two EBVs, some animals do rank differently for feed efficiency in the two different scenarios.

(i) Net Feed Intake (Post Weaning)

NFI-P EBVs are estimates of genetic differences between animals in feed intake at a standard weight and rate of weight gain when animals are in a growing phase. For example, animals placed in a feedlot post weaning. NFI-P EBVs are expressed as kilograms (kg) of feed intake per day.

Lower, or more negative, NFI-P EBVs are more favourable. For example, a bull with a NFI-P EBV of -0.7 kg/day would be expected to produce progeny that eat less feed per day than the progeny from a bull that has a NFI-P EBV of $+0.5$ kg/day (when the progeny are of similar weight, are growing at a similar rate, and are in a growing phase).

(ii) Net Feed Intake (Feedlot Finishing)

NFI-F EBVs are estimates of genetic differences between animals in feed intake at a standard weight and rate of weight gain when animals are in a feedlot finishing phase. NFI-F EBVs are expressed as kilograms (kg) of feed intake per day.

Lower, or more negative, NFI-F EBVs are more favourable. For example, a bull with a NFI-F EBV of -0.6 kg/day would be expected to produce progeny that eat less feed per day than the progeny from a bull that has a NFI-F EBV of $+0.8$ kg/day (when the progeny are of similar weight, are growing at a similar rate, and are in a feedlot finishing phase).

For more information regarding Net Feed Intake EBVs, please contact staff at BREEDPLAN.