

# Using Australian Red Angus Selection Indexes



Selection indexes assist beef producers to make selection decisions that take into account the relevant growth, carcass, fertility and efficiency attributes of each animal to identify candidates whose progeny will be the most profitable for a particular commercial enterprise. Selection indexes provide an overall indication of an animal's genetic value for profit in a specific production system/target market and are calculated based on weightings placed on individual traits that are deemed to be important for that production system.

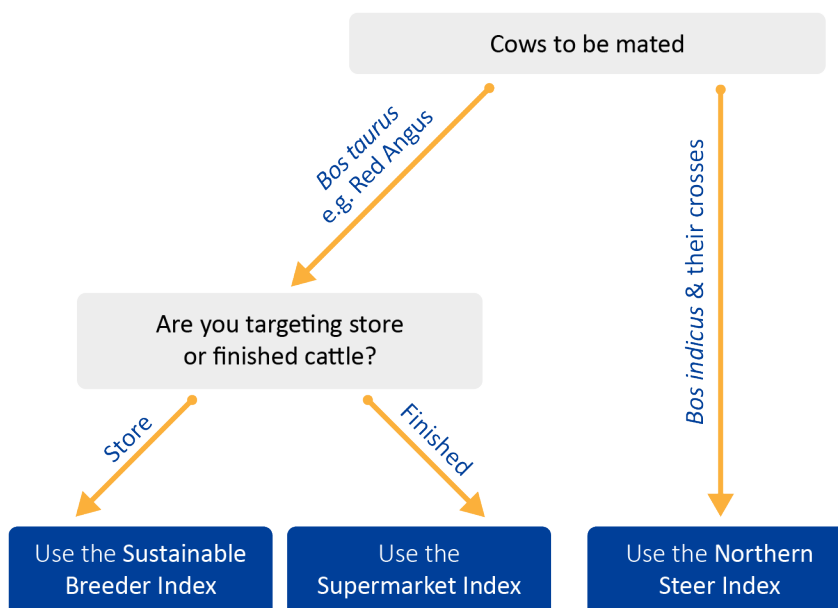
The weightings are calculated using [BreedObject](#) software that analyses all sources of costs and income for the production system represented by each selection index. As such, selection indexes account for both sides of the profit equation and reflect the short and long term profit possible through selection of superior genetics. For example, short term profit can be generated by a bull through the sale of his progeny, and the longer term profit generated by his daughters in a self-replacing cow herd.

## Best Practice Guide to Animal Selection Using Australian Red Angus Selection Indexes

Incorporating selection index information into breeding decisions takes the hard work out of trying to decide how much emphasis you need to put on individual EBVs when determining which animals you want to retain in your herd or purchase. The recommended strategy for selecting animals is to complete the following steps:

1. Identify the selection index of most relevance to your or your client's breeding objectives. This decision should be aided by the index descriptions at the end of this document and the following flowchart.

### Which Australian Red Angus Selection Index should you use?



- Rank animals on the chosen selection index. This can be done via the web search facility available for the breed.
- Consider the individual BREEDPLAN EBVs of importance. All breed level selection indexes are designed for the average of the production system specified in their description. This means that individual farm environments and management choices may require that their own thresholds are applied. For example, if looking for a bull to use over heifers, particular attention should be paid to Calving Ease and Birth Weight EBVs.
- Consider other traits of importance. Structure, fertility (e.g. BULLCHECK™), temperament, genetic conditions and pedigree are all important additional considerations.

Further information is available in the [A BREEDPLAN Guide to Animal Selection](#) tip sheet that can be found in the [Help Centre](#) on the BREEDPLAN website.

## Available Australian Red Angus Selection Indexes

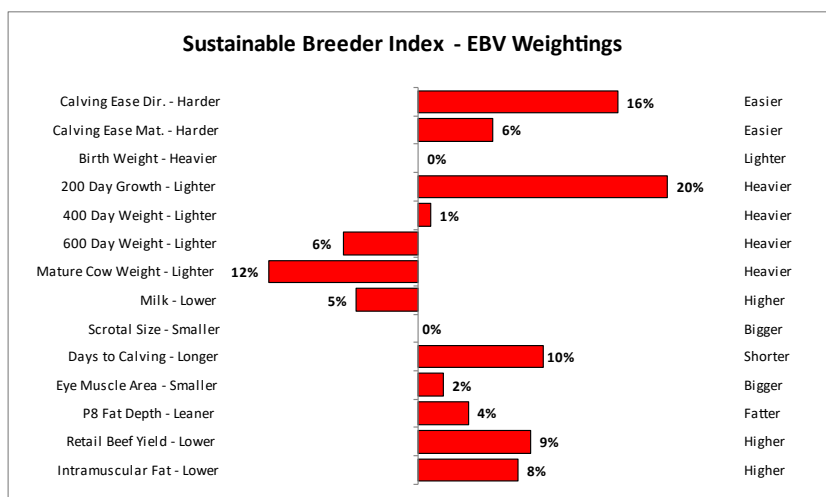
The Red Angus Society of Australia currently reports three different selection indexes. These are the:

- Sustainable Breeder Index (SB)
- Supermarket Index (S)
- Northern Steer Index (NS)

Each selection index is reported in units of net profitability per cow mated (\$), and targets the following specifications:

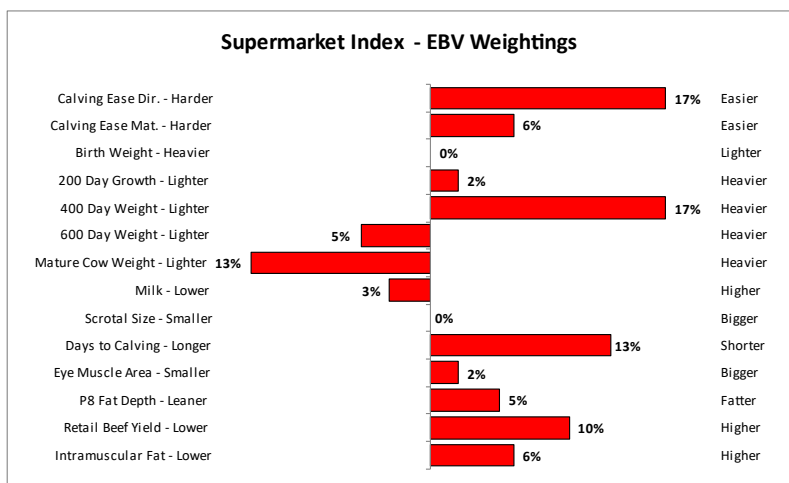
### Sustainable Breeder Index (SB)

- Commercial herd targeting weaner production.
- Heifers are retained so maternal traits are important.
- This index aims to reduce mature cow size in the breed while increasing early growth.
- Steers are marketed as store weaners or yearlings.
- Carcase quality is still of importance to allow the option of finishing at later ages.



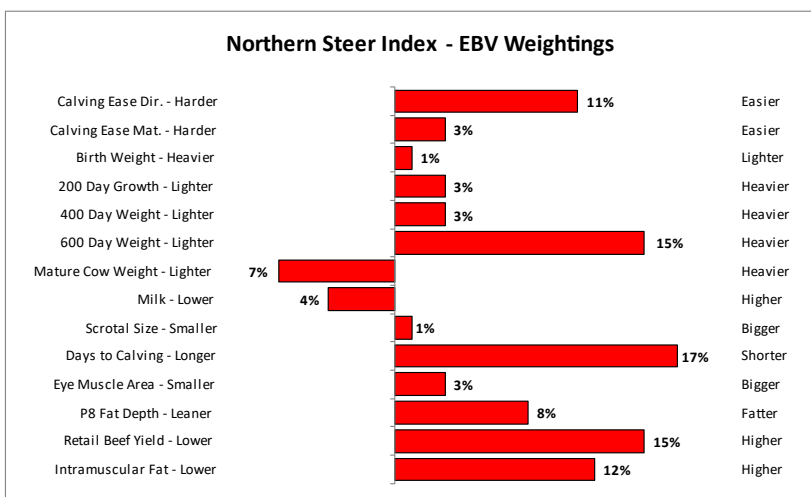
## Supermarket Index (S)

- Commercial herd targeting the domestic supermarket trade.
- Heifers are retained so maternal traits are important.
- Steers are finished on either grass or grain.
- Steers target 550 kg live weight (305 kg HSCW & 11 mm P8 fat depth) at 21 months of age.
- Carcase quality is of importance.



## Northern Steer Index (NS)

- Commercial herd targeting the export trade.
- Bulls used over a *Bos indicus* or *Bos indicus* cross cow base.
- Progeny typically finished on grass.
- Steers target 640 kg live weight (350 kg HSCW & 11 mm P8 fat depth) at 27 months of age.
- Carcase quality is of importance.



More detail on the trait and EBV emphasis for each of the selection indexes described above is available in the [Australian Red Angus Selection Indexes: Technical Specifications](#) tip sheet that can be found in the [Help Centre](#) on the BREEDPLAN website.

**If you have any further queries regarding the Australian Red Angus Selection Indexes, please do not hesitate to contact staff at your BREEDPLAN processing centre.**