



## WAGYU BREEDPLAN

WAGYU has an advantage over other breeds in that due to the small genetic diversity, identifying these superior genetics using BREEDPLAN can be achieved at a much faster rate. BREEDPLAN is like a jigsaw puzzle the more pieces of the puzzle we have the better BREEDPLAN can predict the merit of individuals and their offspring.

As a participant of WAGYU BREEDPLAN you will be entering an exciting phase of the breeds development in the US and your contribution in way of observed performance data (live weights, scrotal circumference, ultra-sound scanning, carcass data and any other important traits) will help this breed develop EPDs (Estimate Progeny Difference) that will assist YOU in making more informed selection choices when breeding or building your Wagyu herd.

No other cattle breed in the US can afford not to incorporate some type of genetic evaluation system to identify those “elite” individuals that will go on to secure the breed’s position in the US beef population.

**BREEDPLAN** participation is quite simply an **EASY 1 2 3** process;

1. **Register** your entire Wagyu herd on the AWA register. BREEDPLAN results are most effective when you **whole herd** record every animal on your ranch.  
Selectively recording your so-called best animals builds a bias in the results. WE need to record the best and least performing individuals (be it weaning or yearling weights or rib eye measures) to identify the genetic differences by isolating or sub-grouping environmental differences.
2. **START** collecting performance data on your herd. By following some basics BREEDPLAN guidelines on how to collect measurements such live weights, scrotal, ultra-sound on your animals from the day they are born through the day they were sold or slaughtered.  
BREEDPLAN has a list of traits that can be analysis (some are a result of a direct or indirect measure and some a correlated like MILK EPD to the weaning or 200day weight.)  
There are several options for data recording from MS EXCEL template, PC management software and online submission format via the AWA website. The latter two (2) options currently being tested and will be available soon.
3. Analysing the collected data from ALL WAGYU herds reporting both individuals herd reports and Association specific reports like a Sire Summary via the various forms of media and format available to the Association and its membership.

STEP 3 will be a work in progress and this will take time, possibly 12 or more months to collect enough data to generate credible EPD results. There is some historic data that we will need to review but our plan is to start building a new dataset of information from all grades of WAGYU.

We need data from F1 through to Fullbloods so if you have a dire need to get the best out of your herd and any future genetics you introduce then start collecting data today!

**American Wagyu Association**

PO BOX 1115,

POST FALLS, ID 83877

Tel: +1 208-262-8100

Fax: +1 208-292-2670

Email: [office@wagyu.org](mailto:office@wagyu.org)

Web: [www.wagyu.org](http://www.wagyu.org)

## How much does it cost?

Like everything, there is a cost involved but the AWA is determined to minimize this as much as possible. During this start-up phase the standard annual enrolment fee will be waived but any individual animals that have an observation submitted will be charged a **processing fee of \$7.50 per calf recorded**. This subsidized fee is partial cost recovery from the BREEDPLAN expenses that AWA will incur and its obligation with the service provider; ABRI. The AWA is committed to herd improvement and so much of the R&D expense will be absorbed by the AWA and/or its associated partnerships with Industry.

It has been shown by our fellow beef cattle producers of other breeds that the benefits of an EPD analysis will out way the expense many times over. If you were a commercial ANGUS or HEREFORD cow/calf breeder, you would not consider purchasing a bull without seeing his figures and WAGYU should be no different!

## What tools do you need?

To get started, you will need;

- A computer to record the observations (paper format is available to those of us that are technically challenged!
- You need to have access to weigh your animals. MUST have a set of scales or load cells.....Collecting this data is critical. Companies like Tru-test, Gallagher can provide weighing systems to suit all budgets.
- As with any breeding enterprise, selection pressure is the key to genetic improvement. For example, not every male calf born will develop traits that are desirable and exploitable so he will be steered so keep a pocket knife or some other castration device handy!

## How do I get started?

1. Sign up to Wagyu BREEDPLAN (complete the BREEDPLAN Enrolment Form)
2. Follow a simple few rules and start collecting the data on your animals. Even if you are not ready to submit to the AWA.
3. Use a format you are most comfortable with. Be it a EXCEL format, PC program et al. Some PC packages are now “cloud based” so you don’t even have to add software to your PC, tablet or smartphone.
4. Remember when recording data you want LIKE-TREAT animals so they all fall into one mix. Make sure you weigh all your calves on the same day and if any individual/s were treated differently ie through the fence on a different paddock and their respective live weights were higher or lower than the average then please tell us because these calves will need to be sub-grouped and placed into a different management group.

**REMEMBER:** BREEDPLAN works best for those who are whole herd recording , are using multiple sires and have a herd size of 20 or more calves being born within a defined calving period so direct comparisons can be when these calves sliced or grouped into females, males, ET or Nat, etc ) when post-birth observations are made. BREEDPLAN looks at contemporary group comparisons and the relationship between individuals. If there are barriers due to calf group size, single sire matings, limited pedigree, etc then the information provided does reduce the effectiveness of the raw data and will impact on BREEDPLAN EBVs calculated for that individual.

**If you have any questions about BREEDPLAN, don’t hesitate to contact the AWA office on 202 262-8100 or email [office@wagyu.org](mailto:office@wagyu.org)**