Birth to First Pregnancy. Heifer mating – how to get there.

PRIORITY: GET IN-CALF EARLY IN THE SEASON
Why?

• Sets her up for lifetime performance Australian Beef CRC research
• Longer time to get back into calf US MARC research
• Will stay longer in the herd
• Wean a heavier calf

Evidence?
Dairy NZ high v low line fertility research

‘Heifers predicted to be more fertile reached puberty earlier and conceived earlier’

Australian Beef CRC- High & Low fat lines

‘Heavier and fatter heifers achieve puberty and conception earlier’

How? Management

• Grow heifers out well and get them to sufficient condition for mating and through it: Beef CRC
  • Don’t have a rule of thumb with mating weight i.e. different systems and genetics will impact
  • Reach relative proportion of mature weight at mating
- Rule of thumb used to be 70% of mature weight. US MARC data suggests that modern cattle can be as low as 55% of mature weight at mating

- Mate lots of them and restrict to keeping those that conceive in 42 days by foetal age scanning

How? Genetics
- Reduced Days to Calving (DTC) EBVs = increased heifer conception
  - Use the DTC EBV (although doesn’t directly refer to) improves heifer puberty: BPT, Beef CRC, Dairy Industry
  - Use the Scrotal Size EBV - already in DTC
  - Sires with increased Rib Fat EBVs produce daughters that are fatter and conceive earlier: AUS Beef CRC

1 Increased Cow Body Condition score increases probability of pregnancy.
B+LNZ Genetics Beef Progeny Test

2 Reduced Days to Calving EBV means cows get in calf earlier.
B+LNZ Genetics Beef Progeny Test