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AMERICAN SIMMENTAL ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES COW HERD DNA ROUNDUP

Bozeman, MT — The American Simmental Association (ASA) has launched a new research project in partnership with GeneSeek, Inc.[®], aimed at collecting female genotypes from whole herds. The Cow Herd DNA Roundup (CHR) offers ASA members the opportunity to genotype entire cow herds at a fraction of the regular cost, with the goal of incorporating vast amounts of genomic data into the ASA genetic evaluation. Female genotypes are rare and valuable, especially to predict maternal traits such as Stayability and Maternal Calving Ease. Only genotyping the best cattle can create bias in the genomic prediction; therefore, genotyping the entire cow herd is very valuable to the genetic evaluation.

Recognizing this value, the ASA Board of Trustees passed a resolution to offer a \$20 genomic profile (50K) to members who test their entire cow herd. In addition, members who supply cow weights with either body condition scores or hip heights receive an additional \$5 off per test. Project coordinator Leoma Wells explained the scope of the project, emphasizing the implications outside ASA. “This goes beyond our breed. This is going to impact the beef industry as a whole as we are setting the precedent for the need for female genotypes. I believe it will have a lasting impact, especially in regard to decision making for future DNA genotyping choices,” Wells explains.

Initially, the program aims to collect a large number of genotypes in a small period of time—samples must be submitted to ASA by December 15, 2018, and the cow weight subsidy only applies to the first 30,000 samples submitted. The overall vision of the project is to set breeders up to maintain a fully DNA tested cow herd in the future. ASA Board Member Tim Curran, Breed Improvement Committee Chairman, champions the program as a timely step to prepare for the future. “It’s going to be a valuable selection tool. In the future we will have this large set of DNA on file, and as technology and accuracy improves, we will have the DNA ready,” says Curran.

In addition to bolstering the genetic evaluation, parentage is included in the test, which will help clear up pedigree errors and result in better EPD predictions. The project research partner, GeneSeek, prefers the use of Tissue Sampling Units (TSU); however, blood cards will be accepted as well. Questions can be directed to Leoma Wells and Dr. Jackie Atkins, by calling 406-587-4531, or emailing cowdna@simmgene.com. Visit www.simmental.org/chr for more information.

Founded in 1968, the American Simmental Association is headquartered in Bozeman, MT. ASA is committed to leveraging technology, education and collaboration to accelerate genetic profitability for the beef industry. In keeping with its commitment, ASA, along with its partners, formed International Genetic Solutions -- the world's largest genetic evaluation of beef cattle.

[CHR Logo](#)