

A guide to contemporary grouping.

1. Use group codes on registration application or performance data submission forms to assign calves to contemporary groups.
2. Use group codes to put a sick or injured calf into a single animal contemporary group if the illness or injury affected the calf's performance.
3. Take weaning weights and measurements on all calves on the same day (when a majority of the calves are between 160 and 250 days of age), including as many calves in each contemporary group as legitimately possible.
4. Weigh all animals in a group before separating them, especially before separating show calves or test station bulls.
5. If the age spread of calves is greater than 90 days, choose two or more weigh dates, using as few as possible.
6. Have progeny from two or more sires in each contemporary group (although not necessary when using the animal model for genetic evaluation).
7. When calves are within an appropriate age range for each trait, record yearling weight, height, scrotal circumference, pelvic area, and ultrasound measurements on the same day.
8. If carcass data are to be collected on cull bulls, heifers, or steers, report weaning weights on all animals. These data allow selection of replacement females and bulls to be accounted for in genetic evaluations and help prevent bias in the predictions.
9. Do not weigh each calf individually as it reaches 205 days of age. Rather weigh each calf individually when calves in a group average approximately 205 days of age.
10. Do not include calves receiving special treatment (show, bull test, and sale animals) in the same group with those that did not receive an equal opportunity to perform.