

Yearling Bull Breeding Soundness Examination

Special Considerations



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KEYWORDS

- BSE • Breeding soundness examination • Yearling bull • Bull development
- Semen morphology • Semen quality

KEY POINTS

- Veterinarians should have the utmost confidence in their decisions when performing a breeding soundness examination (BSE) on yearling bulls.
- Veterinarians should confirm that young bulls submitted for a BSE have completed puberty before being classified as a satisfactory potential breeder.
- Care should be taken to detect congenital or inherited defects.
- Reporting results in a complete, easy-to-read format increases the clients' ability to market or use the bull in a manner that will be positive for their reputation and financial bottom line.

INTRODUCTION

Veterinarians should have the utmost confidence in their decisions when performing a breeding soundness examination (BSE) on yearling bulls. Accurate assessment is important for the bottom line of all interested parties: the buyer, the seller, and the veterinarian performing the BSE. The reputation of the client selling yearling bulls, as well as the reputation of the veterinarian testing them, is also important to recognize. This article is primarily aimed at those practitioners performing BSEs on large groups of yearling bulls before bull sales.

Yearling bull producers should be reminded that the value of BSE testing is to increase the percentage of cows in a breeding pasture that become pregnant in a defined breeding season. A field study demonstrated at least a 5% greater pregnancy percentage in cow herds exposed to bulls passing fertility test versus cow herds exposed to unselected bulls¹ (Fig. 1). This study also demonstrated that simply adding more bulls to the unselected population does not make up for this difference.¹

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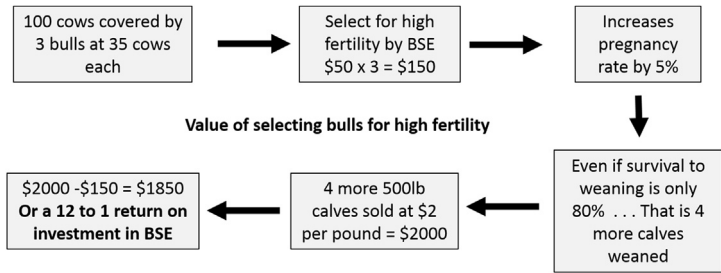


Fig. 1. Estimated economics of investment in BSEs.¹

This article highlights special considerations when testing yearling bulls and thus improves practitioner confidence that their examination and classification are based on current research.

REPORTING

Efficient reporting allows for more successful communication of results with the client as well as aiding the veterinarian in being complete and efficient in their examination. Though the Society for Theriogenology (SFT) offers a standard form (Fig. 2), many practitioners prefer to use their own BSE reporting format.

Provided that a customized BSE reporting format displays equal or more information than is included in the SFT standard form, and improves recording efficiency and client communication, this seems like a reasonable approach. For large groups of bulls, it is often advantageous to input data electronically so that individual or group reports may be printed. This can be accomplished using the electronic BSE (eBSE) software offered by the SFT or by using other data processing software. For efficient

1. ID for Bull and Farm
2. Service capacity (libido and serving ability)
3. Physical Soundness
4. Semen quality
5. Classification

Assuming freedom from disease, bulls require these 3 attributes to be fertile (Albert Barth)

Fig. 2. The SFT electronic BSE (eBSE) form created using the eBSE software. Data can be entered from an iPad. ID, identification. (Courtesy of Society for Theriogenology, with permission.)

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