



## **NEW – LBW Angus Division**

New to the UBIA Performance Bull Test this year is a Low Birth Weight (LBW) division for the Black Angus bulls. The Angus bulls will now be divided into two divisions: traditional “Growth” division and the NEW “LBW” division.

Birth weight in calves is important in all age classes of cows relative to its’ potential impact on dystocia or calving difficulty. While nutritional status of the cow during gestation plays a major part in calf birth weight, the other component that has a major impact on calf weight at birth is found in the genetics of both the sire and the dam.

Calf birth weight becomes especially important when breeding a heifer, as dystocia with the first calf can have negative impacts on overall lifetime productivity and may lead to her early departure from the herd.

In accordance with the above facts, the Utah Beef Improvement Association is offering a new division of Black Angus bulls in their annual bull performance test. The new division is called the Low Birth Weight division and will be made up of bulls which meet a very specific criterion designed to have a positive impact on reducing dystocia in first-calf heifers. This new division was created to highlight bulls possessing these criteria and which, if left in competition with the traditional “Growth” division bulls might not qualify for sale in the annual UBIA Performance Bull Test Sale.

The following criterion must be met in order for a Black Angus bull to be in the LBW division:

- A. Birth Weight less than or equal to 80 pounds, and
- B. Birth Weight (BW) EPD less than or equal to +1.8, and
- C. Calving Ease (CE) EPD of greater than or equal to +5.0.

While the UBIA cannot guarantee a total absence of dystocia problems in calves sired by the bulls in this new LBW division since environment has impacts on fetal growth, these bulls come from genetic lines which show a preponderance to produce lower birth weight calves born with greater ease than other lines.

Naturally, it is the responsibility of the producer to use visual selection criteria to further reduce the possibility of dystocia by looking at the slope of the shoulder and width of the chest in bulls planned to be used on heifers.