

Ultrasound Technology Helps Maximize Beef Production

Kansas State University



A more efficient and profitable form of beef production became possible with the invention of the innovative carcass ultrasound technology invented by Kansas State Professor John Brethour.

The technology offers beef producers a fast, non-invasive way to predict and measure cattle carcass characteristics in live cattle. In 1995, the university licensed the technology to Cattle Performance Enhancement Co., based in Oakley, Kansas. The technology revolutionized the beef industry by allowing producers a cost efficient way to measure intramuscular fat in livestock.

“ *The technology, which estimates the fat, muscle and body composition of cattle, enables beef producers to raise premium beef without over feeding the cattle — a cost savings for the producers and a healthier end product for consumers.* ”

Achieving a premium grade of beef is typically linked to overly fat cattle, but with Brethour’s ultrasound technology, the selection and management of livestock helps predict carcass yield and quality. Brethour’s technology is based on

two U.S. patents. The first is for a system that accurately allows breeders to measure the intramuscular fat in live cattle. The second patent provides an assessment of how long cattle should be maintained on feed for maximum profit by projecting future carcass merit.

In 2003, when the Kansas State Agricultural Research Center-Hays (ARCH) entered 80 Angus steers in the Best of Breed Angus Challenge at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association annual convention and trade show, they came away with the \$100,000 top prize. Illustrating that the university's livestock research is top notch, ARCH steers were graded 100 percent Choice beef or better and 91 percent earned the prestigious Certified Angus Beef award.

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