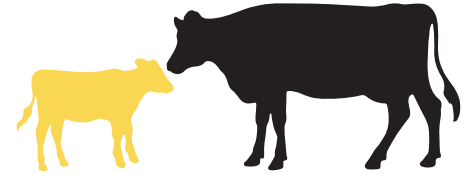


What is the importance of Calving Ease data recording?

The impact on profitability of a herd due to calving difficulty is considerable. While birth weights of calves are a crucial management tool in minimizing calving risk, calving ease EBV also consider other important factors, such as calf shape, pelvic area and dam calving “will”.

The recording of this information allows greater genetic improvement to be made in ease of calving or when selecting replacement breeding stock than just by birth weight alone and can easily be submitted to the registry team while recording your calf entry data.



Recording Calving Ease Scores

SCORE	CALVING DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
Calving Difficulty 1	Unassisted	Cow calved unassisted (no calving difficulty)
Calving Difficulty 2	Easy Pull	One person without mechanical assistance
Calving Difficulty 3	Hard Pull	One person with, or two people without mechanical assistance
Calving Difficulty 4	Surgical Assistance	Veterinary intervention required
Calving Difficulty 5	Mal-presentation	e.g. Breech
Calving Difficulty 6	Elective Surgical	Surgical removal of calf before the cow has the opportunity to calve

Things to consider when collecting calving ease scores

- If you are checking your cows daily, it can be assumed that a cow who calves without assistance between visits can be recorded as unassisted (1), unless the calf is showing signs of distress.
- A score should be recorded for all calves, not just difficult births. Dead calves should also have a score recorded if possible.
- A calving ease of (0) or blank does not mean no difficulty, it is interpreted as no score recorded.
- Some variation in calving ease is required for the scores to be analysed and shown as an observed trait. If all calving's are recorded as (1), then no genetic difference in ease of calving can be identified, meaning it won't appear as an analysed trait.
- When Calving Ease EBV's are calculated, calving difficulty scores of Hard Pull (3) and Surgical Assistance (4) are grouped together. Calving difficulty scores of Malpresentation (5) and Elective Surgical (6) are excluded from Breedplan Analysis as these are considered non-genetic.

Understanding the recorded EBV

- A Calving Ease Direct EBVs estimates the genetic differences in the ability of a sires' calves to be born unassisted from two year old heifers, and higher, more positive EBVs are more favourable.
- The Calving Ease Direct EBVs are reported as differences in the percentage of unassisted calving's.
- A bull with a Calving Ease Direct EBV of +5.0% would be expected, on average, to produce 3% fewer difficult calving's from two year old heifers than a bull with a Calving Ease Direct EBV of -1.0% (6% difference between the sires, then halved as they only contribute half the genetics to the resultant calf)



For more information about Recording Calving Difficulty Scores click the image above or scan the QR Code to watch the video on Youtube

