



Building Ancestry Its Importance Can Never Be Underestimated

The ancestry behind us tells our story. It is a treasure packed full of information. It tells us where we came from, how we got to this point and why we are what we are.

Isaac Latimer is pictured here, possibly reflecting on his ancestry as his grandpa Louis reads him a story about a place long ago and far away. Isaac, like all of us, is a walking blue print of the ancestry behind him. He will obviously be the most influenced by the generations closest to him, but those further back will still have some influence on how and why he is what he is.

It's no different with our cattle and our breeding programs. They represent the blueprint of the ancestry behind them. The challenge as seed stock producers is to manage and guide this blueprint. To manage this process, a breeder has to have in place a select gene pool, a consistent selection guide and the perseverance to turn over the generations.

Set out on the next page are genetic flow charts of the four most prominent sire lines in the Remital program. Charting these sire lines helps to give a clear picture of how these lines have and are continuing to evolve. It is important to note that because they have been self sustaining, just how much they are contributing to the building of the Remital program.

Having accurate knowledge of the ancestry that makes up your program is an integral part in its sustainability.

The cow families in a program - as you will see on pages 8 & 9 - give you the other half of the story. Their value to a program's sustainability is just as critical. Strong cow families are a program's backbone. Without strong cow families, a program has no staying power. There are two main reasons for this, one - they represent the base from which the herd builds, two - they are also your safety net from which you can regroup if a particular sire's offspring prove to be inferior or undesirable. It's amazing how consistently cow families tend to retain what is unique and special to them generation after generation.

Again, knowing your cow families and their ancestry really helps a breeder make more informed and better breeding decisions.

The forefathers of the purebred industry had a better grasp on this concept than most of us seem to today. They knew that to lessen the variables of the unknown and to create a unique and consistent trait or type, animals had to be developed from a select few. Thus, the purebred breeds were born and each breed's uniqueness was very evident. I say "was"... now the trend most breeds have is to mimic most notably the color and body structure of the Angus. This has been done some by selection, but mostly by depurifying the pureness of their breed. I.E. by putting outcross Angus genetics into their gene pool.

Whether these results are an improvement for those breeds, only time will tell. What is very evident though, is that these breeds who have depurified themselves now no longer offer what they were originally designed for. They broke down the purity of the selection process, consequently losing both uniqueness and consistency.

The same process happens within a purebred breed itself, only on a somewhat less drastic scale. This process is referred to by breeders trying to promote an individual as having outcross genetics. Outcross genetics within a breed really means that it has been operating in relative obscurity in relation to the rest of the breed. To find out if this has been for good reason or not is worth your time to research.

Remember this: to develop a trait, whatever it may be, and have it be able to consistently reproduce itself, it has to be developed from a very few select individuals without deviation for generations. Just like the original process used by the forefathers of the purebred breeds.

The Remital program is making tremendous progress. We believe that our young cattle today have superior production to generations past.

With the building blocks in place, we know future generations will be even better.