Michigan Cattlemen's Association

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

MCA-MSU

BULL EVALUATION

MIBulls.com

2026-27 POLICIES & RULES

Nominations due: **September 1, 2026**

Bull receiving: **October 2, 2026**

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The **Michigan Cattlemen's Association-Michigan State University (MCA-MSU) Bull Evaluation Program Committee** (hereafter, "Committee") is responsible for program supervision and direction.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

- **Enhance Producer Education on Performance Evaluation**: promote performance-evaluated beef cattle and serve as an educational tool to help producers understand the value of performance evaluation to improve herd productivity and profitability.
- **Standardized Evaluation Environment:** Provide a common environment for evaluating developing bulls.
- **Facilitate Access to Superior Genetics:** Aid beef producers in obtaining superior bulls that have been evaluated for growth rate, feed efficiency, structural and breeding soundness, and carcass merit.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Consignor Eligibility

1. Breeder participants (hereafter, "Consignors") must be MCA members with their 2026-27 dues paid in advance (micattlemen.org/Membership)

2. Consignors must have a valid Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certification at the time of nomination. Training and certification are available at www.bqa.org.

3. At the discretion of the Committee, bulls will be denied entry if they originate from a county in a bovine TB Modified Accredited Zone (i.e., Michigan counties of Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, and Oscoda) or a county where an active bovine TB positive cattle herd investigation is underway.

Bull Eligibility and Pre-Receiving Preparation

1. Bulls must be born between **Sept. 1, 2025, and Mar. 31, 2026**. The Committee reserves the right to reject any bull with a discrepancy between the stated and apparent age according to dentition.

2. Bulls must be purebred or hybrid, registered in a national or international breed association, and originate from a calf crop enrolled in that breed association's performance program. Each bull must have a corresponding, legible, ear tattoo or brand and have weaning data reported to and processed by that breed association.

3. Bulls must have a DNA sample submitted for analysis through their respective breed association prior to receiving date. Analysis must minimally verify sire parentage and generate genomically enhanced EPDs.

4. Bulls must be tested and verified free of any breed association identified potential lethal trait for which there is a DNA test available. Lethal traits with available DNA tests at the time of this printing include Arthrogryposis Multiplex (AM), Neuropathic Hydrocephalus (NH), and Contractural Arachnodactyly (CA) in Angus, Osteopetrosis (OS), Alpha-Mannosidosis (MA), and Exercise Induced Collapse (EC) in Red Angus, Progressive Ataxia (PA) in Charolais, Tibial Hemimelia (TH) and Pulmonary Hypoplasia with Anasarca (PHA) in Maine Anjou and Shorthorn, Arachnomelia (Spider Leg) in Simmental, and Mandibulofacial Dysostosis (MD) and Maple Syrup Urine Disease (MSUD) in Hereford. Other breeds may have additional defects, and open herdbook breeds may be affected via ancestors. Consult your breed association for a list of

known lethal alleles, animal status, and approved testing procedures. There is no required testing for Developmental Duplication (DD), as it is not lethal, however, carrier and potential carrier status will be published in the sale catalog.

5. Bulls must be vaccinated and boostered (usually 2 to 3 weeks later) per label instructions for:
   a) Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR)*
   b) Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus (BVDV types 1 & 2)*
   c) Parainfluenza-3, (PI_3)*
   d) Bovine Respiratory Syncytial Virus (BRSV)*
   e) *Mannheimia haemolytica* (with "leukotoxoid" or "toxoid")
   f) Histophilus somni
   g) Clostridial organisms, 7-way

   *At least one dose as a modified-live vaccine. Boosters must be given between 14 to 90 days before receiving. Products labeled as "OneShot" or "Once" must also receive a booster, as bulls will be commingled. A list of example vaccination protocols is available at MIbulls.com.

6. Bulls must be treated for internal and external parasites with a broad-spectrum anthelmintic following removal from pasture, but no less than 14 days before receiving.

7. Bulls must be weaned and, if horned, dehorned a minimum of 21 days before receiving.

8. Bulls must test negative for BVDV before receiving. The test must be a virus detection test and not an antibody test. The MSU VDL can complete a virus detection test on an ear notch or blood sample. BVDV tests offered in combination with genomic testing are virus detection tests and are acceptable, but these tests often have prolonged turnaround times.

9. Bulls originating from outside Michigan must have a certificate of veterinary inspection, official RFID tag, and meet all other health requirements to enter Michigan. For questions, contact Michigan's State Veterinarian office (1-800-292-3939).

10. Bulls must have a USDA official radio frequency identification (RFID) tag (low frequency) on the **inside of their left ear** at receiving. Proper placement is imperative for communication with the feed efficiency equipment. See manufacturer's instructions for proper application.

11. Bulls must weigh a minimum of 2.40 lb./day of age at receiving.

12. Bulls must be visually free of ringworm and warts at receiving. Bulls that are morbid, have poor disposition, physical defects such as cryptorchidism, testicular hypoplasia, lameness, or unacceptable claw set will not be accepted at receiving. Close observation of each bull's feet and palpation of the scrotum is recommended during on-farm preparation.

NOMINATION ACCEPTANCE

A completed nomination form must be received electronically or postmarked by **Sept. 1, 2026**, along with the nomination fee for space reservation. Nomination fees are credited to the evaluation cost.

If nominations exceed station capacity a priority plan will be implemented, which reserves space for first-time Consignors. The nomination fee will be fully refunded if space is unavailable, or

entrance requirements are not met at receiving. However, **nomination fees are non-refundable for no-show bulls after the cut-off date** (see schedule). Please contact the MSU or MCA office with any nomination changes.

RECEIVING REQUIREMENTS

Bulls must have these completed documents and payment at receiving.

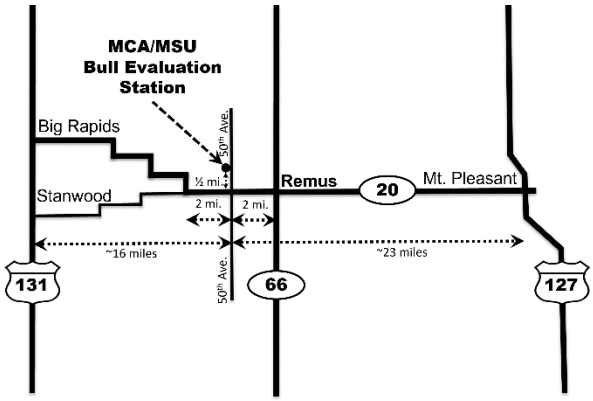
- Consignment receiving form
- A paper copy of the registration papers or online page
- BVDV negative test report copy
- Health verification form (producer signed)
- Bovine TB testing agreement (producer signed)
- Receiving payment
- If applicable, genetic defect test results

CONSIGNOR PERFORMANCE DATA

Performance data (actual birth weight and breed association calculated adjusted weaning weight) should be submitted at receiving. A charge of $50/bull will be assessed for data submitted after Nov. 20, 2026, and will result in sale ineligibility if not received by Dec. 11, 2026.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

1. Bulls will be evaluated at the MCA-MSU Bull Evaluation Program Station, located at Wernette Cattle Company, 9441 50th Ave., Remus, MI, 49340.



2. Bulls will be ear-tagged with identification that will be their evaluation and sale lot number.

3. Bulls will be sorted into 4 pens of 28 bulls (or fewer) per pen based on receiving age, weight, and weaning contemporary group. All bulls will be fed the same ration during the feed test, if possible. Within testing contemporary groups (i.e., Senior and Junior) bulls will be fed the same ration during the remainder of the gain test.

4. Bulls will be retreated for internal and external parasites, including coccidia, and will receive a respiratory disease vaccination booster.

5. After a 21-day adjustment period, individual bull feed intake will be measured with the SmartFeed system ("feed test"). Bulls will receive a total mixed ration, with a diet composition approved by the Committee and available to Consignors upon request.

6. SmartScale weights will be obtained as bulls visit the automatic waterers. Chute full body weights will be obtained at receiving, on feed test (on 2 consecutive d; d-1, d0), middle feed test (d28), end of the feed test (d49), and off ADG test (on 2 consecutive d; d97,d98) for calibration of the SmartScale weights and ADG determination.

7. Individual bull hip height will be measured at the end of the gain test on two consecutive days and averaged to calculate frame size.

8. Bulls within breed acceptable age ranges will have ultrasound measurements of ribeye area, rib fat, rump fat, and intramuscular fat obtained and submitted to the respective breed associations. Late March-born bulls may be too young for the calculation of carcass EPDs. Ultrasound of older bulls, prior to receiving, is acceptable to maintain weaning contemporary groups.

9. To be sale eligible, all bulls must receive and pass a complete breeding soundness exam (BSE) as defined by the Society for Theriogenology, except that bulls born Feb. 1 or later will be considered to have passed with a lowered minimum for normal sperm morphology (i.e., 50% vs. 70%). The Committee reserves the right to have rechecks conducted on BSE deferred bulls for conditions that are likely to resolve before the sale (e.g., warts, elevated white blood cells).

10. Veterinary service for individual bulls will be obtained when deemed necessary by the station manager. The Consignor will be responsible for all veterinary service fees and medication costs. If deemed necessary by the station manager to manage herd health, necropsy fees will be paid from the contingency fund.

BULL REMOVAL

Bulls must remain at the station from receiving until the sale, unless released by the station manager, station veterinarian, or Committee. The station manager and Committee reserve the right to request removal of any bull because of morbidity, injury, structure, disposition, or failure to meet requirements. Consignors are responsible for all costs incurred while the bull is at the station. All costs must be paid in full before a bull is released from the station. Violation of these requirements will forfeit the Consignor's future evaluation privileges.

SCHEDULE

Eligible birth dates	9/1/25–3/31/26	Warm-up period (21 d)	10/2–10/23
Nominations due	9/1	Start gain & feed tests	10/22-23
Weaned on or before	9/11	Interim wt. (perf. data due)	11/20
Initial vaccinations (per label, ~2 to 3 weeks before booster)		End feed test (mid test meeting)	12/11
Booster vaccinations	7/4–9/18	Payment due	1/15
Final day for nomination refund	9/18	End gain test	1/28-29
Bull receiving	10/2	Open House	3/6
		Sale	3/20

COSTS AND PAYMENT

Feed cost will be summed over 4 separate periods, 1) 21-d adaptation period feed cost will be divided equally among bulls within a pen, 2) 49-d feed test period feed cost will be calculated using individual bull feed intake plus the equivalent percentage of unknown feed disappearance, 3) additional 49-d evaluation finish feed cost will be prorated, by individual bull weight gain within a pen, and 4) post evaluation feed cost will be divided equally among bulls within a pen by days present. Veterinary and medical costs, administered individually, will be charged to the respective bull. All other evaluation costs will be equally divided among bulls. Sale expenses will be calculated as a percentage of the sale (or floor) price for all bulls in the sale. Complete settlement will be

made to Consignors by MCA after deducting all evaluation and sale expenses from the sale receipts for each bull. Past costs are available from the MSU office upon request. Payments toward evaluation costs must be made according to the following schedule.

Payment schedule*

Due at:	**Nomination**	**Receiving**	**Jan. 15, 2027****
Payment:	$375	$375	$375

*Late payments will be assessed at $50/bull.

Adjustment of the final payment may be required if market conditions dictate. Make checks payable to the **Michigan Cattlemen's Association.

LIABILITY

Professional veterinary service will be obtained, when necessary, but neither the station managers, Wernette Cattle Co., Committee, its designated veterinarians, member breed associations, Michigan Cattlemen's Association, nor Michigan State University may be held liable in case of loss by casualty, disaster, theft, injury, morbidity, or mortality of animals. Insurance is the owner's responsibility for their bull(s) while at the station.

RECORDS PROVIDED

Data provided to the consignor and publicly throughout the evaluation include: receiving, initial, interim, and final weights, weight per day of age (WDA), average daily gain (ADG), dry matter intake (DMI) and residual feed intake (RFI), frame score, scrotal circumference, ultrasound measures of fat thickness, ribeye area, and intramuscular fat, which are submitted to each breed association for inclusion in carcass EPDs. Breeding soundness examination results are provided to the consignor and buyer only.

SALE REQUIREMENTS

1. Breeders who do not wish to sell a bull for any reason must notify the station manager prior to the end of the gain test. Otherwise, all eligible bulls must be sold through the sale. All non-sale bulls must be removed from the station no later than the day of the Open House.

2. Bulls must achieve the following criteria to be eligible to sell – an ADG of ≥2.8 lb./day, pass the BSE, acceptable observations of disposition and structural soundness, and have acceptable foot conformation scores (foot angle and claw set of 4 through 6, see MIbulls.com for details).

3. Bulls successfully meeting all sale criteria will be freeze branded with the MCA-MSU Bull Evaluation Program brand.

MCA

4. Sale order will be set in ascending order by the calculation:

$$\frac{\overbrace{2 \times (\text{ADG\%} + \text{WDA\%} + \text{RFI\%})}^{\text{Evaluated Gain Performance \& Feed Efficiency}} + \overbrace{(\text{CE EPD\%} + \text{WW EPD\%} + \text{Milk EPD\%}^{*})}^{\text{Maternal}} + \overbrace{\text{YW EPD\%}}^{\text{Growth}} + \overbrace{\text{Marb EPD\%} + \text{REA EPD\%}}^{\text{Carcass}}}{12}$$

**capped at 20%.*

5. The Committee will set the sale floor price at the mid-test meeting. Bulls not receiving the minimum floor price bid will not sell and will be charged sale expenses as a percentage of the floor price. Consignors are urged to support the program by setting subsequent sale prices on "no-sale" bulls at or above the floor price. In 2026, the floor price was $3,500.

6. Registration transfer within 45 days following the sale payment is the sole responsibility of the Consignor. MCA will complete final settlement after bulls are transferred to their new owner.

MCA-MSU BULL EVALUATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE

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