

Angus Foundation Research Project

Name of project: Development and evaluation of hair shedding scores in Angus cattle, North Carolina State University (NCSU) and Mississippi State University (MSU)

Status: Completed

Timeline: 2008 to 2010

Angus Foundation funding: More than \$21,000 from the Angus Foundation; AAA has paid for data collection outside of this amount.

Objective: To adapt a reasonable method to assess hair coat shedding within purebred Angus cattle, determine how much hair coat shedding variation exists among Angus cows and estimate its effects on adjusted 205-d weight and cow's body condition score (BCS).

Results, if any: This research provides evidence that cows that shed late in the season wean lighter calves. Hair coat shedding is a heritable trait and could be altered by selection. Producers within the Southeastern or Southern United States who have observed late hair coat shedding within their herds can select for hair coat shedding earlier in the season. This should result in higher weaning weights, making the cow herd more productive.

Application: Producers seeking to reduce heat stress in their herds related to hair coat shedding should score their cows on a 1 to 5 scale in late May. Cows with hair coat shedding scores of 4 or 5, indicating little or no shedding, should be considered for culling.