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## 2026 Bull Development & Evaluation Program

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Management/Events	Dates
Birthdates	08/15/2025 – 11/20/2025
Nomination Deadline	06/26/2026
Delivery	07/07/2026
On Test	07/20/2026 and 07/21/2026
28 Day Data	08/18/2026
56 Day Data	09/15/2026
Off Test	10/12/2026 and 10/13/2026
Carcass Ultrasound	10/13/2026
Bull Selection Seminar	11/05/2026
Bull Selection Seminar	11/24/2026
Bull BSE	11/30/2026 to 12/02/2026
Sale	<b>12/10/2026</b>

Programs in agriculture and natural resources,  
4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences,  
and resource development.  
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture,  
U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.  
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

**Purpose**

- Provide a standard, impartial post-weaning gain test and development program.
- Record performance and phenotypic data that will be useful to the buyer and the consignor for making future breeding decisions.
- Provide a source of, and market for, performance tested bulls that meet industry needs.
- Serve as an educational tool for bull development beef cattle improvement and promotion.

**Location**

[Middle Tennessee AgResearch & Education Center](#)  
[1070 New Lake Rd.](#)  
[Lewisburg, TN 37091](#)

Centrally located in the state approximately 60 miles south of Nashville and conveniently accessible from Interstate 65 (via 840 from east or west) approximately 8 miles East of Interstate 65 Exit 32 (13 miles from Exit 37 – easier trailer access).

**Management, Facilities & Capacity**

- Administration of the program is provided by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture.
- Management of the bulls and data collection is provided by staff at the Middle Tennessee AgResearch & Education Center, coordinated by [Kevin Thompson \(MTREC Director\)](#) and [Dr. Saulo Zoca \(Assistant Professor & Extension Beef Cattle Specialist – Reproductive Management - Department of Animal Science\)](#).
- Education programming and bull marketing assistance is provided by the UT Department of Animal Science and coordinated by [Dr. Troy Rowan \(Assistant Professor - Beef Cattle Genomics – Department of Animal Science\)](#) and [Dr. Saulo Zoca](#).
- The Tennessee Beef Cattle Improvement Association (TBCIA) provides administrative consultation, manages the self-insured program, and administers sale proceeds.
- The current facility space accommodates a maximum of 100 bulls.
  - In the event that more than 100 bulls are consigned, the number of consignments per breeder may be reduced and/or Tennessee breeders given first priority. This will be handled at the discretion of the bull test coordinating team.

**Consigner Eligibility**

- Breeders consigning bulls to the test should be members of the breed association with which the bulls they consign are registered.
- Consigners must be a member of the TBCIA.
  - TBCIA membership dues notice will be sent to consignors after delivery and payment is required before the sale.
- Out-of-state breeders may consign up to 10 percent of the total number.
  - Program management may adjust percent out-of-state limitation depending on capacity of the facilities and at the discretion of the bull test coordinating team.

## Individual Bull Eligibility

- Registered bulls of any recognized beef breed
- All bulls must be recorded with a breed association and have a performance record (including EPDs) provided by that association.
  - A copy of each bull’s registration certificate must be submitted (due at 56-day weigh period 09/15/2026).
- Identification:
  - Each bull must be individually identified.
  - Each bull must have a legible tattoo in both ears and that tattoo must match the breed-issued registration certificate.
  - Bulls should have a [USDA-recognized electronic identification \(EID; “840”\) tag](#).
    - Bulls that do not have an official 840 EID tag will receive one at delivery.
- **Date of birth on or between August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**
- Performance:
  - **Actual birth weights must be reported.**
  - Minimum on-farm weaning performance as evaluated by the **adjusted 205-day weight (adjWW) without creep feed ≥ 540 lbs.**
    - **With creep feed ≥ 580 lbs**
    - **Adjusted 205-day weaning weight (WW) calculation:**

$$\text{adjWW} = \left( \left( \frac{\text{WW} - \text{BW}}{\text{age at weaning in days}} \right) * 205 \right) + \text{BW}$$

- If a bull does not meet one of the above criteria, it may be accepted if it its **adjusted 205-day weight ratio ≥ 100 among at least five other contemporaries.**
- Health requirements:
  - Each bull must have been vaccinated for the following at least 3 weeks prior to delivery:
    - IBR-PI3
    - BVD
    - BRSV
    - 7-way Clostridium (ci. chauvoei, septicum, novyi, sordelli)
    - 5-way Leptospirosis
    - Killed WART Vaccine (**Recommended vaccine and booster, not required**)
  - Each bull must have been tested negative for the following **prior to delivery:**
    - Anaplasmosis
    - BVD-PI (ear notch test only, serum test results not accepted)
    - **Bulls without negative test prior to delivery will not be accepted**
  - Treated with systemic insecticide(s) labeled for the control of lice and internal parasites.
  - **All bulls must be accompanied by a health certificate, issued by a licensed veterinarian, indicating all required vaccinations and negative disease testing results.**

**Individual Bull Eligibility (cont.)**

- Bulls not originating from Tennessee must have health papers meeting all requirements for interstate shipment to Tennessee.
- Breed association regulations concerning genetic defects will be used to determine eligibility.
  - Potential carriers of genetic defects (i.e. not determined free of genetic defect by pedigree) are required to have a negative genomic test for that defect.
- Each bull must have undergone genomic testing with a commercially available test accepted by their breed association and **must include color and polled status.**
- Consigners are encouraged to have bulls dehorned and healed prior to delivery if they are not polled.
  - For breeds that traditionally retain horns, they should be tipped prior to delivery.
- All bulls will be scored for hoof angle and claw set upon arrival.
  - Any bull scoring 7 or greater on either will be encouraged not to remain on test.
  - All bulls scoring 8 or greater on either criterion will not be eligible for sale.
- Bulls may be turned down if they are deemed to be physically unsound, or otherwise unsuitable, upon inspection at delivery to the facility.
- Bulls with poor temperament (i.e. wild, unmanageable, “high-headed”) will not be admitted at delivery and may be removed from the test at any time.
  - **This decision rests exclusively with program management and will not be open to the consigner’s opinion;** please be critical of temperament on-farm.
  - The safety of the MTREC staff takes priority over any other consideration.
  - Temperament not only negatively affects the performance of individual bulls, but also significantly reduces the performance of other bulls managed in the same pen.

**\*Be advised that, to protect personnel safety and the investment of other consigners, no leeway will be given for poor temperament even if the bull in question did not display similar behavior on-farm.**

**Consent for Data Collection**

Consigned bulls may be utilized for the collection of data in research projects that have received prior approval from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (UTK-IACUC), and/or for the use of data collected during the test, regardless of specific research designation (including, but not limited to, weights, average daily gain, hip height, and related performance measures). These studies are expected to involve minimal risk, as they are primarily observational in nature (i.e., minimally invasive procedures, such as the collection of hair or blood samples for the purpose of evaluating hormone levels in relation to test performance). All bulls shall be managed in accordance with a uniform protocol and shall not be subjected to differential or experimental treatment regimens. Information obtained from these studies may be analyzed, published, and/or otherwise disseminated for research and educational purposes, provided that all individual animal and owner identities shall remain confidential and shall not be disclosed without prior authorization. Consignors may elect to opt out of the use of their animals and associated data

for research purposes by submitting a formal written request via email to the Bull Test management staff prior to the commencement of the test period. In the absence of such written notification, consent for the use of animals and associated data in accordance with the terms outlined herein shall be presumed. By consigning animals to the University of Tennessee Bull Development and Evaluation Program, breeders acknowledge and expressly agree to the terms and conditions set forth herein.

### **Sale Eligibility**

Individual bulls meeting or exceeding the following requirements will be eligible for the post-test sale in December:

- Performance
  - Each bull must meet the following performance criteria ratios of within its contemporary breed group:
    - For breed groups with fewer than five bulls, ratios will be computed with the average of the most comparable breed group in the test.
    - Minimum average ratio of 80 for Average Daily Gain (ADG) in the 84-day test period.
- Frame size
  - Based on age adjusted hip height, and calculated using the equation published by the Beef Improvement Federation in their [Guidelines for Uniform Beef Improvement Programs](#) (pg. 29)
- Structural soundness will be evaluated by a committee of the management staff and structurally unsound bulls will be removed from the sale offering at any time unsoundness is detected.
- Breeding Soundness Exam (BSE)
  - Each bull will undergo a BSE performed by a licensed theriogenologist and classified as Satisfactory Potential Breeder (“pass”), Unsatisfactory Potential Breeder (“fail”), or “deferred” according to guidelines published in the Society for Theriogenology [Manual for Breeding Soundness Examination for Bulls](#) second edition.
  - All bulls with physical defects of the penis and prepuce that will interfere with copulation (warts, penile hair ring, persistent frenulum, scars/adhesions) will be marked as unsatisfactory potential breeder (fail BSE) and removed from the test immediately (not eligible for sale).
  - Bulls receiving the “pass” classification meet BSE criteria for sale eligibility.
  - Bulls receiving the “deferred” classification will not be eligible for the sale, and a re-examination date will be given to the owner to have their bull re-examined at their discretion (not eligible for sale).
  - **Any bull receiving the “deferred” or “fail” classification will not be eligible for the sale.**
- All bulls eligible for the sale will be branded on the right hip with the Outline of the State of Tennessee brand registered to the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture.

## **Sale Management**

- Public live auction with online simulcast
  - Sale management may choose to offer online pre-bidding if available, but final sale price is determined at live auction.
- Eligible bulls will be cataloged and videoed for distribution via hard copy and online media platforms prior to sale.
- Consigners may choose not to catalog or offer eligible bulls for sale.
  - Consignors must notify the test manager by the off-test weigh date if any bulls are to be retained for home use and not sold.
- Consigners may retain a semen interest in any bull (up to 50%), but full possession must be sold (i.e. fractional possession offerings will not be available)
- Proceeds from the sale of each bull will be collected by sale management and the balance after final settlement (see below) returned to the consigner.
- Terms and conditions of the sale will be printed in the catalog.
- Transfer of registration, and associated cost, is the consigner's responsibility.

## **Bull Management On Test**

- Bulls will be given a minimum 14-day adjustment period after delivery before testing begins.
- On-test weights will be recorded as the average weights taken on the first two consecutive days of the test.
- Weights will be recorded on days 28, 56 and 84 of the test period.
- Off-test weights will be recorded as the average weight taken on the last two consecutive days of the test.
- Consigners will be notified when a bull is treated for severe sickness or displays poor performance.
  - A veterinarian will be consulted when needed and also available to consult the consigner.
- Other data collection points are noted in the timeline on the title page.
- All bulls must remain the entire 84-day test period unless removal for health or other reasons is authorized by the test manager.

## **Program Cost**

- Nomination fee - \$225 per bull
  - Payment submitted with nomination materials (see nomination forms and links below)
  - \$25 will be retained, and \$200 returned to the consigner, for bulls not delivered or not accepted at delivery.
- Yardage fee - \$2.00/day per bull
  - Yardage is charged to cover expenses associated with labor, handling, data collection, and facility maintenance.

**Program Cost (cont.)**

- Feed - variable
  - Feed consumption, including hay, will be measured the whole test and evenly divided by bull. Bulls that are removed from test before sale day will be prorated.
  - Bulls will be penned by age, and delivery weight to reduce variation of daily feed intake to the highest reasonable degree
- Indemnity fee - \$25
  - The TBCIA maintains a self-insurance fund, available to current members, to offset feed cost in the case of bull mortality.
- Health treatments - variable
  - Veterinary services and pharmaceuticals for individual bulls will be charged to the consigner at cost.
  - Health management applied to all bulls as special precautionary measures will be distributed evenly on a per-bull basis.
- Advertisement - variable
  - Sale advertisement costs will be distributed evenly across all bulls included in the catalog since those costs are incurred prior to determining eligibility for each individual bull. Includes, but not limited to, catalog design and printing, mailing, video capture and editing.
- Sale cost - variable
  - Sale expenses will be distributed across all bulls eligible for the sale.
  - Includes, but not limited to, sale management, auctioneer, bid assistants, and online simulcast.
- Final Settlement
  - Costs per bull in excess of the nomination fee will be deducted from gross proceeds from the sale of that bull.
  - In cases where bulls are not sold, all testing costs must be paid prior to removal from the station.
  - Consignors of bulls not eligible to sell are responsible for all costs except sale cost.
  - In cases of bull death or removal during the test, the owner is responsible for all costs incurred to that point.

**Liability**

- The University of Tennessee, nor any of its employees, does not assume risk or liability for any animal consigned. Each bull is the property of the consigner until ownership is transferred at auction.

### **Nomination of Consignments**

- Send a completed nomination form, copies of registration certificates, and total nomination fee payment to:

UT Bull Development  
c/o Ashley Savage  
PO Box 160  
Spring Hill, TN 37174

- Make checks payable to “University of Tennessee”
- Nomination can also be emailed to Ashley Savage: [savage15@utk.edu](mailto:savage15@utk.edu)
- Nomination forms can be found:
  - Attached to this document or
  - Printable forms are on the program website <https://utbeef.tennessee.edu/bull-development-and-evaluation-program/>
  - If more than 6 animals are being nominated, please use an additional copy of the nomination form to include the remaining animals.
    - Send check to above address after submitting the online form.

Pre-weaning and weaning performance along with registration certificate copy due by 56-day weigh date in order to be eligible for catalog.

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE  
 BULL DEVELOPMENT & EVALUATION PROGRAM  
**NOMINATION FORM**

Farm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Breeder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Breeder Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed	Horned (Y/N)	Tattoo	Registration Number	Calf Birth Date	Dam Birth Date	Actual BW	Actual WW	Wean Date	205-day WW Ratio	*Number in Contemp. Grp.	**Mngt. Code (C, NC, ET)

\*Number of bulls in the on-farm contemporary group.

\*\*Management code – C = Creep Fed; NC = Not Creep Fed; ET = Embryo Transfer

**Checklist for Nomination Materials**

- COPY of ORIGINAL on-farm performance records must accompany this entry form.
  - Any bull whose pre-weaning and weaning performance is not complete is subject to not being cataloged
- NOMINATION FEE is \$225 per bull. Make checks payable to the University of Tennessee.
- COPY OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE from the breed association should accompany entry form.
  - Registration certificate copies must be received by 56-DAY weigh period (09/15/2026) in order to be cataloged

**Return this form to: UT Bull Development, c/o Ashley Savage, PO Box 160, Spring Hill, TN 37174 or email [savage15@utk.edu](mailto:savage15@utk.edu)**

AGREEMENT: I the undersigned, in consideration for services provided to me by the University of Tennessee Bull Development & Evaluation Program, have read the 2024 Rules and Regulations and agree to be bound by its requirements and provisions. I also agree to become a member in good standing with TBCIA.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_