



Briggs Ranches, Bloomington, Texas

Commercial Data Program to Bolster Santa Gertrudis Database

SGBI Encourages Purebred and Commercial Producers to Participate

Performance data collection is invaluable to genetic progress. One way to advance this progress is by increasing the amount of data that's incorporated into the breed's genetic evaluation. Through utilizing commercial data, Santa Gertrudis Breeders International (SGBI) has developed a commercial data collection program that will amplify the accuracy of the traits important to the Santa Gertrudis breed.

The idea for collecting data on commercial Santa Gertrudis-influenced cattle came about in early 2021 when Tylor Braden of King Ranch presented SGBI with the opportunity to add a large amount of data to the SGBI database. The data was collected on commercial animals whose sires were all DNA verified.

As chair of the SGBI Performance Committee and serving on the SGBI Board of Directors, Kathryn Hefte says a special committee was formed with the task of determining how best to add the King Ranch data and the implications to the purebred database. Hefte raises purebred Santa Gertrudis cattle on Hefte Ranch LLC, located in Nueces and Medina counties in Texas. She has

chaired the Performance Committee for the entirety of her six-year term on the SGBI Board. She has also served as vice president of Breed Improvement.

Along with Hefte, those serving on the committee consisted of Tylor Braden, Adolfo Sanchez, Yancey Strait, Daniel Kubecka and SGBI Executive Director Webb Fields.

"We knew that King Ranch had quite a few records in a commercial scenario utilizing Santa Gertrudis genetics where we could capture data back in a real sound manner," Fields says. "We used this data in a pilot phase for how the integration of commercial data could work and what parameters would be necessary to protect the accuracy of our purebred data."

Creating the Program

The amount of data that King Ranch offered to SGBI was extremely valuable, yet more research was needed, Hefte explains. The committee explored how other breeds were handling commercial data. Their research showed that some breeds offer monetary incentives, while others' motivation is simply to improve the accuracy of the breed's genetic evaluation. The committee's research helped provide a foundation to design the Santa Gertrudis program.

"We know that data is difficult to collect," Hefte says. "It requires labor,

money, discipline and is more accurate and valuable when collected in large numbers."

This program allows producers to add their own data from commercial animals if they meet the requirements. Because breed accuracy relies on numbers, the goal of including this additional data is to strengthen the accuracy of SGBI's database.

"The first step to improving a trait is to begin to measure the trait," Hefte explains. "So, in addition to increasing accuracy with additional data, when we measure these traits, we begin to prioritize them in our breeding selections."

The research and pilot phase with the commercial data resulted in the creation of the Santa Gertrudis Commercial Data Collection Program.

Data Collection Requirements

The program outline specifies contemporary group and data collection requirements. Sires of commercial animals must be registered with SGBI and have a full-panel genotype on file. Sire breed composition is required to be 50 percent Santa Gertrudis, or offspring enrolled in the program must be a minimum of 50 percent Santa Gertrudis breed composition verified by sire pedigree and dam affidavit. Dams must have a

COMMERCIAL DATA PROGRAM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

herd ID and birth year reported, and general breed composition must be identified.

Additionally, as part of the program, carcass and fertility data is to be collected and recorded by SGBI. Carcass data will be reported by the feedlot and packing plant to identify top carcass sires.

Fertility data will be collected from replacement females as a way to add

more accuracy to genetic evaluation in identifying sires that can produce fertile daughters. These commercial females must be at least 25 percent Santa Gertrudis, performance-only recorded with SGBI, sire verified and have at least a GGpuLD panel on file.

"Fertility is undeniably the most economically important trait," Hefte adds. "The fertility data is hard to collect and fertility EPDs have lower heritability, so it is very exciting that we will be adding a large amount of this data to

bolster our Heifer Pregnancy and Breed Back EPDs."

Invitation to Utilize Commercial Data

"We are just getting this program kicked off, and certainly offer an invitation for members to utilize it with their commercial programs," Fields says. "We are also inviting current commercial producers who are using Santa Gertrudis genetics and can capture the data, to add value back to their herds."

Hefte says producers will benefit from recording this data by adding accuracy to their own bulls and by having the data to prove their genetic abilities when selling to their customers.

"Within this first phase, the incentives are on our breeders in their ability to capture more data to make our information more accurate within our genetic evaluation," Fields adds. "I certainly could see, down the road as we grow this program, finding ways to incentivize commercial producers as well."

Producers interested in contributing commercial data to the database can contact SGBI staff to enroll and participate in improving the breed's accuracy. To see full program details, please visit santagertrudis.com. 🐄

King Ranch, Kingsville, Texas



TEAM PREMIER

69 Years Strong · Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

History: The first affiliate to be chartered by SGBI in 1953 was originally named **East Texas Santa Gertrudis Association**. In 1959, ETSGA changed its name to **Premier SGA**. We were also the association that helped put on the first National Junior SGA shows in Dallas and Waco, Texas.

Junior Association Officers & Board of Director Members

President • **Cale Cornelius**
Vice President • **Emma Finley**
Secretary • **Madisyn Douglas**
Treasurer • **Luke Nelson**
Reporter • **Bailey Wiley**
Queen • **Alexis O'Neal**
Princess • **Sawyer Noles**

Active Association Officers & Board of Director Members

President • **Chris Taliaferro** • 214-674-8064
1st Vice Pres. • **Darrell Pitchford** • 903-388-2288
2nd Vice Pres. • **Brad Bland** • 817-991-2624
Secretary • **Brian Cummins** • 903-603-6634
Treasurer • **Matt Nichols** • 940-393-2305

Board Members

Glen Romines • 940-393-6291
Dan Palacek • 505-220-8019



Major Emphasis: To promote Santa Gertrudis and STAR 5 cattle to commercial breeders of all breeds in Texas and the USA. We also put high emphasis on the promotion of our Juniors and the Junior Association, because the Juniors are the future breeders of Premier and SGBI. Support for our Junior members comes through our annual silent auction, which helps fund scholarships as well as Junior shows.