

BEEF CATTLE IMPROVEMENT IN VIRGINIA -- *A History of the Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association*

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There are no exact records as to when beef cattle began to be improved. Robert Bakewell (1725-1795) managed an estate in Dishley, England and made his reputation working with Longhorn cattle, Leicester sheep and Shire horses. Bakewell coined the term "like begets like." Pedigree breeding of animals was established during his era. His outstanding success as a breeder had more to do with making the breeding of livestock popular than had any other man. Pedigree breeding coupled with breed development has been perhaps the most successful procedure used in the world.

From a scientific standpoint, Gregor Mendel, an Austrian monk, is credited with discovering the principles of heredity in 1866. His work with garden peas and other plants in the garden at the monastery is credited with discovering what is now called Mendelian segregation. His work was rediscovered about 1900. Then in the early to mid twentieth century Sewell Wright and R. A. Fisher brought modern livestock breeding, from a statistical standpoint, into the area of science. Wright's principles of genetic relationships among relatives is one of the essential principles of our modern EPD (Expected Progeny Difference) calculations.

From the standpoint of cattle improvement in the United States, much credit would have to be given to breeds that were imported as follows: Shorthorn 1783; Hereford 1817; Angus 1873; Holstein 1852; Jersey 1840; Guernsey 1830; Ayrshire 1822; Charolais 1930; Limousin 1968; Simmental 1968; Chianina 1971; Gelbvieh 1971 and Salers 1974.

Production records got their start in the dairy industry in the late 19th century and early in the 20th century with the first dairy cow testing program in Michigan in 1905. The dairy herd improvement associations were started in 1927.

In beef cattle, the first American breed, Santa Gertrudis, was developed by the King Ranch in Texas in the 1920's. The first bull gain test was conducted in Texas in 1941. The Charolais breed was introduced into Texas from Mexico in 1936, but did not spread across North America until the 1960's.

Early research work led to developing a cattle production records program at the USDA Station at Miles City, Montana by 1936. Performance programs, as such, in beef cattle got started before World War II but were not developed until much later in the period of 1950-1980.

Virginia was not necessarily first in recording records of performance of beef cattle but Virginia did make history by being the first state in the United States to have an organized state beef cattle improvement association (BCIA) which was organized in Charlottesville, Virginia in January 1955.

The performance movement in Virginia followed early research work establishing the fact that growth rate in cattle is heritable. Performance evaluation in the United States was started by a handful of breeders, extension men, and researchers on a one-to-one basis. Examples are George Ellis of the Bell Ranch, Jim Lingle of Wye Plantation, and John Rouse of Wyoming. After World War II, the beef cattle research station at Front Royal, Virginia, operated by VPI and USDA at the old remount station, was organized. Studies in beef cattle breeding began there in 1947. The work at Front Royal was led by Dr. Charles M. Kincaid and Dr. Robert C. Carter of VPI and Dr. T. C. Byerly and Dr. Everett Warwick of USDA and others. Bob Priode, station superintendent and Dr. Ken Bovard, research scientist, supervised the actual work at Front Royal. Their work in herds selected for growth rate versus type produced results showing that traits were heritable and growth and type were basically genetically independent.

Charles W. Wampler, an Angus breeder at Dayton, Virginia near Harrisonburg, was president of the Virginia Angus Association in the early 1950's. His son Bill, who graduated in Poultry Husbandry at VPI in 1950, had learned of the work going on at Front Royal and he and his father went to Front Royal to investigate and visit with Dr. Byerly and others. Charlie Wampler was a "mover" and not long thereafter, he had gotten the Virginia Angus Association board of directors and Dr. Charles Kincaid, Curtis Mast, beef extension specialist and Department Head George Litton, all of VPI, interested in a field demonstration and the start of gathering field research data. In the first year, 1953, nine Angus herds were enrolled with calves being weighed in each herd including the Sunny Slope Farm herd of Charles Wampler. The program was continued in 1954 with 26 herds and by 1955, there were 70 herds from which 2,482 calves and 300 yearlings were indexed. It is interesting that the average performance was as follows: age, 199 days; weight, 389 pounds; type, 11.7 (almost low choice on the old feeder calf grading system); and adjusted average daily gain, 1.7 pounds.

Scales were a real problem because very few farms had scales on which to weigh the calves. The Virginia Angus Association purchased a set of portable scales and turned them over to the VPI Animal Husbandry Department to be used in the program. These scales were built on a four-wheeled trailer and were very difficult to handle both on the highway and on the farms of the breeders. They were later abandoned in favor of a portable scale designed by C. M. Kincaid and built by the Virginia Highway Department. This scale was built on a two-wheeled trailer and was much easier to handle and could be set up for operation in some 15 to 20 minutes. This scale was used probably 3 or 4 years beginning in 1954. Finally, portable single-animal scales were manufactured and a Fairbanks scale was purchased for use in the program. Later several companies began to manufacture single animal scales. Some breeders bought scales but most relied on the portable scale furnished by the Animal Science Department and later through the decade of the 60s by the Virginia BCIA. The most satisfactory scale was manufactured by Paul Scale Company at Duncan, Oklahoma. Many breeders bought the Paul scale but many others used Sure-weigh or Fairbanks and some bought Arkfeld.

The men responsible for establishing the fledgling program were Charles Wampler, then president of the Virginia Angus Association, who was an original program participant, Dr. Charles M. Kincaid, Professor Curtis Mast, Extension Beef Specialist, and Professor

George W. Litton, head of the Animal Husbandry Department at VPI. Of course, cooperating breeders made it possible.

During the first year, each of the nine farms was visited twice and a weight and type score and certain body measurements were taken for each calf between the age of 4 and 10 months. An index was computed on each calf based on the calf's growth rate and type score. This index was based on growth rate and body type to give each theoretically 50% credit. The index formula for calves was average daily gain times 40 minus 18 plus 5 times numerical type score. It was assumed that based on data that the average calf had an average daily gain of 1.7 pounds and a type score of 10 (middle good). Such a calf would receive an index of 100. The numeric grade scale divided into thirds of a USDA feeder grade was: Fancy, 17-16-15; Choice, 14-13-12; Good, 11-10-9; Medium, 8-7-6.

These data were summarized by sire, age of dam, and sex of calf and furnished to each cooperating breeder. Based on this pilot study, it was concluded that a practical, useful program for the improvement of growth and quality of beef cattle on farms of breeders could be achieved.

Between 1945 and 1950, state and extension beef cattle improvement programs (BCI) were started in several states. First were in California, Colorado, New Mexico and Montana and were run by extension specialists. Though Virginia's program was not first, but was probably more advanced than some, great variation existed in methods and procedures used in these young programs.

Interest in the Virginia program became so great that the Virginia General Assembly appropriated a special fund to VPI in 1954 to employ a person to direct the program and make it more widely available to the beef cattle industry. Dr. Thomas J. Marlowe, who had received a PhD degree in animal breeding and genetics at Oklahoma State University, was hired by VPI and joined the Animal Husbandry faculty on September 1, 1954. At this time, 26 breeders were enrolled and 1,100 calves and 300 yearlings were indexed that year in Angus and Hereford breeds. Since available research information indicated that desirable beef type and growth should be given equal emphasis it was felt that a state grader with considerable experience in handling purebred livestock as well as experience in grading commercial cattle should be made available to assist personnel of the Experiment Station and Extension Service in the grading of these calves. Joseph B. Graham, a VPI Animal Husbandry graduate and a man with considerable experience as manager of purebred herds, was employed by the state grading service to do the official grading. Joe Graham did a masterful job in working with the breeders in getting them to accept a rather controversial performance testing program. One has to remember that the only breed improvement programs that even national breed associations had up to that time were their sponsorship of shows. Therefore, eyeball appraisal was considered by most to be of greater value than more objective measures. It would have been difficult to sell a performance program without grading of animals for type score but in retrospect without the grading, more progress might have been possible. Joe Graham was honored by Virginia BCIA (Superior Service Award) and the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) (Pioneer Award, 1999) for his years of leadership and service.

A meeting was held January 26, 1955 at the Virginia Angus Headquarters in Charlottesville and the Virginia BCIA was organized. Those involved included Tom Marlowe, Curtis Mast, W. L. Clover, D. W. Mason, R. H. Matthiessen, F. W. Scott, and Hank Davis. There was considerable discussion relative to what the name of the new organization should be but at a subsequent meeting of the new board of directors in March, 1955, the name Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association was agreed upon. The board of directors included two Angus breeders, two Hereford breeders, one Shorthorn breeder, three Virginia Beef Cattle Association representatives, and one VPI representative. W. L. Clover was elected president and served for three years. A. W. Frame only served one year due to the dispersal of his Angus herd. James A. Tilson and Allen K. Randolph and Fred W. Scott were the commercial representatives (Virginia Beef Cattle Association) and served full terms. W. J. Davis, Shorthorn, David E. Brower, Hereford, and Hunter Greenlaw, Hereford, served full terms. Charles W. Wampler was appointed to the board by VPI. After the first few years, three year rotation of directors became the norm. The second president of the organization was David E. Bower, manager of Still House Hollow Farm at Hume, Virginia served 1958 and 1959. A list of all presidents and board of director members is attached to this article. The first annual meeting of Virginia BCIA was held in 1956 at which time a constitution and bylaws and a set of operating policies and procedures were agreed upon.

The on-farm performance testing program made steady growth until the early 1970s at which time the program peaked at roughly 15,000 records of which some 13,000 were weaning records. VBCIA ceased to make portable scales available in 1970 also. In the early days, all records were kept on IBM punch cards. The old IBM 650 computer with its wired boards was used for computations and summaries. Mrs. Laura Whiter, who ran the computer center at VPI, saw to it that records were properly processed. As time passed, more modern computer equipment was utilized, cards were discarded, yielding to magnetic tapes and discs with data being entered from the BCIA office.

In 1976, Ike Eller and Don Vaniman, then executive secretary of the American Simmental Association, made a trip to St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands to assist Senepol breeders in setting up a performance testing system and organizing a breed association. As result, the Senepol Breeders of St. Croix was organized and Virginia BCIA handled all performance records for three years (1977-1979). The average adjusted 205 day weight (adjusted for age of dam and to a steer basis) was 503 pounds, all with no creep feed.

The Virginia BCIA performance testing program, ever since its inception, has been housed in the Animal Science Department at Virginia Tech. Income for operating the program has come from membership dues, fees for weighing and grading cattle on the farm (in earlier years), and fees for testing and selling bulls in central bull test stations and handling records from them. An office secretary has been paid totally from VBCIA funds since the inception of the program and an Animal Science Extension Specialist has served as supervisor of the program from 1959 on. From 1954 to 1959, that work was handled by Dr. Tom Marlowe, whose appointment was research and teaching. An extension specialist position was created in 1959 and filled with Henry H. Dickenson, Jr., a 1955 graduate in Animal Husbandry. Mr. Dickenson only supervised the performance program for about a year before taking a job as field representative with the American Hereford Association. He was replaced by Charles R. Cooper another 1955 graduate in Animal Husbandry at

VPI, but he left in 1961 to embark on a graduate program at Colorado State University. A. L. (Ike) Eller, Jr., who was in a teaching position in the Animal Husbandry Department, shifted to extension and supervised the program over a long span of years from 1961 to 1998. He had military service for several months in late 1961-62 and the position was filled by Barnes Allen who was doing work on a master's degree in animal science. Then, in 1970-1972 for about 21 months, Eller was away on a PhD program at the University of Tennessee and Curtis Mast and Roger Wynn, Jr. filled the gap. In 1998, Dr. Scott Greiner was hired and currently fills the position. Betty Gray was office manager-secretary for 21 years from 1965-1986 and had a tremendous influence on the program growth and records processing.

A number of other excellent men with the Virginia Department of Agriculture livestock section served as official graders, including Richard S. Ellis, IV, from Buckingham, David Walker of Elkton, Dennis O'Neal of Winchester and Howard Beck of Deerfield. During the 1960s, a number of college students were hired to help with the summer weighing and grading work. Some of these were Curtis Absher, Jim Tomlinson, and Jack Sisk.

Data collected through the BCIA program was used for research in addition to the in-herd use by breeders. Tom Marlowe developed up-to-date environmental adjustment factors such as age of dam, sex of calf, and season of birth. Many graduate students were also trained using the data. Though performance records came from both purebred and commercial cattle, the overwhelming majority came from purebred herds.

While some transfer of data from BCIA to national breed associations was attempted, no satisfactory system was developed. The major breed associations had gotten their performance programs well developed by the mid-1980's. Therefore, Virginia BCIA ceased processing records on registered cattle in 1988, but continued with a program for commercial herds, but with limited success.

Almost from the beginning in 1955, breeders who were members and the BCIA board of directors thought in terms of how cattle could be improved, but also how cattle with records could be capitalized upon in terms of sales. There was a tremendous amount of interest not only in Virginia but in adjoining states and in places across the U.S. about what was going on in the Virginia BCIA program. Many states copied the Virginia BCIA program. Dr. Tom Marlowe initially and later Dr. Ike Eller were the evangelists who traveled many miles and spoke to many groups about performance testing and about what was going on in Virginia.

In 1957, the VBCIA board began discussions about a central bull test station. An agreement was made with the management of the Culpeper Agricultural Enterprises to establish a central bull test station on their property and with their management. J. Walton Loving was one of the principals. Others involved in the Culpeper test who took a special interest was Silas Aylor, C. E. Johnson, Jr. from nearby Rappahannock County, Roy Heltzel, Culpeper extension agent, and others. Leece George was not the first manager of the Culpeper Agricultural Enterprises but came fairly soon and did a wonderful job in getting the Culpeper test established and on solid footing. The first 75 bulls were placed on test in the fall of 1958 and those which qualified were sold at auction in early April 1959.

This first sale was quite successful and encouraged the group to make the Culpeper test an annual event. In the next few years improvements were made in terms of shelter for the bulls and feed bunks under cover. Bulls were fed a dry, bulky ration containing ground ear corn, ground hay, protein supplements and minerals. The average yearling weight that first year was 843 pounds and it was not until 1962 or 1963 that a bull recorded over 1000 pounds 365 day weight. Of course, only Angus, Hereford, and Shorthorn bulls were tested until 1966 when Earl and Lyle Kindig brought the first Charolais. Annual sales, either one or two per season, have been held at the Culpeper Agricultural Enterprises sale pavilion since 1959. In 1996, because of management and facility problems, the bull test was moved to the farm of Tom Nixon at Rapidan which is about 10 miles away, but the sale has continued at CAE, Inc.

There was a real need for a bull test station and performance tested bull sale in southwest Virginia. In 1968, the first group of bulls went to test at a small test station at the Pulaski Fairgrounds, Dublin, Virginia. This endeavor was managed by the principals of the Pulaski Livestock Market who were Roy Meek, Grover Boothe, and Jack Crockett. Sales were successfully held from the bulls tested in the spring of 1969, 1970, and 1971. The Virginia Angus Association (Dave Leonard, Exec. Secretary) and the Virginia Hereford Association (Burton Eller, Exec. Secretary) were engaged to manage the Dublin and Culpeper sales. Prior to that time, the Culpeper sales had been managed by Virginia BCIA.

In 1972, a decision was made to open a test station at Red House, Virginia on the farm of James D. Bennett, operated as Knoll Crest Farm. A brand new facility was constructed by the Bennett family and the first group of bulls went in the test lots at the new Red House Bull Evaluation Center in the fall of 1972, with the first sale of senior bulls held in early 1973. The Red House test performed a tremendous service for central and Southside Virginia from that time through 1998 at which time the VBCIA test station at Red House ceased to operate due to the need for use of feed and facilities by Knoll Crest Farm, by then a significant breeder of Angus, Gelbvieh, and Hereford cattle. Many new innovations were brought about with the Red House central test station. One of the most sweeping was use of a corn silage-based ration which worked quite well. In fact, all test stations in Virginia since those times have used corn silage as the base for the bull test rations. Another innovation was minimum pricing bulls for the auction sales in the early years. This also worked quite well and contrary to what the county extension agents and many breeders thought, any time bulls were not sold during the auction for lack of bringing minimum price, it would be the lowest priced bulls and not the highest priced bulls. Minimum prices were assigned based on performance and type score of the individual bull. Another innovation at Red House was the addition of a purebred heifer test that started in 1977 and continued until 1990. Over most of the years, two sales were held, one for senior bulls born September through December and one for junior bulls born December through February. Heifers, in the years when there were heifer tests, were sold with the junior bulls. There was a group of strong leaders that developed the Red House test station not the least of which was James Bennett himself. Ralph Tucker, Floyd Dominy, and Charles Fariss each chaired the very active Red House test and sale committee. Extension agents Jim Smith, Allen Hunter, Dick White and Jim Myers and breeders such as Mike McDowell, James I. Smith, Jim Baber, and Paul Saunders were most helpful .

There was a group of mostly Simmental breeders who were interested in starting a bull test in southwest Virginia and in 1973-1974, 203 bulls were tested at the Neuhoff Farms feedlot at Foster Falls in Wythe County. There was no auction sale for these bulls, but there was an open house and field day and a small number of bulls were sold by private treaty in the spring of 1974.

From 1977 to 1980, groups of bulls were custom tested at Dundridge Farm owned by Fred Harner at Berryville, Virginia. BCIA organized a test committee that regulated this test and it operated for three years as a custom test only. Bulls were taken home by the breeders after the test was over.

Gold was finally struck in southwest Virginia in 1980 when an agreement was made with Brent Moore to test a group of bulls at his farm just east of Wytheville. The first sale was held in March, 1981 at the neighboring farm (Dr. Jim Laningham's Grandview Farm) sale facility. Jack Poole was employed by Brent Moore as a manager of the test station and he continued as manager of the Southwest test station through the 2001-2002 test year. The farm changed hands and was purchased by E. D. Umberger in 1986 but the bull tests and sales continued. Many improvements were made to the test facility including the construction of a new test barn and a spacious sale facility. Two age groups of bulls were tested each year totaling some 220 head, with only one sale being held in late March selling 125 to 145 bulls. The Wytheville test and sale committee has been extremely active over the years with excellent leadership being given by C. W. Pratt, Buster Hounshell, Smith Reasor, Tom Clark, Charles Cassell, Benny Burkett, and others.

In terms of sales management for the bull sales at the test stations, from 1972 to 2002 all sales were managed by the Virginia Angus Association, operating as VA Sale Services. Several VA sale managers included Dave Leonard, Pete Lohr, Vernon Kindig, Tom Templeton, Mike Gothard, and Kay Weaber. Since 2003, the management of the sales has been handled by the VBCIA office in cooperation with the Virginia Cattlemen's Association.

The Virginia BCIA bull sales at test stations established themselves as the most progressive and usually the strongest bull sales held each year in the state. Until the 1990s there were very few private breeder bull sales in Virginia. The Virginia BCIA board of directors felt there was an unfulfilled market for heavy service age bulls and the test stations did not offer an outlet for bulls born in the spring season. With this in mind, the Virginia All-Breed Performance Tested Bull Sale at Staunton was initiated in 1975 and was held at the Augusta Expoland facility at Fishersville. This sale soon established itself as an annual event selling primarily bulls that were coming two years of age. This sale was typically held the first Saturday in December. Dwight Houff, a breeder of Polled Hereford cattle and later an Angus breeder, had experience managing sales for the Virginia Polled Hereford Association and had established a sales management service known as Virginia Cattle Services. He became the sale manager for the Staunton sale and later for the Abingdon and Blackstone All-Breed Performance Tested Bull Sales. Dr. Arthur Bartenslager, an Angus breeder from Churchville, Virginia was instrumental in getting the Staunton sale started. Bulls consigned to the sale were tested on the farms of breeders or custom tested in one of the central bull test stations. Typically some 45-60 bulls were sold in each annual sale. Beginning in 1985, spring-calving bred commercial replacement

heifers were also sold along with the bulls. The annual offering generally was in the realm of 80-140 heifers. This heifer sale helped establish a market and a price structure for good-quality bred commercial heifers.

In 1982 plans culminated to add an All-Breed Performance Tested Bull Sale at Abingdon. This sale was organized by BCIA and managed by Dwight Houff and was held at the Paramount Farms sale facility at Abingdon. The sale was quite successful from the standpoint of prices received but was terminated in 1986 because of the difficulty of getting enough quality bulls consigned. Typically, bulls for this sale were coming from quite a distance and very few of them were being consigned from breeders in the southwestern Virginia area. The leadership for the sale among southwest Virginia breeders was also lacking.

In response to a demand on the part of cattlemen in the Blackstone area, an All-Breed Performance Tested Bull Sale was established in 1985 and was held in early December at the Southside Livestock Market in Blackstone, Virginia. Russell Leslie, Nottoway extension agent, Elmer Clay and Peter Harris Fitzgerald, area cattlemen and businessmen, were the prime movers. Dwight Houff also initially managed these sales which continued through the 2001 sale season. Commercial bred and open heifers were added to this sale along with the bulls beginning in 1991.

Dwight Houff managed the Staunton and Blackstone bull and heifer sales through the 1992 sale season. The Virginia Cattlemen's Association served as sale manager for these sales from 1993 through 1999 with the Virginia Angus Association picking up the sales management from then through 2002, the last year that the Staunton and Blackstone sales were held.

The merchandising of performance tested bulls had been well demonstrated by the Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association and in the decade of the 1990s a number of breeders established strong private performance tested bull sales filling much of the need that the sales sponsored by the Virginia BCIA had filled for 25 years.

In the year 1955, the same year that Virginia BCIA was organized, extension leaders gathered with the growing number of performance cattlemen in Texas and formed Performance Registry International (PRI). This organization became the focal point of the industry for performance. A codified program was patterned after several growing state programs. Specific weight standards for certification were used. The real innovation of PRI was a certified meat sire (CMS) program started in 1961. Ten progeny were compared to standards for carcass excellence. The program caught the interest of the beef industry.

Performance Registry International tried to become a coordinating organization by providing seats for two directors on the board from affiliated state BCIA's. In 1960 only 11 states and Canadian provinces had accepted affiliation. Virginia was one of these states having become affiliated with PRI in 1957. Because many states did not affiliate and the board was not functioning effectively, PRI decided in 1963 at the meeting in Toronto to elect the board from the membership at-large. This terminated the direct involvement of BCIA's in the governance of PRI and weakened its potential for coordination.

PRI was especially critical of breed associations for their lack of performance programs and support of such during the 1950s and 1960s. By 1964, five breeds had announced, or were contemplating announcements of breed association sponsored performance programs. In three regional extension conferences in 1962 and 1963, there was much discussion about the need to standardize performance criteria and measurements. This was pursued by the Extension Beef Improvement Committee of the American Society of Animal Science chaired by Curtis Mast, Virginia beef extension specialist. In late 1963, Charlie Bell and Everett Warwick of USDA along with Curtis Mast and Frank Baker, federal extension livestock specialist, formulated a tentative plan to achieve some national standardization and coordination. The strategy was to form a national committee to work on the project. The committee was to include representatives of PRI, American National Cattleman's Association, the breed associations, the extension service and the USDA Agricultural Research Service. Frank Baker put together a 25 member committee and in February, 1965 a report from this committee which was known as the United States Beef Cattle Records Committee Report with the subtitle "Recommended Procedures For Measurement Of Traits Of Economic Value In Beef Cattle" was made available.

This report served the purpose of getting breed association representatives to sit down at the table and talk about beef cattle performance measures which they had never done before. This effort was the forerunner of the Beef Improvement Federation. Ferry Carpenter, a colorful cattleman from Hayden, Colorado and a performance participant in PRI, the Colorado BCIA and the Total Performance Records program of the American Hereford Association, called a meeting in Denver on January 14, 1967 which was titled "International Conference of Beef Cattle Performance Testing Associations". Ferry Carpenter asked for input during that meeting from representatives from various state BCIA's and other performance organizations. Most who spoke indicated they would be interested in forming a new overall national performance organization if it did not disturb, and if it mirrored, the state program the person was involved with. Nothing happened at this meeting but Frank Baker had a meeting of a smaller group later at Denver where the Beef Improvement Federation, which is an organization of organizations in the beef industry whose goal is to standardize performance procedures, was organized. The actual organizational meeting of BIF took place in Denver in January 1968. Virginia BCIA was a charter member and has continued membership until the present.

The Beef Improvement Federation has indeed been a most useful organization. The beef breed associations who now handle all the performance records and programs for purebred cattle in their breeds work together in formulating guidelines for beef improvement programs. State BCIA's are involved but state BCIA's are not as strong nor as numerous as they once were. Today the beef breed associations are the kingpins as far as genetic evaluation of beef cattle is concerned. The breed associations collect performance data from breeders, produce production analysis for within-herd use, produce breed-wide EPDs with the help of large computers and scientific expertise at land-grant universities such as the University of Georgia, Colorado State University and Cornell University. Breed performance programs have grown very similar because of the BIF involvement. Virginia BCIA and Virginians have been very much involved in BIF. James Bennett, Paul Bennett, Roger Winn, Jr. and Richard McClung, Jr. have each served as

president. A.L. Eller, Jr. served as eastern regional secretary from 1968-82 and as executive director from 1982-86. Breeders receiving Seedstock Producer of the Year Awards include James D. Bennett, Knoll Crest Farm, Morven Farm and Wehrmann Angus. Commercial cattlemen winning Commercial Producer of the Year include Al Smith of Neuhoff Farms, Charles Fariss, Henry and Hank Maxey of Maxey Farm, Ernie Reeves of Mossy Creek Farm, and Bill Tucker of Tucker Family Farm.

Virginia BCIA, just like BIF, has been a tremendous catalyst for beef cattle improvement and cooperation among beef cattle organizations and groups in Virginia. Breeders of all breeds and their associations learned to get along and “pull in the same harness” so to speak through the BCIA programs, the central bull test stations, the all-breed performance tested bull sales, and other educational events sponsored by Virginia BCIA. The test stations and sales themselves have been a tremendous educational tool for seedstock and commercial cattlemen in Virginia.

Many other activities have been sponsored and promoted by Virginia BCIA in cooperation with the extension service and the Virginia Cattleman’s Association and state breed associations. Many successful statewide seedstock symposia have been staged. Cow/calf clinics of regional and statewide nature, especially for commercial cow/calf producers, have also been organized. Open house educational programs at three central bull test stations have been an ongoing effort since the mid 1980s. These programs have particularly catered to 4H and FFA youth.

The Junior Beef Roundup which is held annually and now in conjunction with the Virginia Beef Expo came about from a meeting of industry leaders sponsored by BCIA twenty years ago (1982).

The Virginia Beef Industry Convention became a total industry entity for education and progressive development when Virginia BCIA joined with the Virginia Cattleman’s Association beginning in the 1960s.

Another educational arm that Virginia BCIA has utilized is publication of a periodic newsletter for a number of years once dubbed “The Bull Sheet” and later “Virginia BCIA Update”. The extension specialists providing educational leadership for beef cattle improvement and the Virginia BCIA authored a monthly column in the Livestock Breeder Journal in the 70s and later the same-type column in the Virginia Cattleman since it was started in 1979.

Virginia has definitely been a leader in the beef cattle “performance movement” over the last half century. Thus, Virginia cattlemen and the Virginia beef industry is well positioned for the twenty-first century.

VIRGINIA BCIA PRESIDENTS

1955-57	W.L. Clover
1958-59	David E. Brower
1960	W.B. McSpadden
1961	S.C. Aylor
1962-63	Henry Sanders
1964	Sam Spangler
1965-66	T. Kent Loving
1967	Allen Y. Stokes
1968	Richard S. Ellis IV
1969	Ralph O. Tucker
1970	George C. Palmer II
1971	Arthur V. Bartenslager
1972-73	W. Alexander Stuart, Jr.
1974-75	James Bennett
1976-77	Dwight E. Houff
1978	Roger Winn, Jr.
1979	William Dunlop
1980	Newbill Miller
1981	Albert Smith
1982	Charles Fariss
1983	Greg May
1984	Mike McDowell
1985	Paul Bennett
1986	Paul Saunders
1987	Scott Burtner
1988	Roger Steele
1989	David Linker
1990	Jerry Burner
1991	Bill Tucker
1992	Bill McDonald
1993	W.C. "Buster" Hounshell
1994	Leon Warner III
1995	Richard McClung, Jr.
1996	William W. Oliver
1997	Greg Keeler
1998	W.C. "Buster" Hounshell
1999	John B. Mitchell
2000-01	C.W. Pratt
2002	Smith Reasor
2003	Hank Maxey
2004	Dennis Pearson
2005	John Wilkins

VIRGINIA BCIA DIRECTORS (128)

W. L. Clover	1955-58	Angus
A. W. Frame	1955	Angus
James A. Tilson	1955-60	Commercial
A. K. Randolph	1955-59	Commercial
Fred W. Scott	1955-59, 1963-66	Commercial
W. C. Crane	1955-58	Angus
David E. Brower	1956-60	Hereford
Hunter Greenlaw	1956-59	Hereford
W. J. Davis	1955-58	Shorthorn
Charles W. Wampler	1957-60	Angus
William B. McSpadden	1958-60	Angus
P. C. Duckworth	1958-59	Angus
W. A. Davidson	1958-61	Shorthorn
W. C. Jones	1959	Shorthorn
J. K. Givens	1958-61	Hereford
Silas C. Aylor	1959-62	Angus
J. Walton Loving	1959-61	Angus
C. E. Johnson, Jr.	1960-63	Angus
Louis Chisholm, Jr.	1961-63	Commercial
Henry Sanders	1961-63, 1978-81	Hereford
Fred K. Carter	1961-63	Angus
J. L. Laurence	1962	Polled Hereford
Robert S. Chilton	1961-62	Commercial
Raymond Bowman	1962-63	Shorthorn
T. D. Steele	1961-63	Angus
W. A. Stuart, Jr.	1963-66, 1971-74	Commercial
Isaac Jeanes	1963-65	Polled Hereford
Sam Spangler	1963-66	Angus
T. Kent Loving	1964-67, 1976-79	Polled Hereford
Charles W. "Bill" Thomas	1964-67, 1990-93	Angus
Arthur Weiss	1964-67	Commercial
Robert L. Dulaney	1965-68	Angus
Allen Y. Stokes	1965-68	Charolais
R. Henry Matthiesen, Jr.	1965-68	Hereford
Robert Magill	1965-68	Shorthorn
Joe Hounshell	1966-69	Hereford
Richard S. Ellis IV	1966-69, 1981-85	Angus
Paul Grinde	1966-69	Angus
Dennis McCarty, IV	1967-70, 1973-76	Shorthorn
Ralph O. Tucker	1967-70	Angus
George Shorter	1967-70	Commercial
James D. Bennett	1968-71, 1973-76	Polled Hereford
Lyle Kindig	1968-71	Charolais
George C. Palmer II	1968-71	Polled Hereford
A. V. Bartenslager	1969-72, 1975-78	Angus
Fred W. Scott, Jr.	1969-72	Polled Hereford
Thomas Tullidge	1969-72	Angus
Robert Alger	1970-73	Polled Hereford

Hugh M. Lynch	1970-73	Commercial
Joe Kelly	1970-73	Shorthorn
James Rea	1971-74	Commercial
Ralph Wilbur	1972-75	Angus
Charles Mitchell	1972-75, 1983-87	Charolais
Robert Styne	1972-75	Commercial
Joseph B. Graham	1973-76	Angus
Charles Wiseman, Jr.	1974-77	Hereford, Simmental
Robert Gaines	1974-77	Hereford
Victor M. du Pont	1974-77	Commercial
Earl Kindig	1975-78	Charolais
Dwight E. Houff	1971-74, 1975-78, 1984-88, 1993-96	Polled Hereford, Angus
Jim Baber	1976-79	Angus
Roger M. Winn, Jr.	1976-79, 1982-86, 1991-94	Angus, Limousin
Jesse D. Williams	1977-80, 1986-90	Hereford
William B. Dunlap	1977-80	Commercial
Thomas Simmons	1977-80	Simmental
Newbill Miller	1978-81	Angus
Floyd E. Dominy	1978-79, 1979-82	Angus
Pete Jamison	1978-80	Simmental
William D. Wampler	1978-81	Charolais, Angus
H. S. McDonald	1979-82	Polled Hereford
Albert Smith	1979-82	Commercial
Jim Stonestreet	1980-83	Hereford
Charles Fariss	1980-83	Angus, Commercial
Jerry Chappell	1980-83	Simmental
Randall Updike	1981-84	Angus
C. W. Pratt	1981-85, 1987-90, 1999-02	Angus
Gregory May	1982-85	Angus
Mike McDowell	1982-85, 1988-91	Polled Hereford, Angus
Glenn Covington	1983-86	Angus
Paul S. Bennett	1983-86, 1998-2001	Angus, Gelbvieh, Polled Hereford
Ernie Reeves	1984-87, 1998-2001	Commercial
Paul M. Saunders	1984-87	Angus
Douglas McIntire	1985-88	Commercial, Angus
Wes Ehlers	1985-88	Polled Hereford
Scot Burtner	1985-88	Simmental
Ralph McDonalds	1986-89	Charolais
Anne Zimmerman	1986-89	Commercial
David Linker	1987-90	Gelbvieh
Roger Steele	1987-90	Angus
Richard McClung, Jr.	1988-91, 1993-96	Angus
Jerry Burner	1988-91, 1994-97, 2001-04	Simmental
Kenneth Marshall	1989-92	Simmental
Bill Tucker	1989-92, 2002-03	Commercial
Judson Lester	1989-92	Polled Hereford
William H. McDonald	1990-93	Simmental, Angus
Robert P. Anderson	1990-93	Angus
Ralph "Skip" McDonalds	1991-94	Charolais
W. C. "Buster" Hounshell	1991-94, 1996-99, 2005-08	Simmental

Leon Warner III	1992-95	Angus
John Mizelle	1992-95	Simmental
Robert Kube	1992-95	Polled Hereford
Thomas D. Clark	1993-96	Simmental
Tim Sutphin	1994-96	Commercial
Jeff Powers	1994-97	Angus
William W. Oliver	1995-98	Commercial
Gregory Keeler	1995-98	Gelbvieh
Don Richardson	1995-98	Polled Hereford
John B. Mitchell	1996-97, 1997-2000	Salers, Commercial
Thomas M. Templeton	1996-99	Angus
Donald Benner	1996-99	Angus
David Zeller	1997-2000	Simmental, Angus, Charolais
James W. Saunders	1997-2000	Angus
Signey Rogers	1998-2001	Polled Hereford
Victor Drewry	1999-2002	Angus
Jim Wylie	1999-2002	Angus
Smith Reasor	2000-2003	Simmental
Hank Maxey	2001-04	Commercial
Jasper Persinger	2001-04	Polled Hereford
Charles Rosson	2001-04, 2004-07	Angus, Hereford
Dennis Pearson	2002-05	Angus
Carl Lindgren	2002-05	Commercial
Randy Mink	2002-05	Angus
Roger Morris	2003-06	Large Breeds - Gelbvieh
Ray Simms	2003-06	Commercial
John Wilkins	2003-06	Angus
Leo Muncy	2004-07	Large Breeds - Charolais
Terry Slusher	2004-07	Commercial
Pete Henderson	2005-08	Angus
Jason Pratt	2005-08	At Large - Angus