

# ARE YOU SURE HE'S GOOD FOR ANOTHER YEAR? ARE YOU WILLING TO BET NEXT YEAR'S CALF CROP ON IT?



Bull breeding soundness is important to verify, whether you are purchasing a new bull(s) or using your herd sire(s) for another year.

A Bull Breeding Soundness Exam (BBSE) done by a veterinarian includes a health exam, body condition scoring, reproductive exam and semen evaluation (motility and morphology). A BBSE can also include Trichomoniasis testing (a transmissible disease) and Johne's testing, depending on the risk in your individual situation.

All bulls are subject to the possibility of injuries or scrotal frostbite. Lower than acceptable semen quality can occur for any number of reasons, and can have a significant impact on breeding success even if the bull shows good breeding drive. A yearly BBSE should be completed early enough in the year that, if a bull is found to be unsuitable, a producer has time to find a different bull.

Appropriate nutrition for bulls is extremely important. Bulls in optimal body condition will be more successful as breeders and more likely to stay in the herd for longer periods of time. Consult your veterinarian or nutritionist to assist with bull specific recommendations for feeding.

Ask your veterinarian to assist in developing a health management plan for all animals in the herd, including bulls. Vaccination improves immunity against foot rot. It's also key for protecting against pinkeye, which can be of particular concern when it comes to bulls.

Bulls represent a large part of the reproductive success of your herd. While insurance policies covering bulls are widely available, producers generally are far better off preventing bull problems before they arise. Proactively managing bull health and disease prevention along with routine breeding soundness exams will give you greater peace of mind, and your bulls will be ready to breed successfully when you need them.

