



## SimAngus™

- A standout Clemson Elite bull that is a complete outcross in a 6.5 frame.
- Attractive profile with a natural up-headed presence; he simply can't take a bad picture.
- Smooth in design and fluid in travel, this bull will wow you with his structural presence.

ASA# 4349697 • 3/4 SM 1/4 AN • Homozygous Black • Homozygous Polled

WLE Copacetic E02  
Sire: **Clemson Elite 41J**  
AK/NDS Christal's Legacy

K-LER Kingsman 610D  
Dam: **KLER Miss 902G**  
KMJ/K-LER Ms Sforce D328

**Semen: \$50/unit**

Semen available through owner.

Trait	CE	BW	WW	YW	ADG	DMI	\$Gain	MCE	Milk	MWW	Stay	DOC	CW	YG	Marb	Fat	REA	Shr	API	TI
EPD	7.9	2.8	96.3	152.3	.35	1.30	.05	3.7	20.3	68.4	14.7	9.7	53	-.33	.15	-.066	1.09	-.19	119.8	84
ACC	.44	.49	.47	.47	.47	.33	.36	.22	.16	.26	.31	.43	.39	.31	.35	.32	.36	.02		
%	95	95	5	10	15	90	50	95	80	25	55	85	10	15	90	15	4	95	75	45

EPD as of 2.17.25



### Stavick Simmentals

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## An Examination of Milk EPD

by Dr. Wade Shafer, ASA EVP

The Milk EPD is used by many producers in selection and breeding decisions. How is the EPD calculated, and how accurate is it? High-producing cows don't always possess a top-end Milk EPD, and the opposite scenario is sometimes true. Why? A cow's milk production ability may be very different from the genes she possesses for the trait.

Over the last several years I have fielded too many calls to count from breeders feeling that Milk EPD do not do justice in gauging their herd's genetic milking ability. Though you may not have voiced reservations about Milk EPD to me directly, I suspect you may have had qualms with them from time to time. This sentiment is not unique to Simmental breeders. Though some may question the validity of Milk EPD, they are without a doubt the best predictor we have of animals' genetic level for milk. That said, when we scrutinize the situation, breeders' skepticism about Milk EPD is understandable. In the following paragraphs I explain why EPD gauge genetic level for milk as accurately as possible, and offer up my opinions as to why breeders often question their validity.

To understand a widely held belief, it usually helps to get at the root of it. What is at the core of breeders' misgivings about Milk EPD? From my experience, breeders seldom question Milk EPD on sires — rather, doubt tends to permeate when cows in their herd wean big calves yet have lower-percentile Milk EPD. On the surface, their skepticism seems justified. It just seems logical that high-

producing cows should have upper-end Milk EPD. It turns out there are solid reasons why a top-producing cow does not necessarily possess genes for high levels of milk production — and, therefore, should not have high-level Milk EPD.

To gain some perspective, let's take a look at factors affecting the measurement we use to gauge milking ability: weaning weights. Obviously, we do not have the latitude to measure milk directly, as does the dairy industry. Even if we could, the trait we are concerned with in the beef business is the pounds of weaned calf expected from a cow due to the genes she possesses for milk and mothering ability, which we can compute using weaning weights. From a cow's genetic perspective, the weaning weight of her calf is affected by her own milk genes and half of her weaning weight genes (the calf carries half of her genes). This fact is the reason Maternal Weaning Weight EPD is calculated as Milk EPD + ½ Weaning Weight EPD. Beyond that, there are non-genetic factors affecting the calf's weaning weight, such as age of its dam, stocking rate, weather, creep feed, and many other non-genetic effects we are not able to distinguish.

Due to the myriad of factors affecting weaning weight, using actual and/or adjusted weaning weights and/or ratios will not serve us well in predicting an animal's genetic value for milk production. One glaring shortcoming of these statistics is that they do not partition weaning weight into separate growth and milk components — an obvious requisite for assessing milk genetics. Beside that monumental failing, weights and ratios do little to