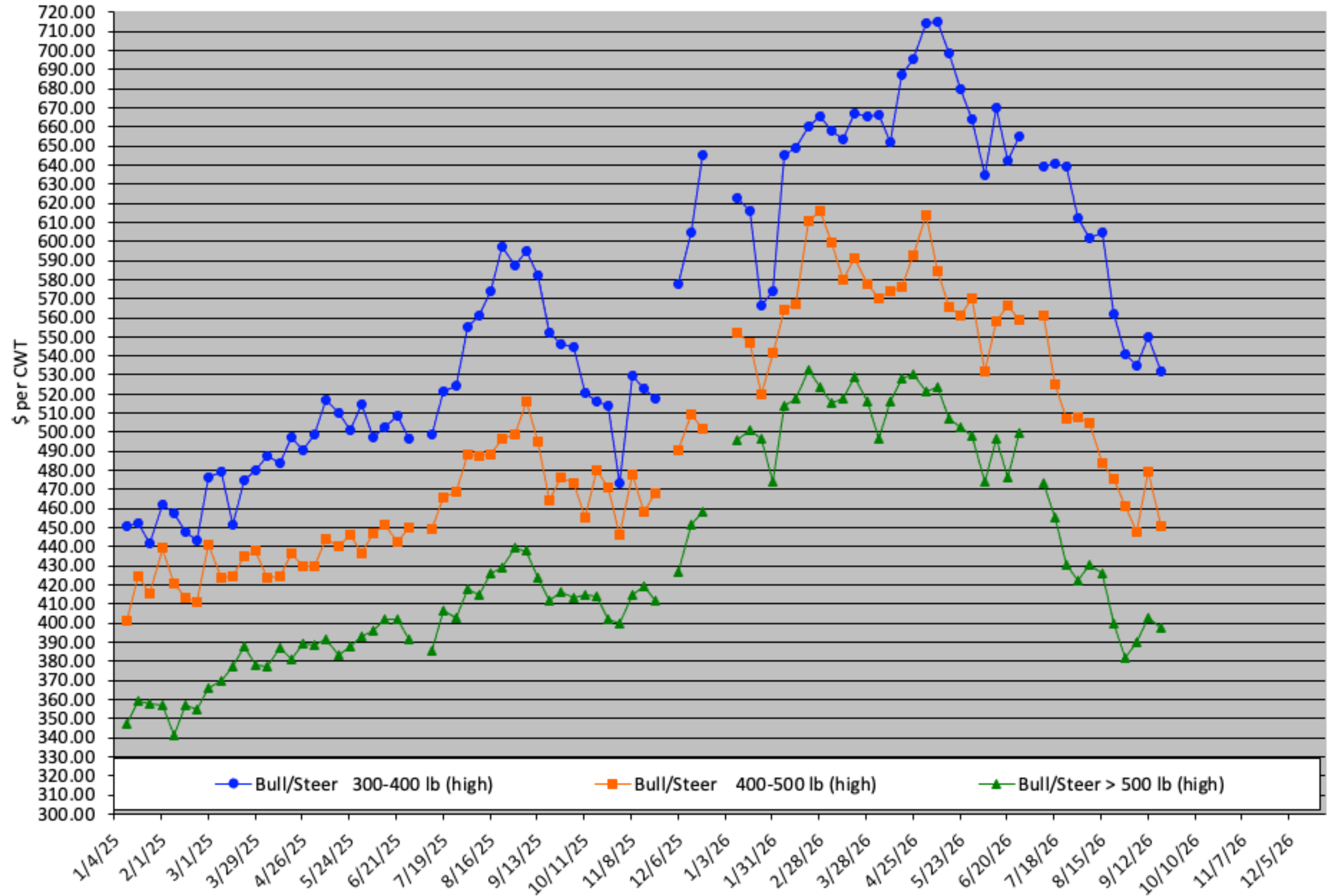


Calf Price Trends

Trend of the Highest Price Reported for Various Weight Calves, Average of 6 East & Central Texas Livestock Auctions

Chart created by Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist

For a weekly email copy of this chart please email amsensing@ag.tamu.edu or contact a Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension Agent

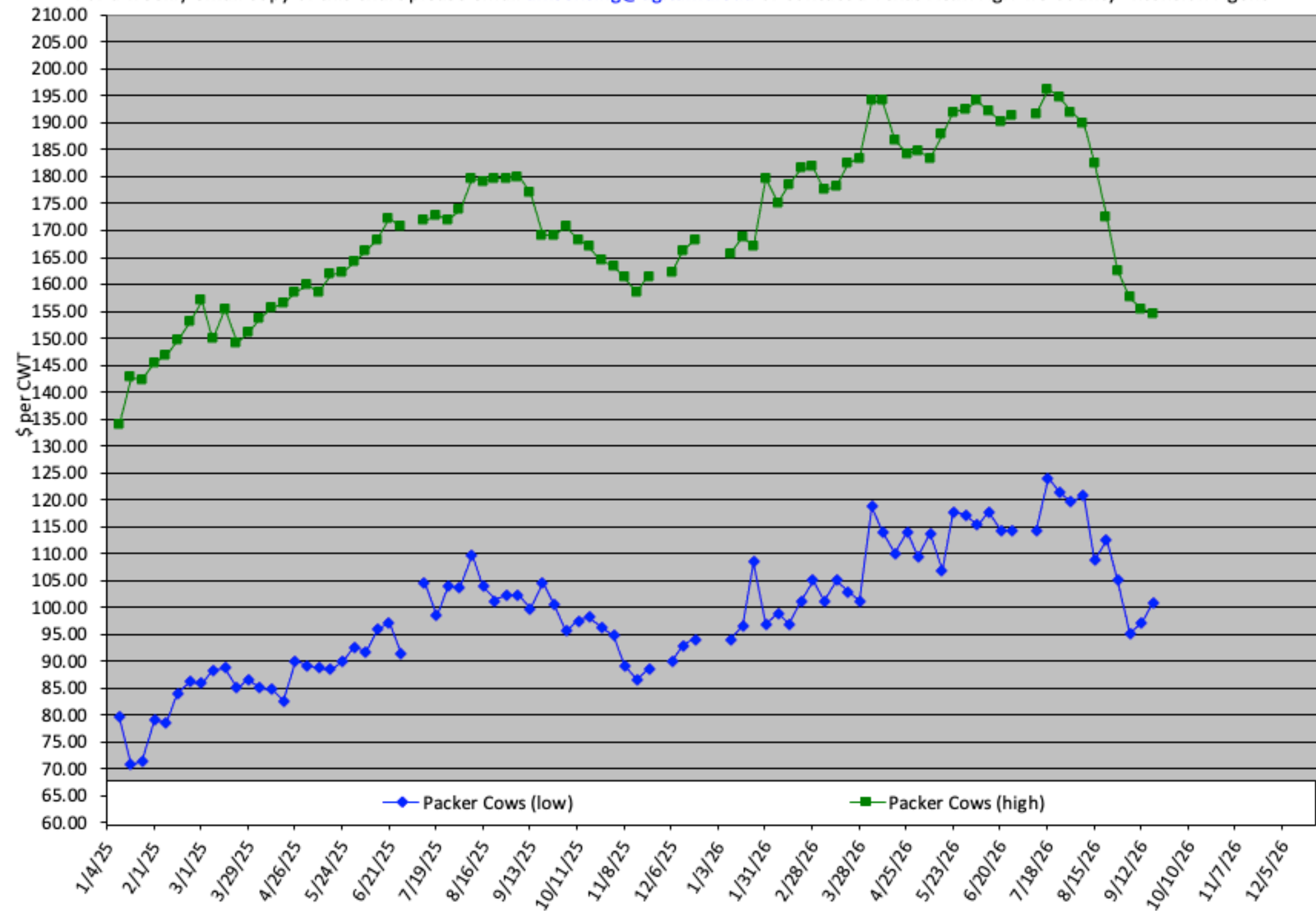


Packer Cow PriceTrends

Trend of High and Low Prices Reported for Packer Cows, Average of 6 East & Central Texas Livestock Auctions

Chart created by Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist

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www.agproud.com/articles/62723-south-central-things-to-consider-when-selecting-bulls

South Central: Things to consider when selecting bulls

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Now is bull buying season for many operations. When it comes to selecting bulls, there are several factors to consider. Additionally, some factors that should be emphasized will vary depending on the type of operation and how cattle are marketed.

For all operations, it is important to evaluate traits that affect the ability of a bull to stay in the herd and successfully breed cows. One of these traits is structural soundness. If bulls are lame, it will reduce their ability to breed cows. There are several things that affect structural soundness. Two of the most important to look at are rear leg structure and the shape of a bull's feet (especially claw shape). If a bull's rear legs are too straight, it puts additional pressure on his hocks when he mounts cows for breeding. This can cause pain, which reduces his desire to breed. Poor claw shape can lead to abnormal hoof growth that results in lameness and increased culling rates. Several major breed associations have good publications with examples of what to look for in terms of foot shape.

It is also important to evaluate a bull's sheath design and if he has a lazy prepuce and how severe it is. Bulls with a lazy prepuce, especially if it is severe, are generally more likely to get a prepuce or penis injury that can affect their ability to breed.

Disposition is another factor important for all operations to evaluate. Bulls with poor dispositions are more likely to hurt someone, hurt themselves or damage equipment and fences. Additionally, wild calves from a bull with a poor disposition are likely to shrink more when they are sold.

When it comes to selecting for growth, expected progeny differences (EPDs) are better indicators than just a bull's actual weaning or yearling weight. Additionally, yearling weight EPDs are probably a better selection tool than weaning weight EPDs. Based on data from the

American Angus Association, the heritability estimate for yearling weight is 0.42, compared with only 0.28 for weaning weight.

More growth is not always better. Increased growth is highly correlated to increased mature cow size. This can result in producing replacement females that are too big to fit their environment. Additionally, growth of calves may not be limited by genetic potential but instead by the available forage resources and the ability of an operation to add weight to calves cost effectively.