

Statement from Dr. Darrell Wilkes, IBBA Executive Vice President, on the genetic condition status of TJM Main Event 59C10.

Summary:

Evidence collected and analyzed by outside experts supports a conclusion that TJM Main Event 59C10 is not a carrier of a deleterious genetic condition.

Background:

TJM Main Event 59C10 was purchased at SUHN'S GENETRUST sale in March 2016 by Draggin M and Double W ranches.

When the bull's first calves arrived in the spring of 2017 it became apparent at a couple of locations that a few calves sired by Main Event were arriving with abnormally small birth weights and in at least one case a calf having some curvature to his spinal column. Upon these reports, Dr. Perkins, then EVP of the IBBA, was contacted by Vern Suhn in March of 2017 and made aware of the concerns.

DNA samples were collected on affected calves and their dams and information compiled and was sent to Dr. Clare Gill at Texas A&M University. A healthy but apparently affected calf was euthanized and necropsied at the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital at Texas A&M in February 2018 by Dr. Tom Hairgrove. Aside from scoliosis, there were no other apparent diseases or disorders, and the scoliosis was not fatal. The cause of death of the calf was euthanasia.

In May of 2018 the case was transferred to Dr. David Steffen and Dr. Jessica Petersen at the University of Nebraska. At approximately that same time the owners of the bull reviewed the situation and the decision was made, in the interest of genetic safety of the Brangus breed, to remove TJM Main Event 59C10 semen from the market pending the outcome of the investigation.

After extensive study and review of affected animals as well as closely related animals utilizing high density 770K genotyping arrays the scientists involved suggested that the observed condition of affected calves is not due to a single variant being carried by TJM Main Event 59C10 or animals in the herds involved.

Other causes of concern could possibly be a virus-induced congenital malformation but could not be confirmed. Through an extensive two-year study there is no indication that these extremely light birth weight calves were the result of a genetic condition and IBBA has since received no reports of other progeny by Main Event exhibiting similar issues. The IBBA board has reviewed this case and has agreed to the release of this statement.

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It is noteworthy that the breeders involved in this, as well as Dr. Perkins, the IBBA EVP at the time, followed IBBA policy precisely as written. Breeders who suspect a deleterious genetic condition are compelled to report their concerns to the IBBA Executive Vice President. The EVP is then compelled to work confidentially and independently with outside experts to investigate using all scientific means available and applicable and to report the information to the IBBA membership.