
Canadian Charolais Association

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Charolais were first imported to Canada in 1956 from the United States. Later, cattle were imported directly from France. Many of the Charolais cattle were imported to other countries through Canada due to our strict rules on importation and high health standards. In 1959 the Canadian Charolais Association (CCA) was formed and in 1960 it was formally recognized as a Breed Association under the Livestock Pedigree Act of Canada. The CCA is a non-profit organization that derives funding from member subscriptions and Whole Herd Enrolment (WHE) fees. The Canadian Charolais Association operates a number of performance testing initiatives on behalf of its members.

However the backbone of the performance program is Whole Herd Enrolment in which breeding and calving information is tracked on each cow every year. This tracking ensures the highest possible level of accuracy in Charolais pedigrees and allows breeders to monitor reproductive traits. Research has shown that fertility is the most economically important trait in beef production and total herd reporting sets Charolais apart as an industry leader.

Canadian Charolais calves are tracked for growth at calving, weaning and yearling, through voluntary breeder participation on the Charolais Herd Analysis and Records Management (CHARM) program. The information collected through the CCA programs is evaluated in a North American Expected Progeny Difference (EPD) analysis that combines the information from the Canadian and American Charolais populations. EPDs indicate genetic differences in cattle and may be used for comparison across herds. They are the best indicators of the genetic merit of an animal available today.

The Charolais Association operates the Conception to Consumer (C to C) program in which Charolais sires are used in commercial cow herds, with progeny being recorded from AI date right through to slaughter. This program was initiated in 1968 and the data collected is the only information of its type in North America. CHARM was started in 1981 and Whole Herd Enrolment was brought in by the membership in 1998.