Geaux Beef – Replacement Heifer Guidelines
ON FARM DEVELOPMENT
2026-2027

Program Objectives:
- Develop a management verification program focused on best management practices (BMPs).
- Educate producers on advantages and disadvantages of different marketing avenues.
- Collect and disseminate data on heifer and cow productivity and performance of offspring.
- Assess producer profitability through implementation of BMPs and chosen marketing avenues.

Benefits of the Program:
- Consultations with members of the LSU AgCenter on all aspects of production, such as reproductive management, health protocols, herd nutrition, record keeping, data analysis, and product marketing.
- Opportunity to collect and evaluate growth and reproductive performance data.
- Opportunity to market heifers through LSU AgCenter-supported sales.
    - An online catalog of all Geaux Beef verified heifers will be developed and advertised publicly prior to all LSU AgCenter-supported sales.

What is an LSU AgCenter-Supported Sale?
- We are excited to be partnering with local auction barns throughout the state to consign Geaux Beef heifers into their sales in the spring and fall.
- Participating auction barns will select dates to sale Geaux Beef heifers. This may be during a weekly sale or a special sale. Sale dates will be announced months in advance for marketing purposes.
- The LSU AgCenter will place pictures/videos and data of the consigned heifers online. These will be shared through the LSU AgCenter's website and social media platforms, as well as by the auction barns through their social media platforms.

Program Costs:
- $25 program enrollment fee is due by the dates listed below.
    - This is per producer. It will set you up within the program to begin developing your heifers.
    - There isn't a limit on the number of heifers being developed through the program at your operation. However, a Geaux Beef ear tag will only be placed in those consigned to sale or officially verified and kept by the producer.
- If you wish to consign in an LSU AgCenter-supported sale during the spring or fall:
    - A $20 per head consignment fee will be due on the dates listed below.
    - A 1% commission fee will be charged per heifer sold within the Geaux Beef Program at an LSU AgCenter-supported sale.
        - Note: This commission is in addition to the commission deducted by the sale barn and will be collected by the sale barn.
- If you wish to officially verify your heifers but retain them for your herd:
    - A $20 per head official verification fee will be due on the dates listed below.

	Spring 2027 Sales	Fall 2027 Sales
Program Enrollment Fee	October 16, 2026	May 7, 2027
Consignment Fee	February 5, 2027	August 6, 2027
Official Verification Fee	February 5, 2027	August 6, 2027

General Requirements:

- Producers must enroll by the dates listed above and pay a $25 enrollment fee.
- An on-site verification will be performed by an LSU AgCenter member at time of registration.
  - On-site visits will be made periodically throughout the heifer development process.
- Geaux Beef branded ear tags will be placed at time of sale or official verification for retained heifers.
- Participating producers must maintain a current Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certification.
- Participating producers must adhere to the management and health protocols required by the program. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the program without a refund of the registration fee or other fees associated with the program.
- Any performance, health, and breeding data collected will be utilized to advertise heifers enrolled in the sales. Record sheets will be provided to use as a template for each aspect of the program.

Management Requirements:

- Individual birth dates must be recorded. (At minimum within a week of their birth date.)
- Heifers must be born on the enrolled participant's farm as the initial point of origin.
- Individual identification is required of all animals.
- The use of growth implants is discouraged in replacement heifers. If implants were used at any time, this must be disclosed in the heifer's health form.
- Heifers must be polled or dehorned and fully healed prior to prior to delivery for the sale.
- Heifers must be PI-BVDV negative for entry into the sales and follow a recommended health protocol throughout the program.
  - This must be certified by a veterinarian.
  - Producers may not sale any heifer(s) testing positive from PI-BVDV.

Official Verification and Sale Requirements:

To receive an official Geaux Beef ear tag, whether retaining the heifers at home or placing them into an LSU AgCenter-supported sale, a heifer will have to meet the following criteria:

- Reproductive tract scores will be collected by a licensed veterinarian to determine pubertal status.
  - Heifers that have not fully reached pubertal status will not be officially verified or sold.
- Pelvic area measurements will be conducted either by a licensed veterinarian or LSU AgCenter faculty member. Pelvic area must meet breed standards.
- Weight Requirements:
  - Open heifers must weigh at least 700 lbs. at the time of sale.
  - Heifers weighing more than 1,000 are encouraged to be sold as bred.
  - Both birth weights and weaning weights are highly encouraged, if feasible.
- Heifers must be weaned <u>at least</u> 45 days prior to delivery for the sale.
- Age Requirements:
  - Heifers must be between 8 and 24 months of age at time of sale.
- Heifers may be bred but cannot have calved prior to verification or sale.
- All heifers will be visually evaluated through photographs and video by an anonymous group of out-of-state extension and/or industry members. These members will determine if the heifers enrolled are of superior quality to represent the Geaux Beef Heifer Development Program. Again, heifers failing to meet LSU AgCenter's general standards for the Geaux Beef Heifer Development Program will be excluded from the sale to maintain the quality and integrity of the event.
  - Once the heifer(s) pass through the verification committee and meet all health and management requirements, an LSU AgCenter faculty member will place an official Geaux Beef branded ear tag in that heifer's ear.

Approved Breeding Methods and Guidelines:

- A breeding date or date range and the resulting calving window range will be required for each bred heifer prior to delivery for the sale.
- Heifers should be bred via artificial insemination or natural service by a properly registered service sire with the accompaniment of their respective breed association EPDs.
- Bred heifers will be guaranteed bred (at a minimum of 60 days) at sale time with documentation from a veterinarian prior to delivery for the sale.
- Assistance with bull selection and interpretation of EPDs is available through local LSU AgCenter Extension agents to help producers identify sires that meet program requirements.

Requirements for AI Bulls

- EPDs must be provided for all bulls utilized to breed Geaux Beef heifers.
- A receipt from the purchase of the semen and the registration number of the sire is required.
- If semen resulted from collection of a bull owned by the consignor, proof of semen collection of the bull is required.

EPD Minimum Requirements for AI Service Sires

Trait	Minimum Percentile
Calving Ease Direct (CED)	Top 30% or better
Birth Weight (BW)	Top 50% or better
Weaning Weight (WW)	Top 60% or better
Ribeye Area (REA)	Top 70% or better
Marbling (MARB)	Top 70% or better

Requirements for Natural Service Bulls

- Natural service sires, whether owned or leased, must test negative for trichomoniasis and vibriosis. Testing may be performed in conjunction with the sire's annual breeding soundness examination (BSE) by a licensed veterinarian. A copy of this BSE must be provided prior to delivery for the sale.
- Respective breed association registration numbers, with accompanying EPDs, must be provided prior to delivery for the sale

EPD Minimum Requirements for Natural Service Sires

Trait	Minimum Percentile
Calving Ease Direct (CED)	Top 40% or better
Birth Weight (BW)	Top 50% or better
Weaning Weight (WW)	Top 50% or better

***TENTATIVE* Timeline for 2026-2027 Program:**

	On-Farm Development	Sale Consignment
October 16	Registration Fee & Form Due (SPRING SALES); LSU AgCenter Verification	
January/February	LSU AgCenter Check-In: Breeding/Marketing Plans	Breeding Form Due
February 26	Consignment / Official Verification Fees Due	Consignment Fees Due
March - May		Spring Sales
May 7	Registration Fee & Form Due (FALL SALES); LSU AgCenter Verification	
August 6	Consignment / Official Verification Fees Due	Consignment Fees Due
August/September	LSU AgCenter Check-In: Breeding/Marketing Plans	Breeding Form Due
September/October		Fall Sales

Replacement Heifer Health Protocol

- Participation in the Geaux Beef Replacement Heifer Program requires adherence to the minimum health and management standards outlined below.
- Producers should consult their veterinarian to develop herd-specific protocols that meet or exceed these requirements.
- Vaccines should be given twice (a primary and booster) in accordance with the specific vaccine label directions or within a veterinarian-client relationship in accordance with Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) guidelines.

All vaccinations, medications, etc. MUST be reported in the individual heifer's health form. This form MUST be signed by a veterinarian.

First Working of Heifers – Approximately 3 Months of Age

Management Practice	Additional Instruction(s)	Suggested Products*
Blackleg Vaccination	Required	Calvary 9®, UltraChoice® 7 or 8, Vision 7 or 8®
Viral Respiratory Complex	Optional but recommended at this age. Cows of nursing calves must have received the same product within the past 12 months if administered to calves.	BoviShield Gold 5®, Inforce 3® along with OneShot® BVD, Pyramid 5®, Vista 5 SQ®
Deworm	Required when indicated by herd health evaluation.	Cydectin®, Dectomax®, Eprinex®, Ivomec®, LongRange®, Safe-guard®, Valbazen®
Dehorn	Required	Work with an LSU AgCenter agent or local veterinarian for the best way to minimize stress.
Individual Number - Ear Tag	Required	Any tag that displays the individual animal identification
Fly Control	Required when indicated by herd health evaluation.	Any product appropriately labeled for cattle.

**Comparable products approved by a licensed veterinarian may be substituted.*

Second Working of Heifers – Approximately 6-8 Months of Age

Management Practice	Additional Instruction(s)	Suggested Products*
Booster Blackleg Vaccination	Required	Calvary 9®, UltraChoice® 7 or 8, Vision 7 or 8®
Viral Respiratory Complex (BRSD, BVD type 1 and 2, IBR, and PI_3)	Required. Must follow up with a booster if the first dose was not administered at 3 months of age. Calves must have received two rounds of the product prior to sale.	BoviShield Gold 5®, Inforce 3® along with OneShot® BVD, Pyramid 5®, Vista 5 SQ®
Shipping Fever Complex Vaccination	Required	Nuplura® PH, OneShot®, Once® PMH IN, Once® PMH SQ, Presponse®, Pulmo-Guard® PMH-1, Vista Once® SQ
Deworm	Required when indicated by herd health evaluation.	Cydectin®, Dectomax®, Eprinex®, Ivomec®, LongRange®, Safe-guard®, Valbazen®
Fly Control	Required when indicated by herd health evaluation.	Any product appropriately labeled for cattle.

**Comparable products approved by a licensed veterinarian may be substituted.*

Note: Producers may give other vaccinations and should treat animals for any illness based on the guidance of a licensed veterinarian. All medications, vaccinations, and other health treatments MUST be disclosed in the health form prior to sale of the heifer.