Midwest MicroSystems L.L.C.

Cow Sense™
Herd Management Software

Cow Sense Certified by NCBA

Cow Sense™ herd management software was recently certified by National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Integrated Resource Management (NCBA/IRM) subcommittee at the NCBA Annual Convention in Phoenix Arizona, January 26-29,2000. Certification is a status granted to those who successfully incorporate the Standardized Production Analysis (SPA) guidelines into management tools such as computer software. Cow Sense received unanimous approval by the NCBA/IRM subcommittee in meeting the criteria for standardized reproduction and performance analysis.

In 1992, the National Cattlemen's Association (the predecessor to today's National Cattlemen's Beef Association) adopted the Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA) system developed through efforts of NCA producers, the National Integrated Resource Management Coordinating Committee and Extension Specialists. The first objective of SPA is to determine the production and financial performance of the producer's cow-calf enterprise. SPA helps the producer to measure progress in meeting business objectives.

SPA has become an important tool for today's beef producer. It (SPA) provides a method of comparing an operation's performance between production years, different producers, production regions, and production systems." Cow-Calf SPA presents standardized analysis terminology, calculation procedures, interpretations and limitations of the performance measures for the cow-calf enterprise.

Midwest MicroSystems has incorporated the standardized analysis terminology, and calculations for reproduction and performance measures into a user-friendly feature of Cow Sense. Beef producers that use Cow Sense herd management software for maintaining computerized reproduction and performance records in their cow-calf operations can generate a SPA-P (reproduction and performance) report with a simple selection from the calf reports menu. All the calculations are done automatically with validations to make sure the data is reflected accurately. The power of the SPA report can now be utilized without the tedious job of recollecting, assembling and calculating historical production information.

Certification provides cow-calf producers confidence that SPA Certified products have met the necessary criteria and in effect can carry the NCBA/IRM logo much like that of a Good Housekeeping Seal. Cow Sense is the only commercial private industry software to have been certified and the only herd management software to have the most recent version certified.

Cow Sense™ herd management software helps cattlemen improve profitability by micro managing each cow's economic contribution to the operation. It takes into account reproductive, weaning, yearling, feeding, carcass and herd health performance factors, on a historical basis for individual animals. SPA certification shows a commitment to provide beef producers with an important management tool assisting them to position for profitability.

The beef industry is striving to adopt successful information management methods, to micromanage the beef production process and design the end product to meet consumer demands. These management methods are common in other industries and depend on the collection, assimilation, and interpretation of large quantities of information. Cow Sense was developed by Jim Lowe on his ranch near Ainsworth Nebraska. The company moved to the University of Nebraska Foundation's Technology Park in 1997. Cow Sense has an installed user base across the entire USA, Canada and 10 other countries.

For additional information, contact Tim Davis of Midwest MicroSystems at (402) 472-3980.

Cow Sense™ compliance with Cow-Calf SPA

Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA) is a means of consistently measuring performance in beef cow operations so that comparisons can be made from year to year with an operation or between operations. The *Guidelines for Production and financial Performance Analysis for the Cow-Calf Producers: Cow-Calf SPA* were cooperatively developed and published in 1993 by the IRM Subcommittee of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the USDA Extension Service, and university professionals from several states. Please see the *Guidelines* for more detail about SPA requirements.

Cow Sense has adopted and incorporated SPA guidelines for reproduction and production, and has been certified by the NCBA IRM Subcommittee. Cow Sense is designed so that the SPA computations can be carried out with minimal additional data entry. Following are notes that explain some of the concepts involved with SPA and will assist you to enter data so that your reports accurately reflect SPA guidelines.

Item	Discussion
Exposed Females	SPA is based on a production cycle that begins when females are exposed to breeding and ends with weaning. Reproductive performance measures are all relative to the number of females exposed. Cow Sense accommodates this frame of reference with the calf history codes, which account for all outcomes of breeding. Although you are not required to enter breeding data, you *must* enter a calf history code for each cow exposed to breeding.
	If a cow is disposed of because of a reproductive failure (or other problem that prevents calving), use the temporary status, "Going," to let Cow Sense make a record for her in the following production cycle, so that the appropriate calf history may be entered.
	If a cow is exposed to breeding but is culled bred for performance reasons, then mark her "Gone" so that Cow Sense does not create a record for her in the following production cycle.
Replacements	Cow Sense detects replacements automatically by looking for cows that did not calve in any of the previous production cycles. Therefore, the first production cycle in Cow Sense will consider all cows to be replacements. For the purposes of SPA, you may run an artificial production cycle to initialize Cow Sense so that replacements to the first true production cycle can be properly identified. To avoid having to enter false calf data, assign each of the records in the artificial cycle a calf history of "8."
Purchased Calves	SPA Guidelines exclude purchased calves (typically grafted to a foster dam who has lost her own calf) from reproductive performance measures, but not from calving distribution and total weaning weights. In Cow Sense, create a second calf record for the dam (as you would for twins) to accommodate the purchased calf. To exclude the calf from SPA reproduction calculations, enter in the calf remarks "SPA Exclude," typed exactly that way.
Calving Distribution Start Date	SPA Guidelines offer two methods of identifying the start date for calving distribution. One is based on the date the bull was turned in with mature cows (285 days after), the other is based on the third calf born from mature cows (3 or older). Cow Sense uses the latter method, since breeding data entry is not required.
Pregnancy Loss Percentage	SPA Guidelines offer two methods of computing pregnancy loss percentage. Cow Sense adopts the first method (Pregnant Females that Fail to Calve/Females Diagnosed Pregnant).