



To: MBTS Consignors

From: Management Committee, Maritime Beef Testing Society July

Date: July 22, 2024

RE: 2024-25 Test Station Announcements and Consignment Intent

Firstly, the MBTS Board would like to thank all consignors who sent bulls to the Test Station for the 2023-24 evaluation and for selling bulls and heifers at the Sale on April 6, 2024. Your continued support allows the MBTS to continue the testing program.

Over the last several years, the MBTS has made considerable progress in financial forecasting, recording, and tracking. The MBTS also continues to improve the financial sustainability of the organization and the Test Station. The Board has implemented several cost-saving measures and looked at additional revenue streams. One of the revenue streams for potential growth is examining the yardage fee charged to all consigned bulls. There was a significant structural change to yardage fees in 2015, and smaller adjustments were made in 2019 and 2022. The MBTS is committed to reviewing the structure and cost of yardage in a transparent manner.

Testing Fee Structure

Based on consignor feedback and careful consideration of revenues and expenses, the MBTS will continue with the pricing structure implemented during the 2022-23 test season. The primary goal of this structure is to continue accurately and transparently reflecting the cost of testing individual animals, meaning that the 'hungry' bulls are no longer compensating for 'less hungry' bulls.

The single testing fee will continue to include the following:

Overhead costs	Adjustment period	RFI measure	Carcass Ultrasound
Arrival health protocol	ADG measure	Breeding soundness	

Individual feed and health treatments will also be billed at the actual cost, significantly reducing feed costs.

Please note that for the 2024-25 season:

- The bulls will be delivered the last weekend of October (Friday, October 25 and Saturday, October 26), with an adjustment period of 11-12 days before going on-test. The test will begin on November 6, 2024, with the 112-day test period ending on February 26, 2025.
- Across Breed Comparisons (ABCs) will not be available again this testing season, as GrowSafe will again perform our Residual Feed Intake (RFI) calculations. GrowSafe is the feeding system used by the MBTS. It is the only feed intake recording system that enables continuous data collection, where the animal identification tag is read every second when an animal is feeding at the trough.
- The GrowSafe system was upgraded in the fall of 2023, so this testing season will again offer self-weighing waterers for extra data collection.

The 2025 Maritime Beef Testing Station 52nd Annual Breeding Stock Sale will be held on April 5, 2025, as a hybrid sale with both in-person and online auction capabilities. Additional information will be provided throughout the testing season.

Based on the previous group of bulls and average feed consumption, we **estimate** the 2024-25 testing fees will be as follows (*please note that these are only estimates, and final fees will be set when the consignor memo is sent in early September*):

# of Bulls	Testing Fee	Feed*	Total Testing Fee
120	\$807.50	\$378.00	\$1,185.50
115	\$839.57	\$378.00	\$1,217.57
110	\$874.55	\$378.00	\$1,252.55
105	\$912.86	\$378.00	\$1,290.86
100	\$955.00	\$378.00	\$1,333.00
95	\$1,001.58	\$378.00	\$1,379.58
90	\$1,053.33	\$378.00	\$1,431.33
85	\$1,111.18	\$378.00	\$1,489.18
80	\$1,176.25	\$378.00	\$1,554.25

*Based on the estimate of 6,300 pounds at \$0.06/pound and would be variable by bull.

New Development and Testing Programs

The MBTS recognizes that overall activity does not present a lot of opportunities for reducing testing costs for consignors. The primary way to reduce costs for consignors and ensure the organization's financial sustainability is to offer more programs and services.

The MBTS previously developed three new programs to generate revenue to cover fixed operating costs. We continue to gauge interest in either a winter bull or heifer development program, which can be held in conjunction with the winter test, as well as a summer testing program which may include bulls, and/or heifers, and/or rams during the summer months. If you are interested in participating, or learning more, about any of these opportunities, please let us know.

The parameters for the winter bull or heifer development program have been established based on producer feedback and include:

	Bull Program	Heifer Program
Health Protocol	Same as test bulls	Same as test bulls
Age Range*	September 1 st to November 30 th and/or March 1 st to June 30 th	N/A
Minimum Delivery Weight*	800 lbs or 600 lbs	650 lbs
Included Test Measures	Average Daily Gain (ADG) Weight per Day of Age (WDA)	Average Daily Gain (ADG) Weight per Day of Age (WDA)
Optional Test Measures	N/A	Carcass ultrasound Breeding soundness
Delivery Date	With test bulls	With test bulls
Exit Date	Any time (with 48 hours' notice) or Exit date of non-sale bulls	Any time (with 48 hours' notice), or Exit date of non-sale bulls
Sale Eligibility	Not eligible	Eligible
Estimated Costs:	TBD- September	TBD- September
Testing Fee	\$50	\$30
On Arrival Health Treatment	\$0	\$35 (ultrasound)
Testing Costs		\$50 (breeding soundness)

*To be further determined within the Bull Program parameters

New MBTS Policies

In the 2024-25 testing season, the MBTS Board approved one new policy, including:

Animal Removed During Test Policy

The MBTS is committed to ensuring the health and safety of animals while on test. Every effort will be made to treat illness, provide veterinary care, and consult with the consignor if serious injury or illness were to occur. If, during these consultations, the consignor decides to remove the animal from test they assume all responsibility related to the treatment of the animal from the time it leaves the barn. Prior to removing the animal, the consignor will sign a waiver releasing MBTS from any liability related to the animal about to be removed.

Consignors who are deemed to act against this policy will have their animals removed from the test program for the remainder of the current test season. Consignors will remain responsible for all testing costs if animals are removed. The MBTS Management Committee may determine a penalty to a consignor from Test Station programming and sales for a subsequent period of up three years.

To help us get a better estimate of the number of bulls we can expect for this testing season, we are asking you to please email the Test Station (maritimebeef@eastlink.ca) with the breed and number of bulls you are considering sending this year prior to August 23, 2024.

We thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation as we continue to improve our processes and planning for the future of the Test Station and the breeding stock producers in the Maritimes.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact Jacy or Kara.

Sincerely,
MBTS Management Committee