

## Steer 2180 Sets the Performance Goal

By Kris Ringwall  
Extension Beef Specialist  
NDSU Extension Service



Most producers avoid number crunching because they don't have the patience to assimilate the numbers and because the resulting analysis of the numbers may drive them to be too practical. Yet, the numbers are necessary to review your operation.

Data analysis can be the foundation for daydreaming or should I say, letting pleasant thoughts challenge your management. Daydreaming does not come easy for the agricultural industry because we seem to be programmed to be negative.

There are those producers who would say this negative focus is the sign of the times. If that is true, these times have been around for a long time. Think back in your lifetime and see if you recall similar situations. Can you look at the good, without thinking of the potential bad? The older generation makes the decisions, but ... It's a nice day, but it finally rained, but . . . It looks like lots of hay this year, but . . . The calves are sure growing, but . . .

Forget the butts, and let's dream. Here are some baseline numbers to set the dream up, a dream we were able to live at the North Dakota State University Dickinson Research Extension Center.

Earlier this year we received the close out report of lot 2369. There are reams of information. The 86 steers were placed on feed Nov. 1, and the lot closed out on June 24.

The pen netted \$67.61 per head. The calves' value going in was \$507, so total revenue available in support of the Center's cow calf enterprise was \$574. The average market date was May 6 with an average live weight of 1,177 pounds per head. In general the pen averaged 64 percent choice or better, 34 percent select and one percent standard.

In terms of yield grade, 27 percent were yield grade 2, 60 percent were yield grade 3 and 13 percent were yield grade 4. On the rail, 12 percent were less than 650 pounds, 81 percent were 650 to 850 pounds and 7 percent were over 850 pounds.

In terms of ribeye, 26 percent were less than 11 square inches and 74 percent were between 11 to 16 square inches. The average gain was 3.22 pounds per day while in the feed yard and the cattle converted at 5.5 pounds per pound of dry feed.

One bloated for a lot death loss rate of just over 1 percent. As with most feedlot data, the challenge is how to absorb, shuffle and change management or genetics to better the outcome, to challenge the status quo.

Looking at the individual steer data creates all kinds of scenarios. Using a market-adjusted net return (MANR), where the price is adjusted to remove the price differences associated with when the steer was marketed, the top animal was steer 2180.

Steer 2180, was a 4.8 frame steer on arrival at the lot, gained 3.7 pounds per day, had a 5.3 pound feed efficiency with carcass yield grade of 2.6, quality grade of sterling silver (calf was red), a ribeye of 13.6 square inches and weighed 866 pounds on the rail. The steer actually sold for \$137.15 per hundredweight (carcass weight) for \$1,188 total.

Now, dream and image all of your calves, peas in pod, standing side by side, each handing you greenbacks to the tune of \$1,188. On 85 steers, that would mean \$100,980 in family revenue. And, there is still another lot to close out--the lot of best steers you saved for last.

The family is jubilant and the very best steer is in the freezer, with char-broiled steaks simmering for the evening supper, fresh with local garden produce and fresh wheat bread, hand milled from this year's wheat crop, the butter slightly melted to engage the home-grown garlic.

No need to wake up, just keep dreaming and remember steer 2180, 4.8 frame, 3.7 pounds per day, 5.3 pound feed efficiency, yield grade of 2.6, quality grade of sterling silver, a rib eye of 13.6 square inches and 866 pounds on the rail.

When you wake up, just be bidding on the bull that can make more calves like Steer 2180.

May you find all your ear tags.

Your comments are always welcome at [www.BeefTalk.com](http://www.BeefTalk.com). For more information, contact the North Dakota Beef Cattle Improvement Association, 1133 State Avenue, Dickinson, ND 58601 or go to [www.CHAPS2000.com](http://www.CHAPS2000.com) on the Internet. In correspondence about this column, refer to BT0153.

---

## And The Winner Is:



**Steer  
2180**

Frame score	4.8
Average daily gain	3.7 lbs per day
Feed efficiency	5.3 lbs per lb of dry feed
Carcass yield grade score	2.6
Quality grade	Sterling Silver (upper choice red calf)
Rib eye area	13.6 square inches
Hot carcass weight	866 lbs
Value on the rail	\$ 137.15 per cwt
Total value	\$ 1,188
Actual net return	\$ 253