

Industry News - PM Argentina creates a new category for classifying cattle
By [Ana Elia Rocha McGuire](#) on 11/26/2010

In this article:

A scientific study conducted by researchers at Argentine animal-nutrition company Coneco, in conjunction with meat processing companies Quickfood/Marfrig Group, has resulted in a new category of classification for cattle, called MEJ (young intact male), Coneco announced in a news release.

Conducted at a Conecar feedlot, the study's objective was to accelerate the production cycle, improve efficiency and increase the supply of quality meat for domestic consumption in Argentina and for export. Quickfood/Marfrig concurrently launched the MEJ Impulse program for the production of non-castrated young male cattle.

The project, which took nearly a year to complete, involved the use of different breeds of cattle, including Braford, Hereford and Holstein Argentino, which were intact males with higher rates of daily weight gain and more efficient feed conversions than castrated males.

All animals were slaughtered to study teeth to confirm age (under 24 months). The quality characteristics of the cuts obtained from intact males were comparable to those of the best steers, and their yield was superior.

The creation of this category allows the use of a product in a currently untapped market of cattle, generating more meat per unit area and higher yields per unit dressing. Roberto Guercetti, president of Conecar, said this is "a great contribution to agriculture in Argentina, in a very difficult time for the industry."

Argentina's agriculture department allowed the study after a request submitted by Quickfood/Marfrig to include the MEF category among all cattle breeds slaughtered under federal inspection.