Dams of Distinction and Leading MPI Dams – What's the Difference?

The **Dams of Distinction** list is produced annually and is a list of cows that meets specific criteria **within a breeder's own herd**. The list is generated based on the dam's consistent production of calves with a weaning index of over 105 and a uniform calving interval.

However, these cows are often misrepresented as the "elite cows in the breed" when actually the list recognizes the best cows *within a herd*. In fact, a very uniform herd of good producing cows may not contain any Dams of Distinction at all.

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Since weaning indexes can only be compared within herd, we need to identify great cows **across the breed**. (Big calves are great, but not if it costs more $$ to get them there.) Unlike weaning indexes, the MPI (**Maternal Productivity Index**) is generated by *combining* the following EPDs:

Calving Ease	0.22
Maternal Calving Ease	0.22
Weaning Weight	39.16
Milk	15.23
Cow Weight	34.41
Stayability	10.75
Total	100.0

The *economic* importance of each trait determines their emphasis in the Index. Simply put - a higher MPI indicates a more profitable package! And like EPDs, the MPI numbers can be compared across the country!
(see more details on MPI in Tools & Trends pg 6-7)

Therefore, the **Leading MPI Dams** list simply identifies the cows with leading MPI numbers. These cows have the top 5% MPI numbers with an accuracy of 50% or greater.

Please be sure to consider the important criteria for both lists when examining the "Dams of Distinction" or the "Leading MPI Dams" listings!