



Northern Territory Government
Department of Business, Industry & Resource Development

alice springs

Rural Review

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BEEF CRC DAY

by IAN McLEAN
FARBIS, ALICE SPRINGS

An informative day was held at AZRI on April 7 with John Bertram and Rebecca Farrell presenting the latest results from the Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) for Cattle & Beef Quality.

The day was a result of DBIRD and the NTCA working together to bring the event to the NT.

The day covered the benefits and pitfalls of cross-breeding to cattle producers. This included:

- Selection for desirable traits
- Heritability of these traits
- How to balance various traits for benefits in production

Producers showed keen interest in the Beef CRC's assessment of different weaning strategies in commercial herds. The results demonstrated how weaning strategies can impact on the animal's performance during its life, quality of its carcass and producer's bottom line.

Temperament issues are something that we are all aware of but it is the cost to cattle production that interested the Beef CRC. Temperament was discussed



and demonstrated at the AZRI yards. Simple management techniques were suggested to minimise stress, reduce weight loss and improve the performance of an animal, on the truck, in the boat, in the feedlot or over the hooks.

The Meat Standards Australia (MSA) meat grading system was also explained. Demonstration of the MSA website showed producers how different factors affect the grading of the various cuts and how they can improve the grade of their beef under MSA.

More information on the Beef CRC can be obtained from the Pastoral Production team (08) 8951 8111.

Thank you to John Bertram, Rebecca Farrell, the NTCA, the Pastoral Production team and AZRI social club.

PROGRESS WITH ASPIAC by PAUL SMITH, CHAIRMAN TIEYON STATION



ASPIAC held its 62nd meeting on the 17 March 2005 at AZRI, for what can only be described as a marathon session. Thank you to the committee for their input and attendance at the meeting.

DBIRD's Pastoral Production team reported to ASPIAC on the progress of current projects and presented concept papers and project briefs on potential projects. The following concept papers and project briefs received endorsement from ASPIAC:

- Reducing the impact of weaning on weight gain
- Managing cattle nutrition in the Alice Springs District with Faecal NIRS and cost effective supplementation
- Remote Management (Telemetry) for the Pastoral Industry
- An evaluation of grazing strategies in Central Australia (In Collaboration with CLMA, DK-CRC and CSIRO)
- Enhancement of remote area surveillance systems for livestock disease (in collaboration with the Biosecurity CRC)

Unfortunately, we were unable to send a representative to the recent NABRC meeting in Townsville. We are working towards getting consistent representation at future meetings.

The next ASPIAC meeting will be our AGM, which will be held in conjunction with the NTCA and CLMA meetings. Any pastoralist who would like to help drive the Pastoral research and development in the Alice Springs District is asked to contact the Secretary Sally Leigo prior to the meeting on 8951 8144 or sally.leigo@nt.gov.au

Current ASPIAC Members:

Paul Smith (Chairman), Tieyon Station (08) 8956 0720

Sally Leigo (Secretary), DBIRD (08) 8951 8144

Phil Anning, DBIRD (08) 8951 8100

Roy Chisolm, Napperby Station (08) 8956 8666

Natalie Edmonds, Ambalindum Station (08) 8953 4088

Jamie Evans, Hamilton Downs Station (08) 8956 8530

Tracey Hayes, Deepwell Station, (08) 8956 0980

Andrea Johnson, CLMA, (08) 8953 4230

Chris Knott, Alcoota Station (08) 8956 9766

Jim Napier, Tanami Downs Station
(08) 8956 8738

Peter Saville, DBIRD (08) 8951 8181

Doug Sims, Narwietooma Station
(08) 8956 8544

Vanessa Smith, New Crown Station
(08) 8956 0969

Anne Stanes, Lyndavale Station (08) 8956 2907

Reminder for Drought Declaration Applications

Drought declaration applications must be received by DBIRD by the 31st May 2005.

To obtain your copy of the drought application form please contact:

Alice Springs

Phil Anning
Regional Director
08 8951 8111

Tennant Creek

Ted Martin
Regional Stock Inspector
08 8962 4488

UPDATE - Calibrating GRASP

by ALISON KENNEDY
PASTORAL PRODUCTION, ALICE SPRINGS

You will recall that the Pastoral Production Branch established six exclosures last year to investigate pasture response to rainfall and soil nutrient availability. Unfortunately, the extremely low rainfall means there was no pasture growth to record at the majority of sites this summer.

However, we were able to record results from one pasture growth event on two sites. Both sites received approximately 80mm of rainfall in a 24 hour period at the beginning of January.

lack of follow-up rain in the next few days meant that the soil moisture levels rapidly declined and the shallow rooted seedlings could not access sufficient moisture to reach maturity.

This is something we all observe anyway – however it does reinforce the need to maintain healthy and robust plant butts that will be able to respond quickly and productively to small or isolated rainfall events.

	Site 1	Site 2
Land Type	Alluvial Flood Plain	Mulga with Annual Grasses
Pasture Type	Perennial & Annual Grass	Annual Grass
Pasture Growth	860 kg/ha	140 kg/ha
Utilisation	15%	15%
AE/km ² (for this bulk of feed)	3.5	0.6

Most of the growth on the second site was in the form of immature annual seedlings. It is supposed that whilst a good volume of rainfall was recorded (approx. 80mm in 24 hours), the

We live in hope of rain and are looking to construct another six exclosures on a variety of land types. If you would like to be involved in this project then please contact:

Alison Kennedy
8951 8184 or
alison.kennedy@nt.gov.au.



Photo of Site 2 after 80mm of January Rain

GRAZING FOR PROFIT SCHOOL A WINNER

The second *Grazing For Profit* (GFP) school to be conducted this year has wound up in Alice Springs with participants giving the school glowing accolades.

The GFP school is run by Terry McCosker of the Resource Consulting Services, and provides holistic insights into the many factors that can affect a business. Issues such as having a vision and goal, effective management, time management, farm ecology, seasonal conditions,

The Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development's FarmBis Coordinator for central Australia, Ian McLean says that the school is always very well received. "Numbers were a bit down for this last one," He said, "But this was due to seasonal conditions, however those who attended will return to their stations better equipped to manage those conditions. There is another school planned for March 2006, and like the one just completed, participants will be eligible for a FarmBis subsidy to attend."



Attendees at the GFP included on the Left table - Deb Roberts (A/Farm Manager DBIRD Alice Springs), Sue Coppock (Waite River Station). The right table, clockwise: Ross Stanes (Lyndavale Station), Dan Wicks (Neutral Junction Station), Alison Kennedy (DBIRD AS), Jayne Trader (Neutral Junction Station) and Kathryn Coppock (Waite River Station)

the economics involved in running a farm, and of course all aspects of livestock management including nutrition, reproduction and grazing management.

"The ten participants of the school will apply what they have learnt in this school to their roles at work or on their property," Mr McCosker explained, "by taking an integrated, holistic approach to management issues, participants are able to see the bigger picture of their business and how it operates instead of getting bogged down in individual issues."

The participants of the school are always its most enthusiastic advocates. Dan Wicks from Neutral Junction Station said he enjoyed the school, and can already see ways to apply what he learnt to his job, especially planning for the future of the business. Deb Roberts, Acting Farm Manager at the Arid Zone Research Institute added that she learned a great deal in the 8 day school and found it incredibly motivating. She said she wants to apply principles of the school to her work immediately.

Further information regarding FarmBis and *Grazing For Profit* can be obtained from:
Ian McLean on 8951 8191

AUSTRALIAN NUFFIELD FARMING SCHOLARSHIPS



The Australian Nuffield Farming Scholars Association awards scholarships each year to farmers in Australia. The objective is to increase practical farming knowledge and management skills and techniques generally.

These scholarships give Australian citizens the opportunity to study farming practices in Europe, Asia and North America and those countries best suited to the Scholar. They will also promote a closer understanding between farmers in the countries visited.

Upon returning to Australia it is expected that Scholars will be able to actively spread the knowledge and understanding they have gained among their fellow farmers and others. Nuffield Farming Scholarships give a unique opportunity to stand back from your day-to-day occupation, and to study a subject of interest to you.

You do not need academic qualifications, but you will need to persuade the Selectors that you have the qualities to make the best use of an opportunity that is only given to a few.

Applications will close the **30th June 2005** for the 2005 Nuffield Farming Scholarships which primary producers throughout Australia are eligible to apply. For further information contact:

Bryan Clark
Phone: 02 6964 6600
Email enquiries@nuffield.com.au
or visit www.nuffield.com.au

Australian Nuffield Farming Scholarships available in 2005:

A **grain grower** in northern New South Wales or Queensland, supported by GRDC

A **grain grower** in southern New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia or Tasmania, supported by GRDC

A **grain grower** in Western Australia, supported by GRDC

A **grain grower** anywhere in Australia supported by ABB Grain Ltd

Two **woolgrower scholarships** supported by Australian Wool Innovation

A **livestock producer** supported by Meat and Livestock Australia

A **primary producer** to study new and emerging industries supported by Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

A **primary producer** supported by Rabobank

A **primary producer** supported by Landmark

A **primary producer** in Victoria supported by Rural Finance Corporation

A **primary producer** in Tasmania supported by Impact Fertilisers

The Lady Southey Scholarship for a **primary producer** to study natural resource management supported by the Sidney Myer Fund

Indigenous ²⁰⁰⁵ Cattlemen's Workshop

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL TONY FRESHWATER ON 8951 8107

This year we're talking on the importance of natural resources for sustainable cattle enterprises. We're focussing on feral animal control and being prepared for drought.

TOPICS

HERD MANAGEMENT & PLANNING
PASTURE MANAGEMENT & PLANNING
WATER MANAGEMENT & PLANNING
MARKET PLANNING

WHEN?

18 AUGUST 8AM TO 5PM
19 AUGUST 7AM TO 4PM

WHERE?

ARID ZONE RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON
SOUTH STUART HIGHWAY

FREE BARBIE 19 AUGUST AT 4PM

**LUNCH & SMOKO WILL BE
PROVIDED ON BOTH DAYS**



Northern Territory Government
Department of Business, Industry & Resource Development

RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD 2005....AND THE WINNER IS...

by ROWENA EASTICK,
NT COORDINATOR RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD

The presentation ceremony for the 2005 Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) Rural Women's Award was held on the 14th February at Parliament House. The ceremony was hosted, and the awards presented, by the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries, Kon Vatskalis. Women from a range of industries attended – the boots, jeans, heat and mud (depending on the stage of the wet season!!!) were exchanged for high heels, dresses, plush carpet and air-conditioning – at least for an afternoon!

This year's winner was Ann Palmer, a manager at Crocodile Farms NT. Her proposal outlined how she would use the bursary to investigate market opportunities for products currently classed as 'by-products' of crocodile production, and to advance on-farm techniques for increased productivity. Over the next 12 months, this will involve visits to interstate crocodile farms to liaise about production innovations and improvements in husbandry and management strategies, and to initiate network development with Asian stakeholders to target by-product markets. Ann commented she was particularly looking forward to her time in Canberra – a week out of the King Gees and work boots, and the challenge of the Directors' Course! I'm not sure how she responded to the nickname of 'Crocodile Dundette', which seemed to stick after the presentation ceremony!

Sarah Fea, an agricultural extension officer at Katherine, **was the runner-up**. She aims to use the \$5000 to assist the agricultural and horticultural industries adopt sustainable management practices through Biological Farming principles. This will involve Sarah's attendance at interstate training courses to increase her knowledge and skills, from which she can then further educate primary producers and promote the benefits of biological farming to better manage weeds, disease and soil nutrition.

Both these women exemplify what the Rural Women's Award represents - they are motivated, dynamic and



The Minister for Primary Industry, Kon Vatskalis, flanked by the winner of the RIRDC Rural Women's Award, Ann Palmer (LHS), and runner-up, Sarah Fea.

are passionate with a strong positive vision for the future of their respective industry – from crocodiles to cropping!

I encourage you to think about women who are dynamic contributors to your industry - horticulture, agriculture, fisheries, pastoral, forestry, natural resource management, and who may be worthwhile nominees for next year.

If you want to get in early to prepare your proposals or nominations you can visit the website: www.ruralwomensaward.gov.au for more information.

I also take this opportunity to thank all who contributed to the progression of the award this year including ABC Radio, Rural Press Ltd, and the Australian Women's Weekly. Look out for the write-up about the winners of the 2005 Awards – last year, each winner had a full page glossy spread – Elle MacPherson will be no match for Ann in her crocodile gear!

I look forward to a flood of nominations for the 2006 RIRDC Rural Women's Award!

Notes from the Regional Director

The origin of the curse “May you live in interesting times” is uncertain. However, it certainly does relate well to the current global trading environment. Some of the dynamics affecting the Australian beef industry include:

- High demand for our beef, including high-return markets (Japan, Korea) partly due to restrictions on access by US suppliers.
- Competitive international pressures from alternative suppliers of beef and live cattle (eg South America) due to the strong Aussie dollar.
- A higher fuel cost environment due to sustained world oil price rises.

Exports are the backbone of the Australian beef industry and Australia’s reputation for food safety is essential to the continued strength of the industry. This was well illustrated by visiting USA speaker Prof. Gary Smith at the recent NTCA AGM in Alice Springs. He noted that a single animal with Bovine Spongiform Encephaly (BSE) in the USA food chain had cost billions of dollars.

Overseas beef markets have demanded systems of accurate and rapid traceability to allow management of health risks.

In Australia there are a range of systems of livestock identification and considerable debate and activity on their continued use and further development. At a time when cattle movements are at a peak, due to extended dry conditions over extensive areas, reliable systems of identification are a key advantage for our beef exports.

This week DBIRD hosted a two day cross-border animal health network meeting in Alice Springs of importance to the cattle industry. The meeting aimed to ensure continuing interstate cooperation and coordination on issues including stock movements, identification, disease surveillance and control and emergency animal disease

preparedness. The NT is well placed in the national beef industry. Maintaining that position requires constant vigilance.

Best wishes,
Phil Anning

VALE GAIL CASSIDY

The Department is saddened to announce the death of Gail Cassidy (nee Bohning), a former technical officer with the Rangeland section in Alice Springs. She died on Monday 28th March after a short illness.

Gail was born and went to school in Alice Springs. After high school she attended Roseworthy Agricultural College before returning to Alice Springs to work for the NT Government.

Gail transferred to the Department from Water Resources in the mid 1980s to join the Animal Production team as a technical officer. In the mid 1990s Gail transferred to a technical position with the Rangelands section.

During her time with the Rangelands team Gail was involved in some major projects such as the Needlebush project and worked on the effects of trees and shrubs on pasture production.

Gail was known for her love of life and sense of humour and will be greatly missed by her colleagues at AZRI.

Gail is survived by her husband Peter and children Patrick, Jessica & Megan.

Pastoral Market Update

FEBRUARY 2005 continued...

OTHER LIVESTOCK EXPORTS VIA DARWIN PORT (includes NT and Interstate Stock)

Destination	Buffalo			Camels			Goats			Deer			Horses			Sheep			Pigs			
	2004	2005	1-28 Feb	2004	2005	1-28 Feb	2004	2005	1-28 Feb	2004	2005	1-28 Feb	2004	2005	1-28 Feb	2004	2005	1-28 Feb	2004	2005	1-28 Feb	
BRUNEI	2,279	0	0	115	0	0	3,680	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
INDONESIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PHILIPPINES	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	640	0	0
W-MALAYSIA	1,556	672	672	0	0	0	725	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E-MALAYSIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	217	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3,835	672	672	115	0	0	4,722	0	0	30	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	640	0	0

Total Live Cattle Exports (Australia Wide) 2004

Australian live cattle shipments for 2004 totalled 637,152 head, a fall of 18% on the previous years total of 774,248 head. Shipments fell to all major export markets, except China and Jordan.

Indonesia was again the largest market for Australian cattle in 2004, taking 358,638 head, or 56% of total exports for the year. Indonesia was also the most resilient of the South-East Asian markets during 2004, with a drop of only 7% on 2003 levels, compared to decreases of 46% and 51% to Malaysia and the Philippines respectively.

Cattle shipments to China continued to increase in 2004, jumping a further 68% on 2003 levels to 73,911 head. This figure established China as Australia's second largest market for the calendar year. The export value of Australian live cattle shipments during 2004 was A\$477 million FOB, only 2% below 2003 levels (A\$486 million FOB).

Given the 18% decline in volume, the 2% decline in the value of exports for the year was primarily due to increased numbers of high value dairy cattle exported (78,446 head – 56% more than 2003), as well as higher prices for non-breeding animals (feeder cattle). The average value of feeder cattle exported in 2004, at A\$594/head, was 8% higher than the average in 2003.

Australian live cattle exports during 2004 were negatively affected by record cattle prices, the strong Australian dollar, increased shipping costs, high demand for feeder cattle for the meat trade and strong competition from competitively priced frozen beef, particularly in Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia.

Total Live Cattle Exports (Australia Wide) by Destination 2004

DESTINATION	2003	2004	% change
Brunei	19,796	17,975	-9.2
China	44,138	73,911	67.5
Indo	387,160	358,638	-7.4
Israel	43,213	20,947	-51.5
Japan	22,034	18,098	-17.9
Jordan	23,065	34,154	48.1
Kuwait	4,081	4,668	14.4
Malaysia	87,955	47,541	-45.9
Mexico	2,552	5,911	131.6
Philippines	96,016	46,918	-51.1
Saudi Arabia	15,969	0	-
UAE	4,687	1,589	-66.1
Others	23,582	6,802	-71.2
Total	774,248	637,152	-17.7

Prepared by the NT Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development.

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Pastoral Market Update

Live Cattle Exports via Darwin Port – MARCH 2005

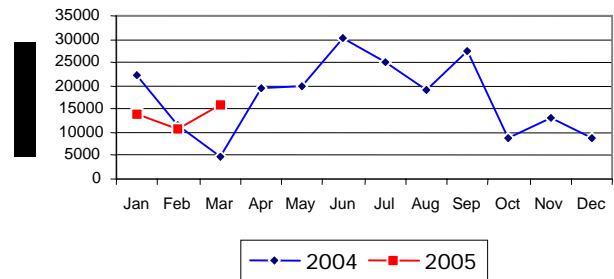
Please note that the "NT CATTLE" figures are NT cattle exported through the Port of Darwin only, some NT cattle are exported through interstate ports.

Destination	TOTAL CATTLE (including interstate)							# NT CATTLE						
	2003	2004	Last year 31/03/04	YTD 31/03/05	1-31 Mar	Previous Month	Difference	2003	2004	Last year 31/03/04	YTD 31/03/05	1-31 Mar	Previous Month	Difference
BRUNEI	16,572	14,101	3,246	0	0	0	0	13,574	10,492	3,246	0	0	0	0
INDONESIA	182,624	158,600	27,425	40,298	15,892	10,652	+5,240	145,274	150,048	27,425	40,298	15,892	10,652	+5,240
PHILIPPINES	51,792	31,623	8,065	0	0	0	0	46,243	29,393	8,065	0	0	0	0
SABAH	224	304	0	0	0	0	0	224	304	0	0	0	0	0
SARAWAK	320	0	0	0	0	0	0	92	0	0	0	0	0	0
W-MALAYSIA	9,028	6,379	0	93	0	93	-93	7,055	6,272	0	93	0	93	-93
EAST TIMOR	58	35	0	0	0	0	0	58	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	260,618	211,042	38,736	40,391	15,892	10,745	+5,147	212,520	205,204	38,736	40,391	15,892	10,745	+5,147
				+1,655							+1,655			

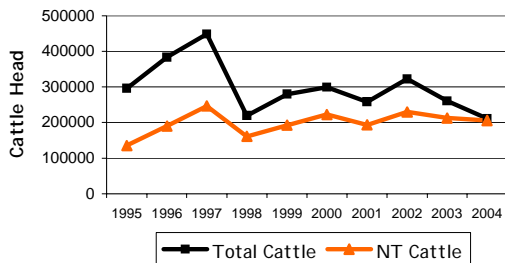
"March at a glance"

- 15,892 head of cattle through the Port of Darwin during March, 5,147 head more than February and 11,156 more than March last year.
- YTD figures indicate 1,655 head in front of the same time last year!
- No interstate cattle through the Port of Darwin for the first 3 months of 2005.

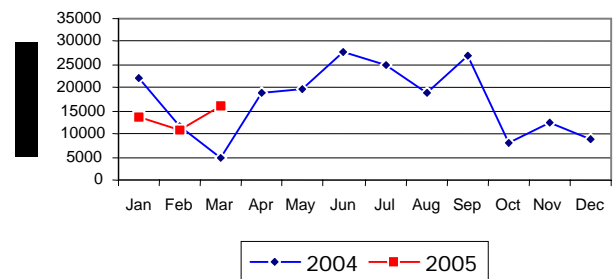
TOTAL Live Cattle Exports thru Port of Darwin
2004 v 2005



Live Cattle Exports thru the Port of Darwin
(last 10 years)



NT Live Cattle Exports thru Port of
2004 v 2005



PREVIOUS 7 YEARS

Total Cattle, Port of Darwin

1997 448,196 1998 219,439 1999 280,011 2000 299,179 2001 258,127 2002 322,602 2003 260,618 2004 211,042

NT Cattle, Port of Darwin

1997 246,389 1998 160,412 1999 192,441 2000 222,669 2001 193,172 2002 229,796 2003 212,520 2004 205,204


Pastoral Market Update

MARCH 2005 Continued

OTHER LIVESTOCK EXPORTS VIA DARWIN PORT (includes NT and Interstate Stock)

Destination	Buffalo			Camels			Goats			Deer			Horses			Sheep			Pigs			
	2004	2005	1-31 Mar	2004	2005	1-31 Mar	2004	2005	1-31 Mar	2004	2005	1-31 Mar	2004	2005	1-31 Mar	2004	2005	1-31 Mar	2004	2005	1-31 Mar	
BRUNEI	2,279	0	0	115	0	0	3,680	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
INDONESIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PHILIPPINES	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	640	0	0
W-MALAYSIA	1,556	672	0	0	0	0	725	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E-MALAYSIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	217	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3,835	672	0	115	0	0	4,722	0	0	30	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	640	0	0	0

NATIONAL CATTLE PRICES - W/E 01/04/05

JAPAN OX									MEDIUM STEER										
Estimated dressed weight price (cents/kg)									Estimated dressed weight price (cents/kg)										
SALEYARDS				O.T.HOOKS					SALEYARDS				O.T.HOOKS						
NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)	NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)	NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)	NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)	NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)
This week	319	321	334	322	311	309	335	320	This week	305	331	343	326	307	306	331	318		
Last week	318	321	342	323	311	305	335	318	Last week	317	326	nq	327	307	303	331	318		
Year ago	294	295	286	292	294	296	290	288	Year ago	296	298	297	295	nq	nq	nq	nq		
US COW									TRADE STEER										
Estimated dressed weight price (cents/kg)									Estimated dressed weight price (cents/kg)										
SALEYARDS				O.T.HOOKS					SALEYARDS				O.T.HOOKS						
NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)	NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)	NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)	NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)	NSW	QLD	SA	AV (Aust)
This week	282	279	293	281	259	261	268	250	This week	362	353	370	362	317	286	308	322		
Last week	275	282	290	279	259	257	268	249	Last week	373	350	386	368	317	282	308	321		
Year ago	248	263	241	252	241	255	228	230	Year ago	319	320	324	317	290	282	255	292		
LIVE EXPORT QUOTES									<p>Prices courtesy of Meat & Livestock Australia</p>  <p>www.mla.com.au</p>										
Estimated live weight price (cents/kg)																			
LIGHT STEERS (280-400 kg)				HEAVY STEERS (400+ kg)															
Darwin		Fremantle		Darwin		Fremantle													
This week	160	170	145	155															
Last week	160	170	145	155															
Year ago	165	150	165	150															

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES

Key Currencies 1AUD =	Current 31.03.05	Previous week 24.03.05	3 months ago 31.12.04	1 Year ago 31.03.04	Pre-devaluation 01.07.97
Brunei Dollar	1.2742	1.2627	1.2834	1.2693	1.076
Indonesian Rupiah	7335.44	7269.03	7230.38	6497.91	1830
Philippine Peso	42.1987	41.848	43.865	42.5217	19.84
Malaysian Ringgit	2.9272	2.9311	2.9609	2.8688	1.9
Euro	0.5964	0.5945	0.5719	0.6192	N/A
US Dollar	0.7702	0.7713	0.7801	0.7537	0.752

Prepared by the NT Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development.

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Monthly Review of Temperature and Rainfall

FEBRUARY

Temperature

In the Alice Springs district Mean monthly maximum temperatures ranged, from near normal over its far southeastern parts through to a large area 3°C - 4°C above average over its northwestern regions. Within the central parts of that latter portion was a small area 4°C - 5°C above average. The highest mean monthly maximum temperature was 40.9°C at Wulungurru AWS and the lowest, 35.4°C at Arltunga. The hottest day reached 45.0°C at both at Rabbit Flat and Wulungurru AWS on the 18th, and the coolest day reached 25.1°C at Arltunga, on the 2nd.

Mean minimum temperatures ranged from near average over the northwestern area of the Alice Springs district through to 2°C - 3°C below average over its southeastern portions. The lowest mean monthly minimum temperature was 18.3°C at Alice Springs Airport and the highest, 26.1°C at Wulungurru AWS. The coolest night was 9.5°C at Arltunga on the 4th. The warmest night was 31°C at Wulungurru AWS on the 16th and 17th.

Rainfall

The Alice Springs district received the odd good fall, especially in its northeastern parts, but generally experienced significant areas of very much below average rainfall. The long term mean for the district is 45.7mm. Alice Springs Airport's tally of only 36.4mm for the period June to February incl. is the lowest ever for that 9 month span (the previous lowest was 41.0mm for equivalent period in 1961/62).



WEATHER DETAILS PROVIDED COURTESY OF THE BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY, DARWIN. PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS INFORMATION IS BASED ON UNCONFIRMED DATA

MARCH

Temperature

Mean monthly maximum temperatures in the Alice Springs district ranged from 1°C - 2°C above average over its far southeastern parts through to a large area of 3°C - 4°C above average over much of its northwestern half. The highest mean monthly maximum temperature was 38.8°C at Wulungurru AWS and the lowest, 33.9°C at Arltunga. The hottest day reached 43°C at Wulungurru AWS on the 1st and 2nd, and the coolest day reached 25°C, interestingly also at Wulungurru AWS, on the 23rd.

Mean monthly minimum temperatures in the Alice Springs district ranged from near normal over much of its southern parts to 1°C - 2°C above normal over the greater portion of its northern areas. The lowest mean monthly minimum temperature was 17.6°C at Alice Springs Airport and the highest, 25.0°C at Tennant Creek Airport. The coolest night was 6.9°C at Arltunga on the 28th. The warmest night was 30°C at Wulungurru AWS on the 2nd.

Rainfall

The Alice Springs district received near average (48.6mm) over parts of its northwest but below, to very much below, average elsewhere. Alice Springs Airport's tally of only 37.0mm for the period June to March incl. is the lowest ever recorded for that 10 month span for both the Airport and the Post Office, ie since records commenced in 1873 (the previous lowest was the Airport's 50.1mm received from June 1963 to March 1964).

Elliott and Rabbit Flat reported the highest number of rain days – that of eight.