Northern muster

Information for rural business in north Queensland

Producing quality food and fibre for a healthy bottom line

in this edition

Issue 22 August 2009

Queensland Government

editorial

Welcome to the Winter/Spring 2009 edition of the *Northern muster*. The good rain early in the year has long gone and pastures are declining fast. Unfortunately some have not had decent rain for a long time.

It is time to look at the health of pastures and the stock grazing them.

This issue includes Market report, Project updates, Dalrymple diary, supplement strategies and more.

Cattle prices are currently very good for good meatworks cattle. The bull selling season has started. What criteria will you use to select bulls to improve the profitability of your herd?

MSA is now a reality in north and central Queensland. There are producer group MSA activities showing success. Contact your local QPIF if you want to know more.

Enjoy the newsletter. Phone 13 25 23 for advice and contacting QPIF staff. Please fill out the Feedback sheet, tell us what information you need and send it in.

Thank you to our advertisers and support teams.

Alan Laing
Editor

ABARE beef report

Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE) has released its latest Australian Beef report (June 2009). Highlights for northern Australia include:

- Improved seasonal conditions in 2006-07 allowed many beef cattle producers to begin herd rebuilding following the 2005-06 drought. Very large scale beef farms achieved this through a reduction in beef cattle turn-off and increased beef cattle purchases and calf production. However, small scale producers in the high rainfall and cropping belt of southern Queensland continued to experience below average seasonal conditions, and responded by reducing average beef cattle numbers.
- In 2007-08, seasonal conditions varied across northern Australia, improving in eastern Queensland, but deteriorating for central-western Queensland and the southern and eastern areas of the Northern Territory. Overall, beef cattle numbers in northern Australia increased by 2% on average in 2007-08, with all groups of beef producers increasing average herd size, except for medium scaled farms. Small scale farms recorded the largest proportionate increase in beef cattle numbers because of reduced turn-off, while very large scale farms were in a position to increase both beef cattle sales and the size of their herd because of higher branding rates.
- In 2008-09, improved grazing conditions in most parts of northern Australia are projected to boost average calf production of small, medium and large scale beef farms and maintain the relatively high branding rates of very large scale beef farms. Small scale farms are projected to run down beef cattle inventories, partly because of dry seasonal conditions, but also to increase cropping activities. Very large farms are projected to continue to increase beef cattle turn-off, while also increasing beef cattle numbers by more than 8% a farm on average in 2008-09. Overall, average beef cattle numbers on northern Australian farms are projected to increase by nearly 3% a farm in 2008-09.

The full 20 page report is available from www.abare.gov.au. Other recent reports of possible interest in the livestock category include The value of the red meat industry to Australia; Korean beef market – developments and prospects; GM stockfeed in Australia – Economic issues for producers and consumers; and Australian lamb (Financial performance of slaughter lamb producing farms 2006-07 to 2008-09).

If you know of anyone who would like to receive the *Northern muster* drop us a note at:

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Million-dollar offensive to kill invasive weed

Queensland is joining forces with other states to mobilise reinforcements and dollars with a war chest of $1.3 million to fight the highly invasive pest Siam weed.

The expected $1.3 million funding for 2009–10 would come from the federal government and those states most at risk — Queensland, Northern Territory, New South Wales and Western Australia.

At present, Siam weed is only found in Queensland, but it poses a serious threat to grazing and horticultural land and to conservation areas throughout tropical Australia.

The other state governments are so concerned at the potential impact of the weed they have agreed to contribute funding towards a national eradication effort. This will put more eradication teams into the field and fund more helicopter surveys, extension staff and research programs.

There are scattered infestations of Siam weed in north Queensland. They have been contained in the Innisfail/Tully and Townsville/Thuringowa areas, and sites around Innot Hot Springs and Mossman, with local eradication from parts of these sites.

The aim is to eradicate the weed completely within 10 years and this funding would provide the necessary resources for the next 12 months.

Biosecurity Queensland is urging people to keep an eye out for this scrambling weed that has triangular leaves and produces distinctive clusters of white or lilac flowers.

Biosecurity Queensland weed eradication project coordinator Mick Jeffery said the June flowering period is the best time to quickly identify Siam weed (*Chromolaena odorata*).

Without flowers, Siam weed looks similar to other vegetation and is not immediately obvious. It is toxic to stock and creates an increased fire hazard in rural areas and can easily spread into inaccessible areas which makes eradication more difficult. It can also be a risk to human health as it causes skin complaints and exacerbates asthma.

Detecting any new infestations is essential if we're to get rid of this weed.

Siam weed is a Declared Class 1 pest plant. It is an offence to sell or give away anything contaminated with Siam weed.

It grows up to 3 m and can scramble up 20 m trees, with flowers similar in form to blue top or blue billy-goat weed.

To help contain and eradicate Siam weed:

- wash down vehicles after travelling through infested areas
- clean clothes, shoes and camping gear
- do not remove sand or soil from contaminated areas
- do not move any item that might be contaminated.

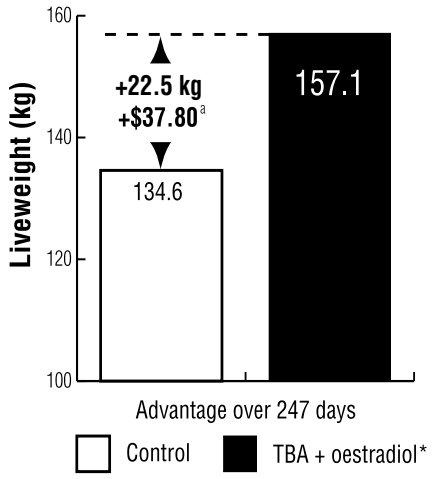
Colour photographs and more information about Siam weed are available from www.dpi.qld.gov.au

Suspected sightings of this weed should be reported to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

Mick Jeffery
Biosecurity Queensland Weed Eradication Project Coordinator

Implanting for profit

Compudose®-G from Elanco is the perfect way to say goodbye to steers and heifers this season. Applied 100 days before anticipated turn-off, Compudose-G delivers superior short-term liveweight gains and profitability.



The implant specialists

Elanco has a complete range of long, medium and short-acting implants suitable for maximising growth rates in grassfed cattle. No matter what your target market, the strategic use of Compudose implants can maximise the profitability of your beef operation by helping your cattle achieve market specifications sooner.

Compudose-G at a glance

- *Ideal for finishing grassfed cattle*
- *Functional life of 90–100 days*
- *Two active ingredients*
- *Superior short-term liveweight gain advantage*
- *Should only be used under good nutritional conditions*
- *Weight gain benefits can be lost if cattle are not re-implanted*
- *Implant 100 days before anticipated turn-off, or ideally, as the terminal implant as part of a whole-of-life strategy*

What's the difference between Compudose-G and Compudose 400

Compudose-G is a short-acting implant which has a functional life of less than 100 days. While it delivers superior short-term liveweight gain advantages, these benefits can be lost if cattle are not re-implanted. As such, Compudose-G should be implanted 100 days before anticipated turn-off, or ideally, as the terminal implant as part of a whole-of-life strategy.

Compudose 400 is a long-acting implant whose liveweight gain advantages are maintained even after the pay-out period expires. It is the only implant which maximises growth rates in beef cattle for 400 days, making it the best choice when sustained growth is required. It is ideally implanted at branding as part of a whole-of-life program.

ELANCO*
Compudose®
*

For more information, please contact Elanco on 1800 226 324

[1]BF1433 NAPCO "Coorabulka" trial, first round steers, first period only. Trial data based on revalor†-G. *Compudose-G and revalor-G contain 60 mg trenbolone acetate (TBA) and 12 mg oestradiol-17ß.
[a]Jap-ox, $1.68/kg. *Elanco®, Compudose® and the diagonal colour bar are trademarks of Eli Lilly and Company. ®Compudose is a trademark for Elanco's brand of oestradiol. WORDSMITH28126

A pointed collection

People collect a fascinating range of items – one has only to watch the *Collectors* show on ABC1 to be amazed by the breadth of interests out there. Amongst non-mechanical farm items, the humble barbed wire fence has its fair share of followers.

Although there were several early forms of barbed or 'bobbed' wire, the idea was not patented and mass-marketed until the 1870s. Barbed wire in its many varieties has now become a popular collector's item. Both the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame in Longreach and the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney contain barb wire displays in their collections, but it's in America where the majority of serious collectors reside.

Kansas claims the title of 'Barbed Wire Capital of the World', and hosts the antique barbed wire society (committed to collecting, preserving, exhibiting, and interpreting the historical heritage of barb wire and barbed wire related items) http://www.antiquebarbedwiresociety.com/ and the Kansas Barbed Wire Museum, which includes the 'Barbed Wire Hall of Fame' and The Larry Greer Research Center (has the largest known collection of patents related to barbed wire and fencing tools). http://www.rushcounty.org/BarbedWireMuseum/

The Devil's Rope Museum in Texas claims to be the largest barbed wire historic museum in the world, and includes a 'warwire' display of barbed wire barriers used in warfare http://www.barbwiremuseum.com/

Tonia Grundy
Information Officer,
Ayr Research Station

The following poem was written on the occasion of Joseph Farwell Glidden, December 1875, joining in partnership with Isaac L Ellwood to manufacture Barbed Wire. For more information, see http://www.gliddenhomestead.org/

BARB WIRE

Who made the first fence, and what was it like?
'Twas made out of brush without nail or spike.
It did very well in those primitive days,
When newly-fledged farmers but little did raise,
When cattle were few and hogs that now run,
Four footed and otherwise scarcely were known.
Ah! yes: such a fence might do very well
For those who had little to buy or to sell;
But what would it be in the times such as now?
Not more than a cobweb to stop an old cow.

The next fence to speak of was made out of rails;
It took lots of timber, but not any nails;
It took lots of pounding to split up the logs;
But made a good fence to stop cattle and hogs.
It must be laid crooked or else wouldn't stand –
In this way it took a good piece of the land.

With stakes and with riders we saw it displayed,
Somewhat like a fortress, or strong barricade,
'Twas looked upon then with much pride and joy,
I remember it well; when I was a boy,
From the heat of the sun it offered a shade,
While hide-and-go-seek in the corners we played.

The time-honored stone wall must not be forgot,
For with it was bounded full many a lot,
There's one point where memory never doth fail.
The ground was covered with stones thick as hail.
With oxen and stoneboat we gathered the stones.
It made our hearts ache, as well as our bones.

It had to be laid up so wide and so high,
And made just as true as the squint of your eye;
So broad at the base, and so narrow the top,
'Til over it you were not able to hop;
But over it sometimes would go the bold sheep,
The stones rolling after them all in a heap.

'Twas well for the genius of man who invents
Who found out a way to make a board fence;
And surely, most surely, it was a good bit
To saw up the timber they couldn't well split,
And everyone said, "What is better than that?
"They could make it so tight to stop even a rat."
And then they could make it so straight on a line,
'Twould do for a noon-mark when sunbeams did shine,
And it took up so little room on the soil,
It paid for itself in the lightening of toil.

There's various hedges that oft have been tried,
And some have done well, it can't be denied.
Dame Nature hath shown us full many a feat,
But now we must say she herself has been beat.
The thorns on the hedges supplanted have been
By the barbs on the wires, so sharp and so keen;
The hedges themselves have grown tedious the while,
Since wires in a twinkling stretch many a mile.
Then hail to the genius of this present age,
That with a good will in good works doth engage,
And Joseph and Isaac, now joined hand in hand,
As the prophet foretold, shall be great in the land.

The essential ingredient

Improved growth rates and feed conversion efficiency

Scientific trials involving thousands of cattle and conducted throughout the world have found that the addition of Rumensin to supplementary feed can increase weight gains by 70–120 g/head/day (6–16%), regardless of the energy and protein level of the supplement.[1–4]

QDPI&F trials conducted at Swans Lagoon Research Station have demonstrated the addition of Rumensin to typical dry season molasses and urea supplements can improve liveweight gains by up to 70% and feed conversion efficiency by up to 59% compared to cattle fed standard molasses and urea rations.[5,6] In one trial, Rumensin increased liveweight gain by 42% yet reduced molasses and total feed intake by 12% and 16%, respectively.[6]

Besides improving feed efficiency, Rumensin is the proven way of improving growth rates and reproductive performance in grassfed cattle, as well as controlling coccidiosis.[7] If your molasses or lick doesn't contain Rumensin, then you're not getting the most out of your investment in feed supplementation.

Improved feed conversion efficiency in cattle fed molasses supplements[6]

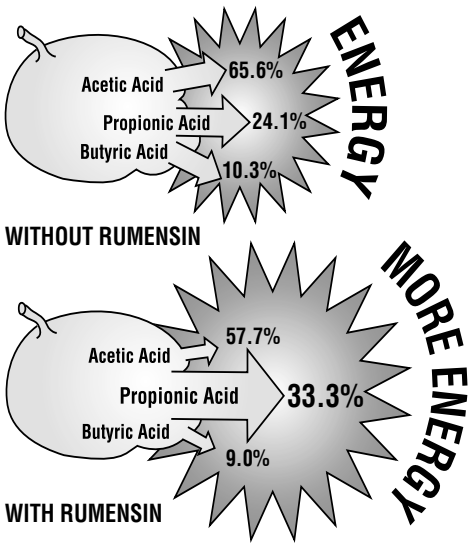
	Rumensin (160 mg monensin /hd/day)	Control	Improvement
Molasses intake (kg/day)	3.2	3.7	-16%
Total feed intake (kg/day)	4.3	4.8	-12%
Average daily gain (kg/day)	0.428	0.301	+42%
Feed conversion efficiency	10.0	15.9	**59%**

Ration included molasses + 3% urea, fed ad lib, plus a daily supplement of 0.8 kg chaffed hay and 0.3 kg cottonseed meal.
Bos indicus *crossbred steers, average weight 180 kg.*

More energy from every mouthful

Rumensin® is the essential ingredient in all feed supplements. No matter what type of feed is provided or at what time of the year, Rumensin helps cattle to digest their food more efficiently. Put simply, this means more energy in the feed is made available to the animal from every mouthful consumed, thereby improving feed conversion efficiency (i.e. liveweight gain relative to feed intake) regardless of the pasture quality or the level of supplementary feeding.

Effect of Rumensin on volatile fatty acid production (molar percentage)[1]



For further information, contact your feed manufacturer or Elanco on 1800 226 324

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Rumensin®*

[1]Goodrich, R.D. et al (1984), J. Anim. Sci. 58:1484–1498 [2]Potter, E.L. et al (1976), J. Anim. Sci. 43(3):665–669 [3]Lana, R.P. et al (1997), J. Anim. Sci. 75:2571–2579 [4]Corsi et al(2001) Procedings 17th Simpsio sobre manejo de pastagens [5]BF1449 [6]BF1450 [7]Rumensin is registered for improved feed efficiency and as an aid in the control of bloat in feedlot cattle; for improved feed efficiency, weight gain and reproductive performance in heifers; and as an aid in the prevention of coccidiosis caused by *Eimeria zuernii* and *E. bovis*. *Elanco®, Rumensin® and the diagonal colour bar are trademarks of Eli Lilly and Company. Rumensin® is a trademark for Elanco's brand of monensin sodium. WORDSMITH28052

Bucks for brains

Australia requires eligible cattle and sheep brains each year to be tested specifically for proof of freedom from transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). Livestock producers who submit eligible brains from their animals can now receive generous incentive payments whilst helping Australia maintain market access for its livestock industries.

TSEs are rare, fatal diseases that cause gradual deterioration in the brain and other central nervous system tissues. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), also known as 'Mad Cow' disease, is the form seen in cattle, while scrapie is the form seen in sheep.

Incentive payments

By submitting your eligible animals, through your veterinarian or regional animal health officer, you will receive $300 for cattle samples and $50 for sheep samples. This incentive payment is for a maximum of two animals per disease incident. Veterinarians also receive a separate incentive payment to cover the cost of all laboratory fees and subsidise the cost of freighting samples to accredited laboratories. Therefore, the actual cause of the disease affecting your stock may be diagnosed or confirmed at a reduced cost. Even if you think you know what your animal is suffering from, if it is displaying signs compatible with a TSE, consider having it tested to rule out BSE or scrapie. Australia must collect, examine and test eligible cattle and sheep samples on an ongoing basis and so more brain samples are always needed.

The national TSE surveillance program in Australia

The National TSE Surveillance Program (NTSESP) helps Australia meet guidelines set by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to demonstrate Australia's freedom from BSE and scrapie. In order to meet these guidelines, Australia must continue to collect, examine and test eligible cattle and sheep samples.

Which sheep and cattle are eligible?

To be eligible for the incentive payment, animals must:

1. be examined by a veterinarian or government animal health officer
2. be displaying signs compatible with BSE or scrapie
3. be within the appropriate age groups.

The clinical signs of BSE and scrapie can also be common to many other diseases and this is the reason testing is required – to exclude them.

Eligible **sheep** are 18 months of age or older, displaying signs compatible with scrapie and have not responded to treatment. Clinical signs can include:

- changes in temperament
- mild behavioural and neurological signs
- apprehension
- loss of wool on flank and hind quarters
- rubbing or scratching
- poor coordination (circling, staggering and falling)
- muscle tremors
- abnormal posture (abnormal head carriage)
- difficulty in rising
- paralysis
- agitation.

Eligible **cattle** are 30 months of age or older, displaying signs compatible with BSE and have not responded to treatment. Clinical signs can include:

- changes in behaviour and neurological signs
- excessive licking of the nose and flanks
- poor coordination (circling, staggering and falling)
- muscle tremors
- abnormal posture (abnormal ear position and abnormal head carriage)
- difficulty in rising (downer)
- paralysis
- excitability
- increased or decreased sensitivity to sound, pain, heat, cold, or touch.

If you have cattle or sheep displaying any of these signs, contact your veterinarian or your state/territory government animal health officer to determine whether you are eligible for an incentive payment.

Further information

If you require further information about the NTSESP or more information about the diseases, it can be found at:

http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/adsp/tsefap/tsefap_home.cfm

or in the disease library at:

http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/ farm-biosecurity/disease-library_home.cfm.

Market report – July 2009

After our big wet season rainfall totals, there has been very little rain since Easter. Even the wet coast and Tablelands areas are down on their usual autumn showers. Better rainfall across Queensland and the Northern Territory over the last summer has seen a lot of restocking activity in the market place. Queensland drought declared areas have fallen from 66% of the State to 41% at present.

Direct to works cattle prices over the last few months have hovered just below $3/kg dress weight for best bullocks and in the last week or so have just nudged over $3/kg.

As predicted, both domestic and export markets have traded lower on expensive cuts and long fed cattle from our feedlots. The feed costs plus store-cattle cattle prices and the low slaughter rates for 100 day grain cattle has had the feedlotters trading in the red for some time. Producers who have lot fed for over 20 years have not seen such tough trading conditions.

Our export markets remain difficult with the ongoing recession especially severe in Japan and USA, the volatility of our dollar and lower competition from our key markets. Low prices for hides and other co-products are adding to lower processor returns.

The introduction of a grass fed beef standard is drawing closer according to Greg Brown, president of Cattle Council Australia. A certified grass fed product will be HGP and antibiotic free, MSA graded, no confinement or grain feeding. Most of Australia's big processors are very supportive of the concept. Negotiations with Aus Meat are ongoing to implement an auditing process that will guarantee the product.

The USA's Department of Agriculture (USDA) forecasts for world beef production in 2009 are as follows:

- Total beef production down by 1.7 million tonnes to 60 million tonnes.
- Major falls in production from Brazil, India, China and the USA.
- If grain prices continue to rise it is predicted world beef production will decline further.

World beef production – 2009

Production region	Beef production (millions of tonnes)
USA	12.2
Brazil	9.3
EU-25	8.1
China	6.3
Argentina	3.1
India	2.7
Mexico	2.2
Australia	2.07
Russia	1.3
Canada	1.2

Australia

Meat Standards Australia (MSA) reports that over the 2008/09 financial period, MSA have notched up a record throughput of 957,300 head with Queensland recording 451,912 head. This is out of a total Australian slaughter of just over 8 million cattle. Significantly, 50% of the national MSA throughput has been grass fed cattle.

Australian beef production was up in the first quarter of 2009 at 522,679 tonnes – the second highest start to a year on record (2001 the highest) with numbers slaughtered being 1.9 million head.

High beef supplies and a lower Australian dollar saw shipments to Japan and Korea fall (tight credit, economic downturn, rundown of stocks), but an increase in shipments to the USA, mainly because of demand from the fast food sector.

Industry snapshot – June 2009

- Farm gate value of Queensland beef production 2007/08 was $3.4 billion, live export contribution $40.2 million
- Australian cattle herd totals 27.3 million head, Queensland herd 11.9 million.
- Queensland, with 294 feedlots, has 49% of the Australian feedlot capacity of 1.2 million head.
- Australia processes approximately 8 million head annually, with 45% processed in Queensland.
- Annual Australian domestic consumption is 700,000 tonnes. Export markets consume 1.3 million tonnes.
- Average annual Australian consumption levels in 2007 were: 37.6 kg of beef and veal, 14.6 kg of lamb and mutton, 25.7 kg of pig meat and 38.7 kg of chicken.
- The average annual beef consumption level in Japan was 9.3 kg, versus 42 kg in the USA.
- 60% of southern Australian cattle were sold by auction.
- 38% of northern Australian cattle were sold by auction.

Live export

After numbers exported were slow in January-February due to wet weather, activity picked up, with a record number of cattle exported to Indonesia during April (54,562). This brings our first four month total to Indonesia to 191,958 head, a record for that market.

Our total exports this year to April are down to 238.246 head, but there has been good activity from Malaysia, Japan, the Philippines and Bahrain. Darwin has been our busiest port so far with approximately 87,000 head exported.

Indonesia is also an improving market for boxed beef with Australian sales last year totalling 33,000 tonnes. MLA analysts have high expectations for improvement as per capita consumption of beef is only 2 kg per person per year.

Japan

As expected, the sales of our high value, long, grain fed beef into Japan has fallen rapidly due to their tightening economy, competition from US product and the aging Japanese population. Australia still has approximately 80% of their imported beef market but this is expected to decline over the next five years.

The up and down value of the Australian dollar over the last month has given meat wholesalers plenty of headaches but Australian exporters expect increased demand from Japan soon in the lead up to their mid August holiday season.

In the first four months of 2009 Japan was our highest value export market with sales valued at A$635 million.

Korea

US beef has still not made significant inroads into this market, but its presence has resulted in low prices and a run down in beef stocks. During May, Australia sent 7,164 tonnes of beef (60% of Korean beef imports), while New Zealand sent 2,710 t and the US 1,945 t. Even with the low volumes prices remained ordinary. Australian beef exports for the first four months of 2009 were valued at A$152 million, 35% lower than last year.

The Korean government has notified their consumers they are able to track domestic beef purchased from butchers' shops across the country. All Korean domestic cattle are now required to be tagged and registered in a central data system that provides consumers with the place and date of birth, the property of origin, slaughter data and quality grade. The information can be checked with your mobile phone.

Korea has begun a series of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks with Australia, New Zealand, USA and the European Union. If the US gets a reduction in the 40% tariff it is vital for our beef producers that we get the same deal. Australia's strength in mineral and energy resources has been an excellent match for Korea's mass production capabilities. Australia is the largest per capita consumer of Korean exports in the world. The two-way trade last year reached US$18 billion, with Australia's top exports coal and iron ore. How agricultural commodities fare in any FTA negotiations will be critical if we are to keep our beef export market share.

USA

The USA feedlot industry is under economic pressure with high corn prices, lower store cattle numbers and weak beef demand. With approximately 28 million head slaughtered out of feedlots each year and severe losses per head being experienced it is unknown what is ahead for their feedlot industry. Our exports to the USA for January-April 2009 were valued at A$400 million, the best start since 2003. Our volume of beef exported is up, but value is down, reflecting the cheaper cuts being sold.

South America

An interesting development in Brazil is the debate between economic growth - development of the Amazon and environmental conservation. Brazilian meat packer JBS has signed a deal with retail chain Wal-Mart whereby both companies have committed to producing and selling beef in Brazil in a sustainable manner.

It seems next month the Brazilian government will issue a list of companies involved in the deforestation of the Amazon, including beef properties, meat packers and distributors.

Greenpeace recently released a report that claims that the beef industry in Brazil is the largest contributor to Amazon deforestation.

News from Argentina last month of more farmer strikes and roadblocks. They want their Government to reduce taxes on grain exports and stop the restrictions on beef exports. This year Argentina is experiencing bad drought conditions with a loss of over a million head of cattle from lack of water.

Bernie English
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Ph 07 4091 9440

Greg Brown
Meadowbank Station,
Mt Garnet

Perennial grasses: the key to profitable cattle production

The cheapest feed available is the pasture in your paddock. All it needs is rain and sunlight to grow and the animals harvest it for themselves. But ensuring a reliable supply of cheap forage can be a problem with our variable rainfall. This variability can never be eliminated, but long-term research from the *Wambiana* grazing trial near Charters Towers shows that it can be minimised by maximising the proportion of perennial grasses in the pasture. The data clearly shows that while other species come and go with the seasons, perennials are relatively constant and are the backbone of the production system.

As reported in previous *Northern musters*, the *Wambiana* trial has been comparing the sustainability and profitability of different grazing strategies since 1998. Detailed measurements on pasture composition have been conducted annually over the last 11 years to determine how different species respond to rainfall and management. This period includes a range of seasons varying from some very wet to some exceptionally dry years (Figure 1). The 2002/03 dry season was particularly bad with no rain for virtually 11 months.

Data collected from 1998 to 2008 shows that annual grasses like firegrass and button grass come and go with the seasons. These species respond not only to the total amount but also to how the rain falls through the year. Native legumes like *Zornia* and most annual forbs or herbaceous species also behave the same way.

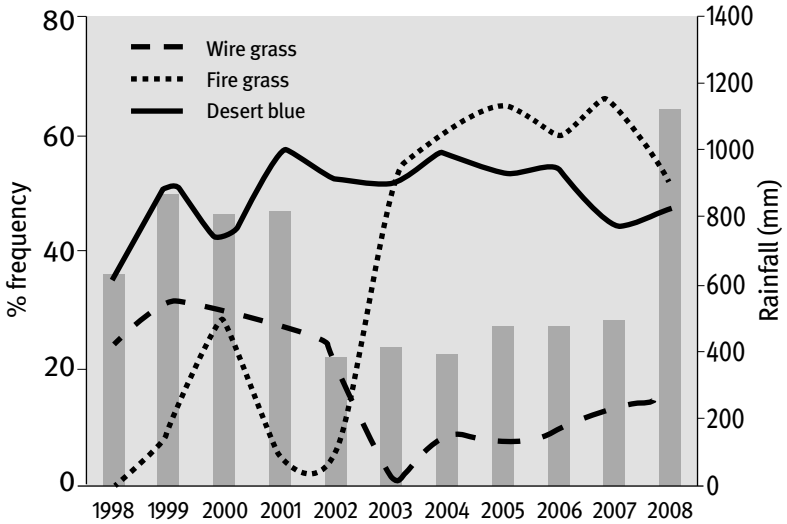

Figure 1: The change in frequency of three types of grasses over 11 years at the Wambiana grazing trial. Rainfall is given on the right axis.

Weaker perennials, like the wiregrasses (*Aristida*) as well as those such as cotton panic, brigalow grass and the lovegrasses, do not fluctuate quite as much as the annuals but are still relatively unstable. These species tend to increase in wet years but decline sharply or even disappear completely in drier years.

In contrast, perennial grasses like desert bluegrass and Queensland bluegrass are far less sensitive to rainfall variation than annuals or weaker perennials. Although some tussock death may occur in severe droughts such as 2002/03, these species are far more stable. Perennial grasses thus form the foundation of the pasture within which transient species come and go with the seasons.

While all species thrive in good seasons, only the perennials survive the droughts. When the rains return, the perennials are waiting and can respond immediately to rainfall. In contrast, weaker species still have to germinate and grow which often takes weeks. Where seed supplies have run down, these species may take a number of years to build up population numbers before they can produce a reasonable amount of forage.

Annual grasses can of course sometimes be of much higher quality than the perennials, which can get tall and stemmy, particularly in very good seasons. Here, weight gains on pastures dominated by annuals can be excellent. But this boom is usually short lived, with an inevitable collapse in the dry season or when the next drought arrives. It is also relatively cheap to provide a urea supplement to rectify a quality shortfall on a pasture dominated by perennials. In contrast, buying in feed or finding agistment when the paddock is dominated by failing annuals or bare ground, is always very costly.

The key to maintaining a high proportion of perennials in a pasture is getting the grazing management right. That means relatively light pasture utilisation rates and some form of wet season spelling whenever possible. This way the proportion of perennials will be maintained and built up over time to ensure a regular supply of the cheapest feed you can grow a steak on. Perennial grasses are really the key to stable and sustainable production in a variable climate!

Peter O'Reagain and John Bushell
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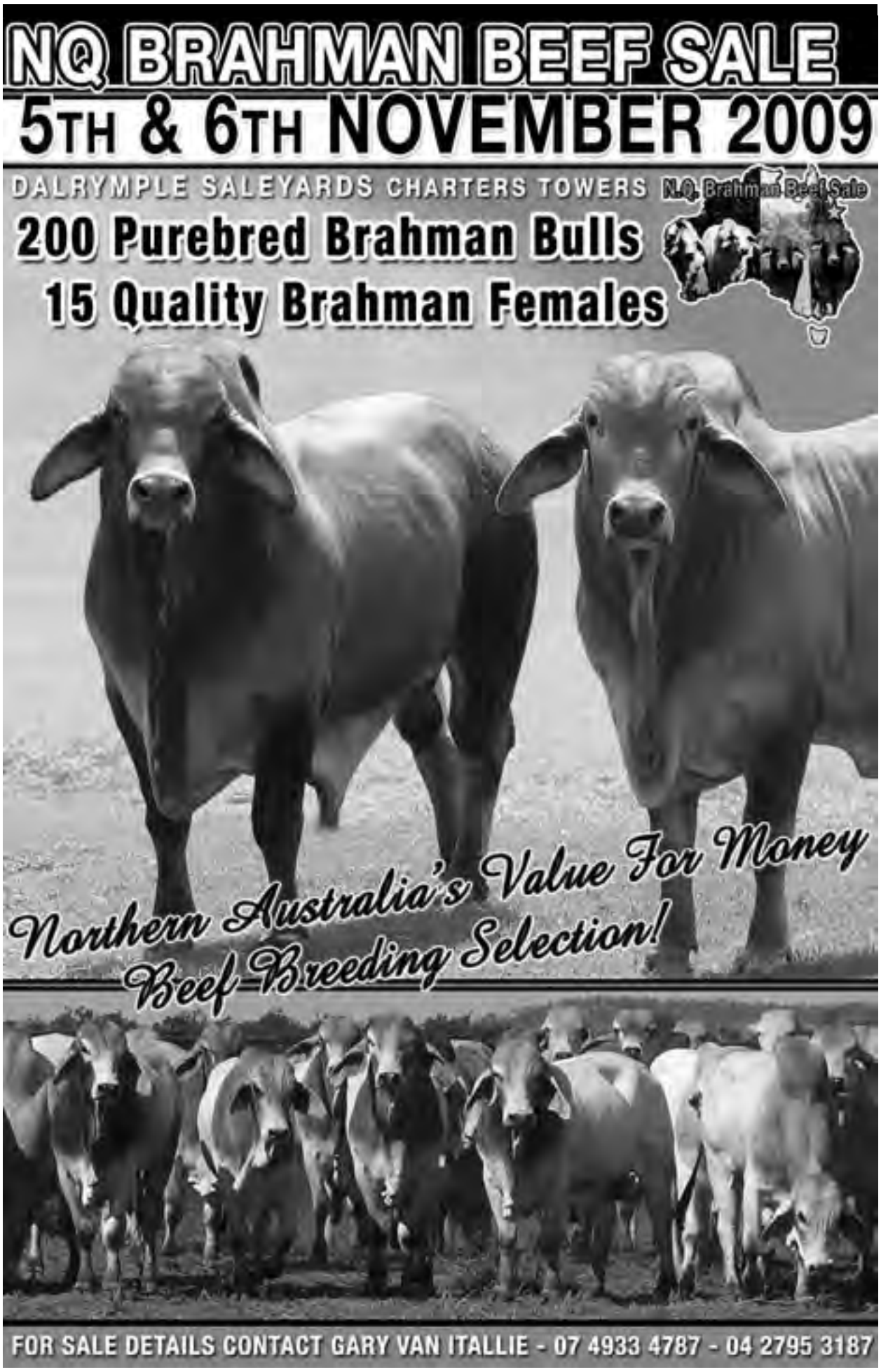
Charters Towers
Ph 07 4761 5161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FOR SALE DETAILS CONTACT GARY VAN ITALLIE - 07 4933 4787 - 04 2795 3187

Inaugural DLC – City Country Day a success

The Dalrymple Landcare Committee recently hosted 55 residents from Charters Towers on three different properties in the region as part of their inaugural City Country Day, designed to give urban residents a closer look at primary production in the region and life on the land.

Host properties *Riverview*, *Hillgrove* and *Wambiana* each offered a diverse range of activities for the guests across both the grazing and intensive farming industries. Notably, over half of the participants were under the age 18, with the balance including of retirees, secondary and primary school teachers and other residents from Charters Towers.

Each of the three properties came up with their own list of unique activities they best felt demonstrated the commitment of the grazing and cropping enterprises to sustainable primary production and Landcare. The day also highlighted the importance of the business, family and lifestyle aspects of living in the bush.

Participants were also encouraged to participate in the day to day outdoor activities that occur in the modern day grazing business. At *Wambiana* those willing and game enough were able to step forward and try their hand at branding or pregnancy testing via rectal palpation. Guests were also shown how cattle are drafted and handled in the yards. Another highlight for both properties was the weighing and automated recording of cattle weights in a computer database using NLIS tags and an automatic NLIS race reader.

Away from the yards and along a water run, Tom and Bill Mann from *Hillgrove* spoke about how their improved grazing land management techniques aimed to reduce erosion, improve land condition and overall productivity of the pastures. Productivity, palatability and nutritional value of the various native and introduced grasses and leguminous species was highlighted and discussed at length.

Costs of production in terms of labour, supplementation and general operating costs were discussed in length. Capital investment in improvements on commercial grazing enterprises was also highlighted and examples provided through the various man-made watering points, solar-powered bores, fences and cattle yards visited as part of the tours.

In contrast to the grazing properties, those who elected to travel on the *Riverview* tour were given an insight into an intensive farming operation. Located just north of Charters Towers on the Burdekin River, *Riverview* is owned and operated by the Penna family. Hosts, Michael and Natasha Penna, grow potatoes for crisps and fodder hay. All facets of the potato production cycle from planting, growing, harvesting, grading and loading were discussed and demonstrated.

Those on the tour were also surprised to learn that when the potatoes reached maturity they are harvested from the ground and sent to Brisbane for processing into crisps, a process which from harvest, through processing and into ready to eat packaged crisps, takes less than 36 hours.

The challenges of living and working on a cattle property while trying to educate a young family was outlined by Michelle Lyons who is currently tutoring her eldest son Thomas at *Wambiana*. Michelle also discussed in length the role of Royal Flying Doctor Service in providing the bush with a medical lifeline in times of desperation or misfortune.

Following the success of the first City Country Day, the DLC is keen to see it run again in future years. The Dalrymple Landcare Committee would like to formally thank and acknowledge the key sponsors for the day, included the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme, NQ Dry Tropics NRM, AgForce, the Lyons family *Wambiana*, Mann family *Hillgrove* Penna family *Riverview* and all those who participated on the day.

Digital case studies of the day can be viewed online at www.landcareqld.placestories.com

John Nicholas
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The next DLC General Meeting is proposed for 4 September 2009

Healthy grazing country booklet helps graziers

NQ Dry Tropics has released a new booklet to help graziers understand the significance of the native plants and animals they find on their properties.

Healthy Grazing Country Indicator: Native Plants and Animals was developed in consultation with graziers and aims to build upon grazier's knowledge and interest in native plants and animals and how they reflect on the health of the landscape.

The booklet describes the benefits that native plants or animals bring to a property and the links they provide in maintaining a sustainable grazing enterprise that endures seasons.

It also provides information on management practices that are more likely to encourage particular species on to the property, but is not full of hard and fast rules.

The booklet was funded by the Australian Government's National Heritage Trust and supported by the Queensland Government.

CSIRO played a huge hand in the production of the booklet, providing information and images on many of the species.

For a copy of the booklet, visit the NQ Dry Tropics website www.nqdrytropics.com.au or contact their office on 4724 3544.

Legal advice services

The Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) has produced a free brochure titled *A Guide to Legal Services for Rural Australia – Free and low cost legal advice and referral services.* The brochure provides the contact details for services offering free legal assistance as well as other advocacy and support services dealing with a range of legal issues.

Copies of the brochure are available from Rural Financial Counsellors, State Farmer Associations and Centrelink offices around Australia.

The brochure is also available online from the Rural Law Online website (www.rurallaw.org.au).

FaHCSIA has also funded the National Drought Law Forum (linked to from the above website), which is supported by 20 lawyers around Australia who are ready to provide a free national online legal information service for rural communities, farmers and rural small businesses.

Australian animal welfare standards and guidelines – Land transport of livestock (*Land Transport Standards*)

The new *Land Transport Standards* which covers the process of land transport of livestock by road or rail is the nationally developed and endorsed document describing acceptable animal welfare practices for the land transport of livestock.

This document was endorsed by the Primary Industry Ministerial Council in May 2009.

The *Land Transport Standards* will replace existing Australian model codes of practice for the welfare of animals relating to the transport of livestock.

They have been developed in extensive consultation with all stakeholders involved in the transport of livestock and define acceptable animal welfare standards for transporting:

- alpacas
- buffalo
- cattle
- camels
- deer
- emus and ostriches
- goats
- horses
- pigs
- poultry
- sheep

The document is divided into two parts:

- Part A - Standards and Guidelines common to all livestock species, and
- Part B - Standards and Guidelines specific to each livestock species.

All jurisdictions are now responsible for implementing them under state and territory legislation.

In Queensland the *Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2002* will be amended during 2010 to implement the *Land Transport Standards*.

What do 'standards' and 'guidelines' mean?

Standards provide agreed animal welfare requirements that must be met under law for livestock welfare purposes. They are intended to be clear, essential and verifiable statements that define what **must** be done when transporting livestock. They will be compulsory requirements regulated by state and territory legislation.

Guidelines provide additional information and recommended practices to achieve desirable animal welfare outcomes. Noncompliance will not necessarily constitute an offence under state or territory legislation.

Why have they been introduced?

The *Land Transport Standards* is the first in a series which are being developed under the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy. The aim is to facilitate consistency of legislation across states and territories for improved and sustainable animal welfare outcomes.

Who do they apply to?

The *Land Transport Standards* define the responsibilities of each person in charge of an animal during transport including:

- transport companies (including QRail)
- livestock handlers at farming enterprises
- depots
- saleyards
- livestock processing plants
- drivers
- owners
- agents
- feedlots.

From an animal welfare perspective, the land transport process commences at the time that animals are first deprived of feed and water prior to loading to the time that livestock have access to water (with the exception of day old chicks and poultry sent for processing) at the completion of the journey (destination) and includes:

- mustering and assembly
- handling and waiting periods prior to loading
- loading, journey duration, travel conditions, spelling periods, and
- unloading and holding time.

The *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001* (the ACPA) applies a 'duty of care' to all persons in charge of an animal. During transport this duty of care is a shared responsibility and is transferred with the animal during all stages of transport.

The ACPA also allows for the development of structured monitoring programs in consultation with the relevant animal user groups and provides specific powers for authorised officers to undertake their monitoring role. It is anticipated that monitoring systems will be implemented to enforce the compulsory code requirements (the 'standards') of the *Land Transport Standards*.

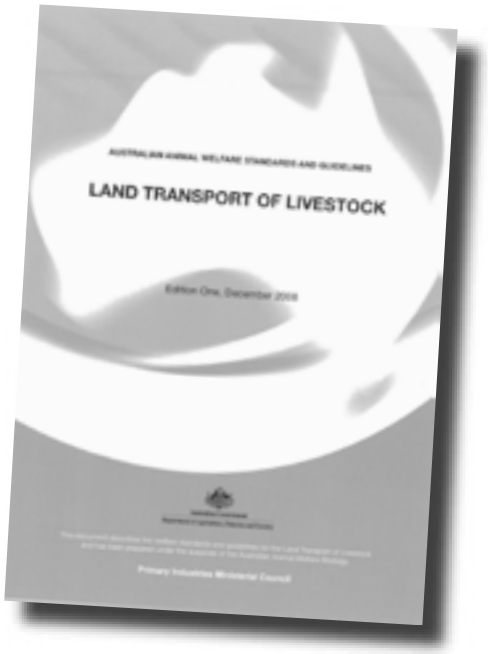
More information

For more information about the *Land Transport Standards*, the ACPA and other animal welfare information:

Visit www.dpi.qld.gov.au and follow the links to 'Biosecurity' > 'Animal welfare and ethics' > 'Your responsibilities' > 'Animal welfare standards and guidelines'.

Telephone Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries on 13 25 23.

Ian Rodger
Senior Policy Officer, Animal Welfare
Biosecurity Queensland
Ph 07 4057 3675



Beef industry snapshot

Queensland is Australia's largest beef producing state, supplying nearly 50% of the nation's beef for domestic consumption and export. Relative to Queensland's other agricultural industries, the beef industry provides a third of Queensland's total gross value of production from agriculture. *The Beef Industry Situation Snapshot* (April 2009) provides a useful source of information and statistics on industry trends in employment; enterprise numbers; herd size; beef processing, production, and consumption; and the value of beef and live cattle exports.

The Beef Industry Snapshot is available at the QPIF website's industry trends page http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/16_33_ENA_HTML.htm

Cattle transport – Loading strategies for road transport

Recent media attention of the prosecution of a grazier for cruelty and breaches of duty of care for failing to adequately select cattle that were fit to travel has highlighted the importance of the duty of care and responsibilities of those involved in transporting stock.

Background

Good preparation of livestock is essential to minimise stress and injury during transport. Good communication and cooperation between the cattle producer (owner/owner's representative) and the transport driver will maximise animal welfare while the animals are in transit and improve meat quality.

The cattle producer has a major influence on handling and transport strategies. This will affect the meat quality of their cattle. The consignor decides which cattle are selected, how they are segregated (type, sex, horns, size) and whether they are offered feed and water while in the yards.

They also set the time they are held in the yards following mustering, and the rest/fasting period prior to loading. The producer sets the handling standards, which influence the actions of their stockmen and the transport drivers. The truck driver, after consultation with the producer or their agent (and using their own knowledge and experience), will decide on the loading density. The driver is responsible for the welfare of the animals from loading to unloading.

Animal selection

When selecting animals for transport they must be 'fit to load', strong enough to undertake the journey and not have any visible signs of injury or disease. Animals in late pregnancy should not be transported.

Feed and water

Cattle begin to lose live weight when they're taken off water and feed, most of which is gutfill (faeces and urine). The greatest weight loss will occur in the period between yarding and loading. Cattle off grass lose weight at a faster rate than cattle off grain (feedlot). When cattle are fasted before transport the floors of trucks are drier—and the animals travel better—they are cleaner and are easier to unload. It is therefore recommended that cattle be kept off water for 6–8 hours and off feed for 6–12 hours before loading. The actual time off water will depend on the weather, distance to be travelled, road conditions, the cattle's previous feed and previous transport history and when they last had access to water.

Rest

Cattle require time to settle down after mustering. After handling in the yard they should also be rested prior to transport. Rushing cattle causes stress, which leads to tough or dark-coloured meat. A survey of deaths among railed cattle from western Queensland showed that fewer animals died in transit when they were rested for more than 12 hours between mustering and loading at the property yards. It is recommended that cattle are rested for 6–12 hours before transport. The length of the rest period prior to transport depends on the time taken to muster and handle the cattle, the distance to be travelled and the prevailing weather conditions.

Preparing cattle for the MSA market

All cattle being presented for the MSA market should be on feed and water right up until trucking. The MSA target also requires minimal stress from handling and drafting prior to trucking. (Separate recommendations are available for MSA procedures).

Handling

Success in transporting cattle is determined by the attitude and actions of the handler. Cattle travel better when they are quiet and also when segregated according to horn status, size and sex. Mixing horned and hornless cattle should be avoided as it will increase the risk of injury and losses from bruising.

Correct handling of cattle reduces bruising and stress. Skilled stockmen work cattle without noise and bustle to reduce animal stress. The training of weaners to normal yard handling practices is the first important step towards improving meat (product) quality.

Loading densities

Appropriate loading densities will depend upon the size, shape and horn status of the cattle, as well as weather conditions and the distance to be travelled. Loading densities must be assessed for each pen in the stock crate to ensure the animals give each other mutual support. Appropriate loading densities reduce stress, bruising and deaths during the journey. Overloading increases the risk of an animal going down and being unable to get up again, especially horned cattle. Downer animals significantly increase the risk of bruising, injury and mortality.

Mean live weight of cattle (kg)	Floor area (m^2/head)	No. of head per 12.2 m deck*
250	0.77	38
300	0.86	34
350	0.98	30
400	1.05	28
450	1.13	26
500	1.23	24
550	1.34	22
600	1.47	20
650	1.63	18

* Equates to a single-deck trailer.

Recommended loading densities of adult cattle for road transport

More information

The following publications provide further information on loading livestock:

Australian standards and guidelines for the welfare of animals—land transport of livestock (available to download at www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

Is it fit to load? A national guide to the selection of animals fit to transport (available to download at www.mla.com.au).

For more information contact Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries (part of the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation) on 13 25 23 or visit www.dpi.qld.gov.au and follow the links from 'Animals' to 'Animal welfare & ethics'.

John Lapworth
Principal Project Officer,
Industry Services, Animal Science.

Stock feed audit essential in fight against disease

Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries is auditing stock feed manufacturers and retailers across the state to help ensure protection against a major threat to our valuable beef markets- mad cow disease.

The scientific name is bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) - a chronic, degenerative disorder that affects the central nervous system of cattle.

Across the state, Biosecurity Queensland inspectors are looking for any contaminated stock feed and checking that the ruminant feed ban in Queensland is being maintained.

These routine audits are an essential component in keeping BSE out and trade flowing.

Queensland holds an internationally recognised 'negligible risk for BSE' status. This favorable status gives Queensland beef producers access to export markets, which has been cut off to countries such as Canada and Great Britain where outbreaks of BSE have occurred.

This access provides many economic benefits to Queensland producers. It is an advantage not taken lightly, and Queensland works hard to maintain this market access.

The inspections include analysing stock feed to ensure there is no animal matter, and verifying stock feed is correctly labeled according to legislation.

As well, stock feed agents are supplied with extension material to pass on to retailers and customers. Stock feed producers are generally more than willing to do their part, because they understand the devastating implications that a case of BSE could have.

Just one confirmed BSE case would close entire export markets, meaning less beef production, and ultimately less sales of stock feed. It would be an economic earthquake that would have a ripple effect across rural and regional Queensland.

BSE can be spread through contaminated stock feed. Like all other states and territories of Australia, Queensland has legislation in place to enforce a ruminant feed ban.

Ruminants are animals that chew the cud - including cattle, sheep, goats, deer, buffaloes, camels, alpacas, llamas and other cloven-hoofed species.

It is illegal to feed ruminants stock feed that contains material taken from a vertebrate animal, including:

- blood meal
- meat meal
- meat and bone meal
- fish meal
- poultry meal
- feather meal
- compounded feeds made from these products.

Gelatin, milk products, oils extracted from fish, treated tallow or treated cooking oil are not covered by the ban.

For more information contact the Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries on 13 25 23, visit www.dpi.qld.gov.au, or subscribe to direct.

http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/4790_12974_ENA_HTML.htm

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Min. Crude Fibre	2.48%
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Urea Equivalent	31.15%
Min. Phosphorus	1.32%
Min. Calcium	2.84%
Min. Sulphur	3.36%
Vitamins A, D & E	
Essential Trace Minerals	

Daily Intake: 80 to 155 grams

M8U+R+P Molasses blend

High energy liquid supplement for all seasons

Analysis:

Min. Total Protein	27.84%
Urea Equivalent	8.26%
Min. Phosphorus	0.31%
Min. Sulphur	0.66%

Daily Intake: 1 to 2kg/head/day

CHARTERS TOWERS OFFICE
Lot 6 Flinders Highway
Charters Towers Qld 4820
Ph: (07) 4787 7007 Fax: (07) 4787 7008

Contact: Craig Cook 0428 646 916
Scott Adams 0408 880 593
Goscelyn Smith 0408 773 157
Adam Brahim 0429 723 865

MT GARNET OFFICE
Lot 1 Battle Creek
Mt Garnet Qld 4872
Ph: (07) 4097 0081 Fax: (07) 4097 0082

Contact: Steve Flett 0429 970 081

Beef Australia 2009 an outstanding success

From Monday 4 to Saturday 9 May, Beef Australia 2009 celebrated 21 years since the inaugural Expo in 1988 with a record breaking crowd of 68 000 people, including 461 delegates from 32 countries. Over 400 trade fair exhibitors showcased their wares at Australia's one stop shop for all things beef cattle related with Australian genetics and technology in the forefront. It is expected that over $8 million dollars will have been generated into the central Queensland economy from direct event spending when final figures are calculated at the end of June.

Provisional dates for Beef Australia 2012 have been set from Monday, 7 May to Saturday, 12 May 2012.

Bovine ephemeral fever – is it changing?

Cattle producers have been reporting that bovine ephemeral fever (BEF) is becoming more severe, both in terms of the number of cattle affected and the number of mortalities.

This is supported by reports of atypically severe forms of the disease during the January 2008 floods in the Belyando River region.

Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries and the Australian Animal Health Laboratory investigated the Belyando outbreak. The strain of BEF virus in one sample appeared to be different from those identified as circulating in Australia up until 1992, which includes the current vaccine strain which was isolated in 1968.

To investigate this possible change in the virus, staff at the QPIF require blood samples from animals that have been affected by the disease. Blood samples from BEF outbreaks forwarded to QPIF veterinary laboratories will be cultured for the virus free of charge.

There is considerable interest within the industry for developing a new generation BEF vaccine. Ideally this vaccine would be delivered as a one-dose product and include currently circulating BEF viruses in its formulation.

Herds from which blood samples have been received for BEF analysis will be potential candidates for any future vaccine development work taken up by outside laboratories.

Dr Bruce Hill
Animal Research Institute
QPIF
Yeerongpilly
Ph 07 3362 9445

Above article reproduced from the Beeftalk *newsletter Issue 27.*

Many cattle in north-west Queensland are not getting enough energy or protein from the feed that is growing after this year's floods

Désirée Jackson from Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries says masses of poor quality vegetation has grown in areas where there was a pasture response to the flooding, or significant rain. Frost and spoiling rain has killed off a lot of other feed.

She says energy levels are much lower in cattle than they usually are at this time of year and there is a danger they will start to lose weight very quickly.

'I would highly recommend that people start monitoring their cattle once they find out where their cattle are at,' she said.

'If they are energy deficient they really need to consider either offloading animals if they don't want to feed until a break in the season, which is a few months off yet. In the case of breeders, pulling weaners off the cows will substantially reduce the breeders' nutrient requirements,' she said.

'In some cases they might still get away with nitrogen-type supplements which they only need to feed in small quantities, so it's relatively inexpensive compared to feeding energy supplements.'

Désirée Jackson
Animal Science, Longreach
Ph 07 4650 1200

Bull selection time

The bull buying season is approaching. Did you realize that the bull you buy today affects your herd for at least 15 years? That is based on a bull being in your herd for 5 years and daughters for 10 years.

Bulls have more influence in a herd than females. A bull can produce 100 to 200 calves in a life of four years. Average cows produce 4 to 5 calves in their lifetime.

What choices are there to find sires that will increase your herd's profitability into the future? The traits to evaluate bulls on need to be measurable, heritable and economically important.

The two areas of Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation (BBSE) and Genetic information go together and compliment each other.

BBSE

The bull must be fertile and able to produce significant numbers of progeny. Fertility assessments in a bull cover three areas

- Clearly visible
- Microscopic assisted
- Genetically defined

Clearly visible

This covers structural soundness including 2 uniform testicles of sound tone and other reproductive anatomy in sound working order.

Microscopically assisted

The main requirement is for Morphology or % Normal sperm. A secondary consideration is motility.

Genetically defined

This includes Estimated Breeding Values for Scrotal Size and Days to Calving.

Genetic information

The best genetic tool is BREEDPLAN Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs). This uses the measured performance of the animal and all known relatives plus genetic information like heritabilities and correlations.

EBVs are available to describe

- Growth
- Fertility
- Carcase

BREEDPLAN EBVs just describe the genetics of the animal. It is the responsibility of the user as to how the information is used.

For more information contact

- Your local beef extension officer
- Philip Mann, Tropical Beef Technology Services 07 4927 6066

Alan Laing
Extension Officer (Beef), Ayr
Ph 07 4720 5115

Protein meals in molasses-based supplements

It has been some time since the big rain and pastures are drying out fast and declining in feed quality. Correspondingly, cattle are losing weight and supplement programs are generally in full swing. One of the supplement options is to use molasses based supplements. Protein meals are scarce and expensive. Therefore, it is wise to review what is economical to use as our ingredients.

Molasses based supplements have a role to keep weaners moving forward and in finishing. Molasses is a cheap energy supplement but is deficient in protein.

We need to add a minimum of 3 kg of urea per 100 kg of molasses for the rumen bugs to be able to efficiently handle the molasses. We need to add extra protein for the animals' benefit. Vegetable protein meals are used for this role.

Recommendation – use the cheapest protein meal you can buy to put in molasses. In a final mix, there is only a small difference in total daily protein intake between the different protein meals.

Where cracked grain is available cheaper than protein meals, it may be possible to replace all or part of the protein meal with grain. However, stick with protein meal for weaners under 140 kg.

Typical molasses based supplements to improve cattle performance.

		Weaners under 140 kg	Other cattle
Molasses	kg	1000	1000
Urea	kg	30	30
Protein meal	kg	100	60
DCP	kg	10	10
Salt	kg	10	10
Rumensin	kg	0.5	0.5

Alan Laing
Extension Officer (Beef), Ayr
Ph 07 4720 5115

Lining up for a top MSA steak

Lisgar field day

On 24 July, a successful field day was held at Lisgar Droughtmaster stud south of Home Hill.

Lisgar is currently involved in the QPIF Epigenetics project, the QPIF Value in Beef project and is in an MLA MSA Producer Demonstration Site project.

The field day program covered:

- Lisgar history
- Progressive tools in use at Lisgar in bull selection (bull breeding soundness evaluation and genetic information using BREEDPLAN and other data)
- Targeting market specifications - Lisgar experiences with MSA
- Overview of the Epigenetics project
- Synchronized AI programs in wet cows
- Paddock inspection of heifers being targeted for the MSA market
- Yard inspection of No 8 bulls with full range of EBVs (Estimated Breeding Values), very fertile cows, and weaners with BREEDPLAN data

Weaners drafted into above and below average for growth. Field day participants working out which yard is which group.

- NLIS demo and electronic recording of data.

Participants rated the day highly and asked for a follow-up day on MSA and Lisgar's data.

Alan Laing
Extension Officer (Beef), Ayr
Ph 07 4720 5115

$5.6 million available in Reef Rescue funding

Following on the massive success from last year, NQ Dry Tropics has just opened Round 2 of the Reef Rescue program, which provides financial incentives to help support the adoption of improved land management practices.

Over $5.6 million is available for works during 2009/2010 that improve practices in our region.

Applications are being taken from sugar and horticulture producers for Reef Rescue funding. Funding will be available for improvements to nutrient, pesticide, soil, and water management.

Sugar producers can obtain an application form from NQ Dry Tropics, or through the local Burdekin BSES, Burdekin Productivity Services, or their Canegrowers group. Applications for sugar producers close 31 August.

Horticulture producers can obtain an expression of interest form from NQ Dry Tropics or Growcom. The closing date for receipt of expressions of interest is 21 August so you will need to be quick.

It is expected that applications will open for graziers over the coming weeks.

NQ Dry Tropics Reef Rescue Project Manager, Linda Hygate, said 'The Reef Rescue program is an exciting opportunity for the region's sugar, horticulture and beef producers to access funding and extension programs to improve water quality entering the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. It is an entirely voluntary process and we encourage landholders to get involved.'

Last year, Reef Rescue proved a massive success with over 170 expressions of interest submitted, resulting in $4 million spent by landholders and Reef Rescue funding in the region. In total, over 50 sugar projects, 20 horticulture projects, and 13 grazing projects were completed.

The NQ Dry Tropics region includes the local government areas of Townsville, Charters Towers, Burdekin, Isaac, Barcaldine, Etheridge, Hinchinbrook, Palm Island, and the Whitsundays.

Lesley McMahon
Corporate Communications Manager
NQ Dry Tropics
Ph 07 4724 3544 Fax 07 4724 3577
email: lesley.mcmahon@nqdrytropics.com.au
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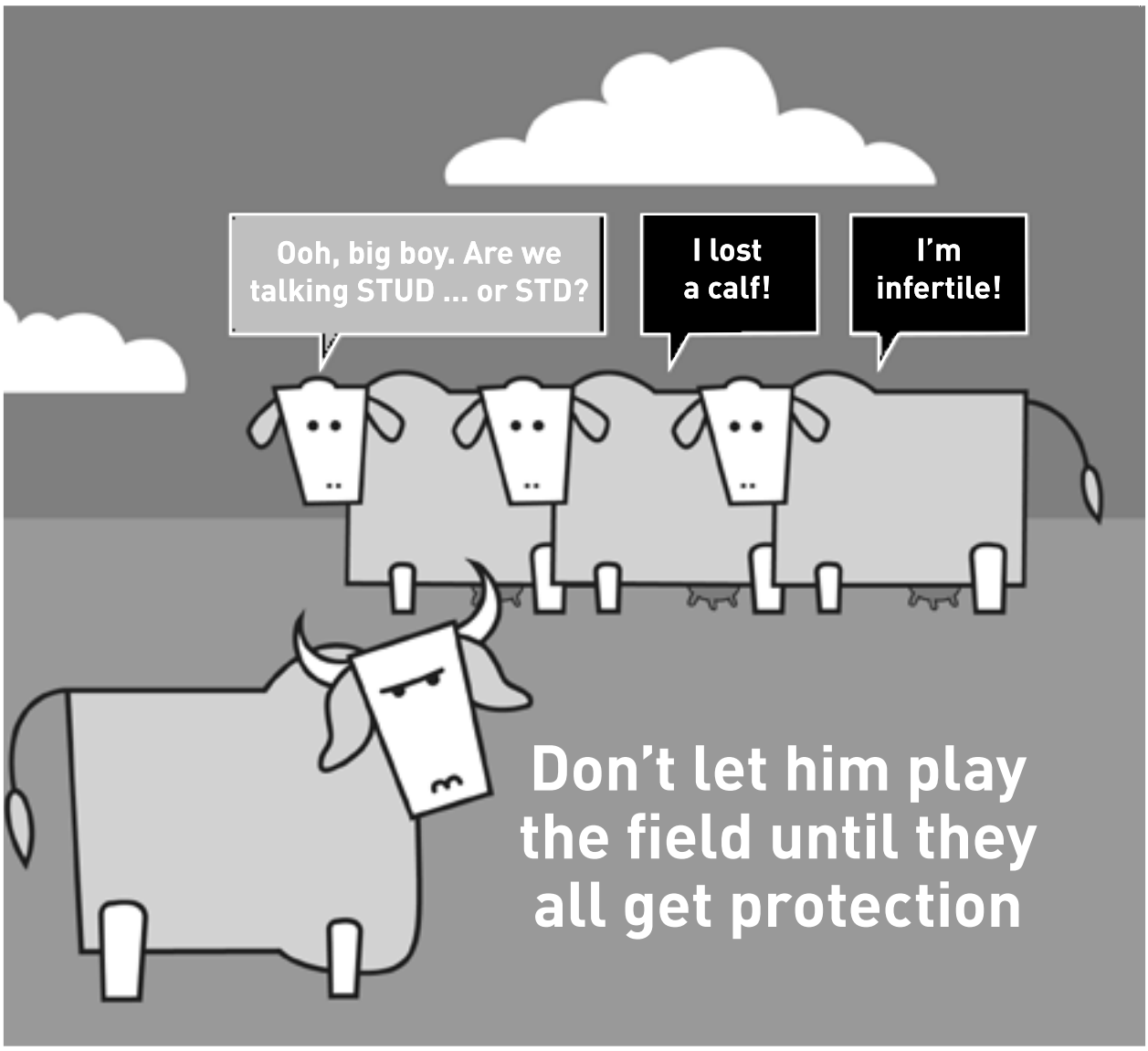

- Vibriosis is a venereal disease widespread among Australian cattle. Bulls are the usual source of infection in a herd.
- Vibriosis could cost a grower between $12 – $16 per breeder per year.[1]
- The cost benefit analysis of using Pfizer's Vibrovax® vaccination is between $7 and $9 for every dollar you spend.[1]

If your herd displays any of the signs of vibriosis, ask your preferred Pfizer stockist about Vibrovax®.

The clinical signs of Vibriosis:

- Lower than average conception rates
- Females returning after service
- Calving patterns spread out
- Sporadic abortions
- Permanent infertility could be the outcome

Start protection before conception

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Refrence 1: Pfizer data on file.

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