



BEEFTALK
Taking stock of your future

13 25 23 futurebeef.com.au



Choosing the best genes

Get the power to make positive changes this bull buying season with tools such as BULLCHECK and Estimated Breeding Values

BY TIM EMERY, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES BEEF EXTENSION OFFICER

IF YOU are responsible for buying bulls for a business, your selections will have an influence on the genetic direction and profitability of the herd in question for more than a decade.

Relying on visual appeal can be an expensive gamble.

Luckily, there are a host of tools that can help you make more informed, objective decisions.

Bull checks

When purchasing a bull, you are ultimately buying a package of genes.

In order to pass on these genetics, the bull must first and foremost be fertile.

A veterinary bull breeding soundness evaluation (VBBSE) or BULLCHECK uses a set of standards developed by the Australian Cattle Veterinarians to identify risk factors for a bull's future fertility.

Before purchasing a bull, you should ask the seedstock producer for a BULLCHECK report, including a morphology assessment, so you have a clear understanding of the level of risk associated with using the bull for a particular purpose.

It's also a good idea to ask seedstock producers about the selection pressure they apply to their herd, if bulls

are PI (persistently infected)-tested free and their routine vaccination and biosecurity programs.

Breeding objectives

Clear, written breeding objectives will help you focus on where you want your business to head and what traits you need to consider and place emphasis on.

Determining the breeding objectives of prospective seedstock suppliers is also recommended.

Estimated breeding values

Estimated breeding values (EBVs), which provide an estimate of an animal's genetic merit for a particular trait, have been available for more than 30 years to help drive genetic improvement.

Research projects and demonstration sites conducted across various years, locations and breeds have clearly shown EBVs provide an accurate prediction of genetic merit, with the expected difference in the progeny and the actual difference closely aligning for various traits.

Calculating EBVs

Included in the calculation of EBVs are the animal's own performance, the performance of known relatives, the heritability of each trait, the relationship between the different traits and - in some breeds (five at present) - genomic (DNA) information.

EBVs can be expressed



When purchasing a bull, you are ultimately buying a package of genes. To pass on these genetics, the bull must first and foremost be fertile.



Your selections will have an influence on the genetic direction and profitability of the herd in question for over a decade. Relying on visual appeal can be an expensive gamble.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries beef extension officer Tim Emery

as a positive, negative or zero value. It is important to remember a negative value doesn't always denote being undesirable.

This is certainly the case

for the fertility trait "days to calving", where a more negative figure is favourable.

You cannot currently compare EBVs across breeds (such as Santa Gertrudis

versus Droughtmaster).

But research projects are being undertaken to drive development of multi-breed EBVs (such as Repronomics, Southern Multibreed and the Northern BIN Steer Projects).

Using EBVs

Determine the most appropriate selection index for your breeding objectives and production system - giving consideration to individual EBVs where relevant - and use this to establish a shortlist of genetically desirable animals.

EBVs can be found on the BREEDPLAN or relevant breed society websites.

Here you can find comprehensive information about how the bull you are looking to buy stacks up across the varying traits, dam history and any genetic conditions of concern.

When using online sale catalogues, you can enter minimum and maximum EBVs to quickly identify animals that are genetically suited to your requirements.

Spend ample time appraising each shortlisted animal for temperament and structural soundness, excluding those that are unsuitable for your long-term breeding program.

When purchasing, implement measures to minimise risk to your new sire(s) and the overall business.

Be prepared

Tools such as BULLCHECK and EBVs significantly minimise the guesswork and, in turn, the risk to your business.

They give you the power to make positive changes this coming bull buying season.

You can start preparing now by:

- reviewing and revising your breeding objectives
- doing your homework
- identifying seedstock producers going the extra distance to provide objective information
- evaluating your current and potential sires.

For assistance, contact Department of Agriculture and Fisheries beef extension officer Tim Emery on 0408 707 155.

You can also learn more by visiting futurebeef.com.au, genetics.mla.com.au or breedplan.une.edu.au or attend MLA's Breeding-EDGE workshop.

Maximise your productivity with Australia's #1 Desmanthus



Hard seed suitable for faecal seeding

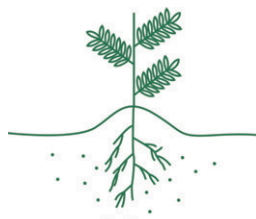
Add to your dry lick or molasses

Extend your pasture season

Progardes® Desmanthus
Persistent | Palatable | Productive | Perennial



Deep tap rooted legume
Nutritious, high protein
Drought tolerant
Good water use efficiency



Summer growing
High biomass production
Adds pasture diversity
Neutral to alkaline soil pH

www.agrimix.com.au

AW7213060



BEEFTALK

Taking stock of your future

13 25 23 futurebeef.com.au



Prepare for wet season

PREPARING northern pastures and cattle for the wet season is a key tactic to boost productivity in beef businesses.

As the end of the dry season approaches, northern beef producers will be trying to maintain as much ground cover as possible going into the 2022/2023 wet season.

As plants can only use water when it becomes available as soil moisture, maximising rainfall infiltration through ground cover is critical.

Producers are advised to maintain ground cover of more than 50 per cent in the lead-up to the wet season.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) Western Australia development officer Matthew Fletcher said now was an extremely good time to start planning for the upcoming wet season.

"At the start of the wet season, grasses produce green leaf from energy stored in roots," he said.

"If new shoots are continuously grazed and plants don't have an opportunity to replenish energy reserves, the reserves will run out and grasses die.

"This is an example of how desirable perennial grasses such as Mitchell grass (*Asprella species*), ribbon grass (*Chrysopogon fallax*) and curly blue/bundle-bundle grass (*Dichanthium fecundum*) can be removed from a grazing system.

"Experience suggests once these plants are removed it is very difficult to get them back."

There are several things producers can do to get the best out of the wet season

opportunity.

"Aligning stock numbers with available feed is the number one thing to do," Mr Fletcher said.

"There is little benefit emptying paddock A into paddock B to achieve a wet season spell when paddock B is already stocked to capacity.

"The benefit gained from spelling one paddock comes at the expense of overgrazing the other.

"This leads to bare ground, erosion, reduced infiltration and reduced desirable grasses in the overgrazed paddock."

Managing stock and having control over grazing is also essential in the lead up to the wet season, according to Mr Fletcher.

"Cattle preferentially graze the more productive, palatable pastures and if the opportunity presents, they will find their way back to these areas every time," he said.

"Keeping cattle out of preferentially-grazed areas over the wet season will enable palatable grasses to grow biomass (ground cover), set seed and replenish root reserves ready for grazing the next dry season.

"Fire is also a useful tool for encouraging stock onto underutilised areas."

Dr Kevin Bell is the technical innovations manager at Pardoo station in WA's Pilbara region.

He said there were several key management decisions Pardoo makes to prepare the cattle and land for the wet season, including spelling pastures and undertaking a controlled burning regime.

"Our usual program would aim to spell approx-



DPIRD WA development officer Matthew Fletcher, centre, says rotationally spelling pastures during the wet season is key to achieving good pasture growth.

“

Cattle preferentially graze the more productive, palatable pastures and if the opportunity presents, they will find their way back to these areas every time. Keeping cattle out of preferentially-grazed areas over the wet season will enable palatable grasses to grow biomass (ground cover), set seed and replenish root reserves ready for grazing the next dry season.

DPIRD development officer Matthew Fletcher

imately 30 per cent of our country in the wet season," he said.

"But this is dependent on the type of wet season we have.

"We incorporate spelling pastures with a controlled cool burn on an as-needed basis.

"Much of Pardoo is spinifex pasture, and so usually every four to five years we would anticipate burning designated areas.

"As spinifex pasture becomes of low value and difficult - or impossible - to graze the older it is, a cool burn removes accumulated dead and "stemmy" plant

material and restores fresh high-quality leaf.

"It also provides an opportunity for new plants to germinate."

Dr Bell said burning was achieved close to the wet season when humid conditions commenced and when weather conditions were favourable.

There are other useful things a cool fire can achieve on the northern rangelands.

"Burning also helps to remove some of the unwanted plants such as wattle and poverty bush," Dr Bell said.

"Burning this helps to open up more ground for spinifex pastures."

At Pardoo station, heifers are prioritised in management decisions and paddocks are stocked at an appropriate rate matched to feed availability.

"We try and place heifers into the paddocks spelled over the previous wet season," Dr Bell said.

"The fresh plant growth is of good quality and, if cattle numbers are conservative, the spinifex provides excellent nutrition.

"An appropriate stocking rate is required to meet a happy medium."

To enable spelling, cattle have to graze somewhere over the wet season in the northern rangelands.

So, producers should look for a paddock in good to fair condition (A-B condition).

Mr Fletcher said these paddocks would have the resilience to maintain ground cover with grasses able to tolerate grazing by the cattle.

"Once the wet season starts, cattle will generally spread out and minimise overgrazing," he said.

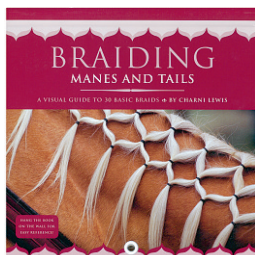
All I want for Christmas is.....

ruralbookshop.com.au

BRAIDING MANES AND TAILS

Charni Lewis

Horse trainer and instructor Charni Lewis brings the wonderful process of braiding to life in her clearly described, step-by-step guide to 30 beautiful braids. Helping the braider along are full-colour photographs and detailed illustrations showing twists and turns that make each style unique and the hand positions necessary to hold those ropes of equine hair in place.

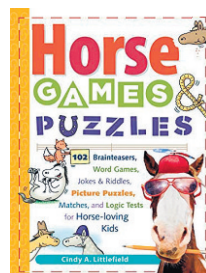


\$39.99

HORSE GAMES AND PUZZLES

Cindy A Littlefield

This book is divided into five sections: Word Play, Picture Puzzles, Drawing, Fun and Games, and Brain Teasers. (All the answers are included.) Fun, horsey cartoons and illustrations adorn every page. And scattered throughout the book are horse riddles, bits of horse trivia and quotes about horses.



\$25.99

NOT JUST JAM

Matthew Evans

'Not Just Jam' is gourmet farmer Matthew Evans' ode to the surplus of the seasons—a collection of more than 90 modern recipes for old-fashioned preserving methods. Not just for those with their own orchard, but also for those passionate about flavour.



\$47.00

ONLINE www.ruralbookshop.com.au EMAIL ruralbookshop@theland.com.au

PHONE 1800 025 308 POST Rural Bookshop, PO Box 399, North Richmond, NSW, 2754.

(Money order/cheque payable to Rural Bookshop - Include phone and address) All prices include GST, postage and handling.

rural
bookshop





BEEFTALK
Taking stock of your future

13 25 23 futurebeef.com.au

NORTHERN
TERRITORY
GOVERNMENTDepartment of
Primary Industries and
Regional DevelopmentQueensland
Government

Know your toxic *Pimelea* species

Get on top of problem plant

PRODUCERS should keep an eye out for *Pimelea* following cooler temperatures and winter rain across south and south-west Queensland.

There are three commonly found toxic *Pimelea* species that can cause significant economic losses to production if not managed effectively.

These are *Pimelea elongata*, *Pimelea simplex* and *Pimelea trichostachya*.

Impacts on production start to occur when pastures are not readily available, or when *Pimelea* grows within pastures.

It is important to be on the front foot with management. Understanding the species on your property is a useful first step.

Cattle do not generally consume *Pimelea* when it is green, as the plant releases a strong odour.

When the plant dries off, this odour disappears.

Then flowers and seed heads, which contain large levels of the toxin, can easily be mistakenly consumed in pastures.

Pimelea can also be consumed by cattle through ingestion of soil or water



There are three commonly found toxic *Pimelea* species that can cause significant economic losses to cattle production if not managed effectively.

containing fragments or seeds and inhalation of dried fragments.

Be on the front foot by understanding your pastures and cattle. Introduced animals are found to be more

susceptible. Identification of *Pimelea* species and its impacts to cattle can allow for effective management options.

There is currently an Australian Pesticides and

Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) Minor use permit (#13549) for spraying small areas of *Pimelea*.

Other management options include strategic grazing and removal of animals

from paddocks when there is risk of significant consumption of *Pimelea* plants.

Pimelea poisoning, otherwise known as *St George* or *Maree* disease, can occur with excessive consumption.

It can happen at all stages of cattle growth.

Typical signs of poisoning in cattle are:

- diarrhoea
- reduced appetite and depression
- rough coat/condition
- oedema (due to build-up of fluid) of the head, brisket and abdomen
- increased respiration rate and heart rate
- reluctance to move (during exertion sudden death can occur).

All classes of animals can suffer, and it is more likely to occur in cattle that are new to the area - probably because they have no built-up rumen microflora to assist in detoxifying the poison in the plants and are uneducated about its toxicity.

When visual signs of *Pimelea* poisoning are observed, remove stock and get them onto quality, non-*Pimelea* infested pastures.

This can assist in recovery if impacts have not gone too far. Do not push affected animals, but try to move them slowly.

More information about *Pimelea* can be found at www.futurebeef.com.au.

Helping build resilience for beef producers

WHETHER you are managing drought or have just come out of drought conditions, planning and adapting to climate risks are a vital part of business planning.

The Farm Business Resilience Program (FBRP) supports business planning by identifying goals, business and climate risks and strate-

gies to manage these risks.

The FBRP is delivered through the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Queensland Farmers' Federation, Growcom and CANEGROWERS.

Within DAF, the Grazing-Futures Livestock Business Resilience Project has partnered with rural financial

counselling services and natural resource management groups to provide a comprehensive whole-of-business extension program which is flexible to producers' individual needs.

Along with workshops and other training opportunities, one-on-one assistance is on offer to help primary

producers complete a Farm Business Resilience Checklist and develop a Farm Business Resilience Plan.

DAF senior principal beef extension officer Joe Rolfe said more than 950 producers had received one-on-one support from the Grazing-Futures Livestock Business Resilience Project this year.

"Along with one-on-one assistance, we're running workshops and other training opportunities to help producers develop a Farm Business Resilience Plan," he said.

"There may be actions and strategies identified in your business plan that could improve your business

operation, such as building new water infrastructure and fodder storages.

"While not all actions identified may require a direct financial commitment, some of these actions may be considered for funding."

For more information visit daf.qld.gov.au/drought or phone 13 25 23.

**Access to all
our newspapers**
from across the nation - online

Digital subscribers have access to digital version of each of our weekly agricultural print editions: **The Land, Queensland Country Life, Stock & Land, Stock Journal, Farm Weekly and North Queensland Register**. This Week's Paper lets you flip through and zoom in on every page. We suggest tablet, laptop or desktop for the best reading experience.



**Unlock unlimited
access now**
for only **\$4.40/week***

*Billed monthly at \$19.00



queenslandcountrylife.com.au/subscribe

**QUEENSLAND
Country Life**

part of the **ACM Agriculture** network



BEEFTALK
Taking stock of your future

13 25 23 futurebeef.com.au



A boost to prevention and preparedness

Industry unites on diseases

THE Queensland Government's recent announcement of \$22 million over five years, followed by an ongoing annual investment of \$2.4 million, will boost prevention and preparedness for biosecurity emergencies to ensure the protection of Queensland livestock and supply chain industries.

Activities will further strengthen prevention and preparedness efforts in response to the threat of emergency animal diseases including Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and African Swine Fever (ASF).

Queensland and Australia remain free from Foot and Mouth Disease, Lumpy Skin Disease and African Swine Fever.

An incursion would have the potential to cause significant and far-reaching impacts to Australia's livestock industries, including considerable economic losses and restrictions.

Queensland's Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Allison Crook said the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries was working with other government departments and



Lumpy Skin Disease causes swelling of lymph nodes across the animal's body. Picture by AW Coetzer, E Tupparainen, S Babiuk and DB Wallace.

key livestock industry and supply chain stakeholders to ensure emergency animal disease preparations were timely, informed and united.

"We know the key to Australia's defence is vigi-

lance, early reporting and ensuring every livestock supply chain enterprise has adequate biosecurity measures in place," Dr Crook said.

"We continue to collaborate with our livestock

industry networks and are encouraging everyone along the supply chain to look, report and protect."

Livestock owners know their animals best. Key actions you can take now are:

■ **LOOK** - for and know the signs of emergency animal disease such as Foot and Mouth Disease, Lumpy Skin Disease or African Swine Fever

■ **REPORT** - suspect cases of

Foot and Mouth Disease, Lumpy Skin Disease or African Swine Fever to your veterinarian and the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888 immediately

■ **PROTECT** - your livestock and livelihood

■ Have a biosecurity management plan that it is being followed by everyone who visits your property. To create a farm biosecurity management plan or for more information visit farmbiosecurity.com.au

■ Ensure your Biosecurity Entity registration is up to date. Registration helps to quickly locate animals and contact livestock owners in the event of an animal disease emergency in Queensland. Visit qld.gov.au/BiosecurityRegistration

Keep up to date with the latest developments about emergency animal diseases at daf.qld.gov.au.

You can also check out our emergency animal disease preparedness eHub.

This brings together resources at daf.engagemen-thub.com.au/animal-disease-preparedness.

Advantages of segregating the breeder herd

SEGREGATING breeders into calving groups based on predicted calving dates can be a valuable management tool for beef enterprises.

For control-mated herds, foetal aging at weaning enables the drafting of breeders into early, mid and late calving groups - with the number and size of calving groups

based on the pregnancy status of the cows, paddocks available and seasonal conditions.

Breeder segregation is particularly valuable in year-round mated herds.

It enables cows calving out of season to be better managed, reduces mustering costs and lowers supplemen-

tation costs. This practice enables more targeted management of breeders.

■ Breeder groups can be paddocked to better match feed quality to nutritional requirements. Earlier calving cows are likely to have a longer period as wet cows on lower quality dry season pastures so can

be given paddocks with the best pasture.

■ If animals are paddocked on the basis of calving period and consequently nutritional requirements, supplementation can be better targeted. Cows that will not calve until the end of the dry season may not require any dry season

supplementation, whereas those calving early are likely to require dry season supplementation.

■ Calving females can be monitored more efficiently for calving difficulties and health issues.

■ Branding and weaning practices can be timed to avoid having to brand big

calves and younger calves being stressed during mustering and handling.

For more information visit futurebeef.com.au and search for 'breeders'.

Or you can contact Jo Campbell, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries technical officer, 0459 895 881.

The premium AgTrader Audience[^]

96% of the AgTrader audience are farmers

81% male

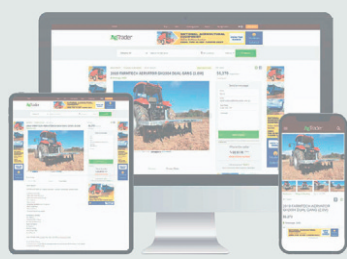
Average of 17 Sessions per user per month showing a strong user experience with content that keeps consumers coming back for more.

68% access the site on-the-go indicating an always-on presence is most effective to ensure your brand is in the right place at the right time

Average on-farm income of \$372K

64% are actively looking to make a farming related purchase in the next six months.

*Limit one dealer per subscription



Scan for more



Agtrader Dealer Subscription, Brand Builder Pack, Story Teller Pack.
We can tailor a package to suit the needs of the individual.

For further information please contact your local representative or Justin Bowler - 0419 891 049
justin.bowler@austcommunitymedia.com.au

AgTrader
Where farmers buy and sell



FLOCK TALK

13 25 23 leadingsheep.com.au



Australian Wool Innovation Limited



Queensland Government

Spring rains boost worm risk

QUEENSLAND sheep and wool producers are being warned to prepare for increased worm burdens this summer.

The current Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) outlook is forecasting above-median rainfall for most of Australia between August and October, with minimum temperatures likely to be above median.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries extension officer Jed Sommerfield said forecast rainfall in spring meant producers must be vigilant with monitoring and increase the frequency of worm checks in their flock.

"Prolonged favourable conditions will create an opportune environment for increased survival and multiplication of worms in sheep, with high moisture levels in the soil and substantial vegetation cover on paddocks limiting the chance of these parasites being exposed to the usually lethal sun in summer," he said.

"There are several things producers should keep a look out for this spring and summer period."



It is vital for producers to understand the impact of worms on their flock's productivity and ensure they have a worm management plan.

Common visual indicators include: scours and subsequent weight loss; swelling under the jaw - which is commonly referred to as "bottle jaw"; general lethargy; or - in more severe cases - collapse

when being mustered and death.

But the most accurate indicator are the results from a faecal worm egg count.

Mr Sommerfield said this would give you a clear

indication of the number of worm eggs and the worm burden in your sheep.

"A worm egg count (WEC) test will alert producers to the scale of worm burden and give them the information

they need to make informed management decisions, particularly around drenching," he said.

Mr Sommerfield said this was highlighted during a recent conversation with a

Queensland sheep producer, who said: "I was desperate. After finding a weaner with symptoms of worms, my first reaction was to drench. I did a worm egg count, which indicated a low worm burden, and I saved myself the cost and effort of mustering and drenching."

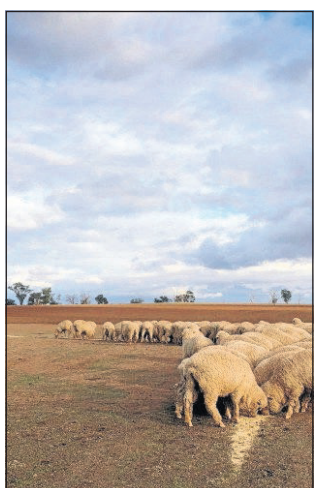
Mr Sommerfield said that while drenching was the most commonly used management practice for sheep with high WEC, it was important producers continually evaluated its effectiveness and checked for drench resistance in their flock.

"WormBoss has a quick and easy test to help check for drench resistance - DrenchCheck - where, following results of an initial WEC, producers drench their mob and send in another WEC sample for testing 14 days later," he said.

"The results will compare the effects of drenching on the worm egg count."

Leading Sheep is a partnership between Queensland's Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and Australian Wool Innovation and is supported by AgForce.

TOP FLOCK TIPS TO GET THROUGH THIS WORM SEASON WITH FEW DISRUPTIONS



THE sheep and wool industry incurs significant productivity losses from worms each year, but there are several tests and simple management methods producers can put in their toolbox to help mitigate the risk of an infestation.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries extension officer Jed Sommerfield said if you're neglecting regular worm egg count (WEC) tests, it's easy to miss the signs of

infestation until your sheep become ill.

"So, be sure to test regularly and always be on the lookout for visual signs of infection in your flock," he said.

"If it's a method in your management plan, it's important to be vigilant in ensuring the correct drench dosage is administered to your sheep.

"This is an easy mistake to make. So, ensure you use a correctly-calibrated

gun, alternate the type of drench you use and assess for drench resistance to ensure effectiveness."

Mr Sommerfield said it was key to keep any new sheep brought onto your property away from your existing flock and give them a 'quarantine drench', keeping them off your pastures for six to eight hours.

"The most high-risk time for worm contamination in sheep is in late winter and late summer, so be watch-

ful. If your pasture becomes contaminated, rotate your sheep into a new paddock after drenching or the cycle of infection will continue," he said.

The WormBoss website - at www.paraboss.com.au/wormboss - has a range of resources, including how to collect and send WEC samples and a list of WEC providers. There is an online booklet outlining regionally-specific worm control programs.

SIGNS OF WORMS

What to look out for

- Bottle jaw
- Accumulation of fluid in the abdomen
- Humped back from abdominal pain
- Coughing and pneumonia
- Anaemia
- Lethargy and collapse
- Weight loss from decreased appetite
- Scouring
- Nodular lesions

DOUBLE THE VALUE!

Horse Deals

Available at all good newsagents, saddlery & produce stores across Australia

Facebook Instagram Twitter

ON SALE NOW!

Australia's Leading Equestrian Magazine PLUS Stallions Showcase & Breeding