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EDITORIAL

Welcome to our winter (or summer in the northern hemisphere) newsletter. I hope that you have been amongst the more fortunate that have experienced kinder climatic conditions over the last 4 – 5 months and that this has given you some renewed hope for the future. There are still many challenges though, that need to be taken into account as we plan for the future. Without wanting to get involved in any political debates, two issues that have been gathering momentum in recent years that have the potential to add more challenges to primary producers already full bag of considerations when future planning are climate change and anti-farming protest groups (see later discussion in this newsletter).

At the risk of sounding a little sceptical, hasn't the climate been changing since day one. If one takes the time to look at climatic changes over the centuries, it shows that the climate is constantly changing. Certainly, the rate and length of change has varied, but it has always happened. In today's highly technical and industrialised age, man has changed many parts of the environment and we need to be ever mindful of the impact these changes are having on our climate and world generally and be prepared to address and change anything that has a negative effect on our environment.

Unfortunately, our media is only really interested in publicising the extremes of most issues so we are regularly hearing how much the climate is changing and how it is having such a negative impact on us all. Usually we hear most about the thing that is going to attract most headlines and therefore followers. The balanced view is forgotten while the opposite view usually gets some publicity, but if it doesn't have the funding or political clout that the other side of the coin has, then it will not get equal hearing. As primary producers, we have a responsibility to at least maintain the status quo as our own contribution to ensuring we leave the world a better place for our future generations.

WHAT'S (BEEN) HAPPENING

*We ended up having to make the regrettable decision to postpone the 5 day evaluation course that we had planned to hold at Bundick Murrell near Young in Central NSW from the 25th – 29th. March.

Whilst this is very disappointing for us, we can fully understand the predicament that so many producers are currently in with the very harsh seasonal conditions that have prevailed over the last 12 months. Given that there had been little overall improvement in the seasonal conditions, it was understandable that most of those who had indicated that they would like to attend were still feeding cattle etc. and just couldn't afford the time to attend. We hope that things turn around very soon.

*I would like to thank those who had agreed to support us with offers of cattle, cattle yards and other facilities as well as to those who responded to the invitation to attend and others who advised their interest despite not being able to attend at this time. We do plan to hold more courses when the conditions are more suitable so please let us know of your interest.

*We will also be going to the Northern Territory in August and returning through South Australia to catch up with producers there and Central West NSW on the way home. We will be returning to NSW in the second week of September for a few days and again to Northern Vic. for our Annual Meeting in early October.

* We are still very keen to hold more field days in localised areas over the next few months, so if you would like one in your area, please let myself, Albert Hancock (0267334666) or other company directors know and we will get it under way. We would like to be as flexible as possible in our future planning and would welcome and appreciate any input that you can provide for us in this regard.

*We will be evaluating cattle at Matt Crowley's (0429169068) property north-west of Charters Towers on July the 25th and 26th. and will have time available to share and demonstrate our system to any

local producers who might be interested in attending.

*We now have linear measuring callipers available for sale for \$100.00 plus freight so if you are interested, please let me know.

*We remain keen to get some marketing of graded cattle going and are happy to advertise for any of our clients here in the newsletter or on our website.

*The Coodardie (Northern Territory) bull sale will held on Wed. August 14th. 2019. There will be a good selection of 2 and 3 year old bulls to choose from with some outstanding figures to support these quality bulls. This is an opportunity for buyers to purchase some of the strongest remaining Cherokee Brahman bloodlines in the country. The O'Brien family welcome visitors for the sale and will provide their usual great hospitality.

*The Annual Clunie Range Angus sale will be held on the property at Wallangara in Northern NSW on Friday the 2nd. August

*If any other clients are having sales etc. and would like me to put them in the newsletter, please let me know the details.

BREED OF THE QUARTER TEXAS LONGHORN

The Texas Longhorn, as the name implies, has been named after the size and dominance of their horns, which can extend to over 69 inches (1.8m) tip to tip for bulls, and up to 100 inches (2.54m) tip to tip for exceptional cows.

They are descendants of the first cattle bought to North America by Christopher Columbus and the Spanish colonists from the dryer regions of western Europe nearly 500 years ago. Over the years they have increased their high drought-stress tolerance.

Genetic analyses show that the Texas Longhorn originated from an Iberian hybrid of two ancient cattle lineages: "taurine", descending from the domestication of the wild aurochs in the Middle East, and "indicine", descending from the domestication of the aurochs in India

Due to a combination of natural selection and adaptation to the environment, the Texas Longhorn is the only cattle breed in America

which - without aid from man - is truly adapted to America. Texas Longhorns are known for their diverse colouring and can be any colour or mix of colours, but dark red and white colour mixes are the most dominant.

The three main registries for the breed are the Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America, started in 1964, the International Texas Longhorn Association, and the Cattlemen's Texas Longhorn Registry.

The Texas longhorn is a beef animal known for its lean beef, which is lower in fat, cholesterol and calories than most beef breeds. The Texas Longhorns are also used for their many excellent qualities adding hybrid vigour and easy calving abilities when crossed with other breed. They are a unique breed in that while they are often quite aggressive, they can still make loving farm companions.

With the destruction of the buffalo following the Civil War, the Longhorns were rushed in to occupy the Great Plains, a vast empire of grass vacated by the buffalo. Cattlemen brought their breeding herds north to run on the rich grazing lands of western Nebraska, Wyoming, the Dakotas, and Montana. The Texas Longhorns adapted well to their expanding world. However, their population diminished as the rangeland was fenced off and cropping began to expand. They also lost more popularity with the introduction of imported cattle with quick maturing characteristics. Intensive crossbreeding had nearly erased the true typical Longhorn by 1900.



Photo courtesy of Dickinson Cattle Co. Inc. www.texaslonghorn.com

In 1927, the Texas Longhorn was preserved by the United States Government on wildlife refuges in Oklahoma and Nebraska. Also, a few southwestern cattlemen, convinced of the Longhorn's value as a genetic link and concerned for their preservation, maintained small herds through the years. The longhorn now appears headed along another important new trail. Lean, natural meat, offering more nutrition per calorie, is in demand, and the longhorn fills the bill. Those who have tasted longhorn beef pronounce it tender and full of flavour.

Characteristics

- *Colour - varied shadings and combinations of most colours.
- *Weight - ranges from 800 to 1500 pounds.
- *Reproductive period - twice as long as that of most other breeds.
- *Early maturing – generally speaking
- *Natural resistance to the most common cattle diseases and parasites
- *Diet - a wider range of grasses, plants, and weeds than most breeds of other cattle.
- *Meat - produces naturally less fat and lower cholesterol for today's health conscious public.
- *Reproductive Efficiency - Large pelvic openings and low birth weights result in live calves.
- *Adaptability - The breed thrives in climates from the hot, damp coastal regions to the harsh winters of Canada.
- *Docility - Longhorn cattle are intelligent, easy to work and to handle.
- * Due to their innate gentle disposition and intelligence, Texas Longhorns are increasingly being trained for steer riding.



Photo courtesy of Dickinson Cattle Co.
Inc. www.texaslonghorn.com

Today, Texas Longhorns are found mainly in the USA and Canada. However, in recent years they have started to be exported overseas and in 2008, what initially started as a social group in Australia, formed Texas Longhorns Australia (TLA), which has gone from strength to strength since becoming an incorporated association in June 2010.

CHINE.

I have discussed the importance of the chine in some of our very early newsletters and our book “The Vision Tender”. I would like to take a little space here and reinforce much of what I have written previously. The part of the backbone that we refer to as the chine starts at the point of the shoulders and ends at the start of the loin or at the last rib.

We have not included the chine as a separate trait in our 18-trait evaluation system because it is an important sub trait, if you like, in a number of other main traits. We consider these sub traits in all the main traits when we are learning the evaluation system during our 5 day courses.

Because of its importance within a number of our main traits, we believe that the chine is an excellent indicator of an animal’s overall confirmation balance.

One of the most important factors in the development of the chine is the amount of butterfat or milk quality that a calf receives during its time on its mother. We believe that at least 4.0% butterfat is essential for good skeletal development within an animal and probably not just for cattle, but all mammals.

This can be seen in the difference between beef cattle and dairy cattle. Beef calves ideally suckle on their mothers for at least 9 months in reasonable conditions and as a rule and ideally, the chine won’t be any more than 1 – 2 cm (around half an inch) above the shoulder blades. These calves will have the benefit of their mother’s natural milk during that time.

Compare these with dairy calves that are weaned from their mothers within the first week after birth at the most and fed on substitute milk products. These calves usually end up with chines that are more than 5 cm. or 2 inches higher than their shoulders by the time they are mature animals. Other prominent bone features such as the hooks and pins will also be much more prominent on these cattle as compared with most of their beef cousins at maturity.

If you have beef cows with high chines, it is a good indicator that their mothers were low in butterfat. An even, slightly rounded shape over the shoulders is natural. Have a look at your young calves, especially up to about a month in age and you will not see a very high chine. That will mainly only change as they get older and, as stated, is strongly influenced by the quality of milk that the calves are fed.

As mentioned, the chine height and positioning is a key to the overall balance of an animal. This trait is one of several that doesn’t have a precise rating of good at one end of the continuum or bad at the other end. It is important to have balance with other traits such as the front shoulder, angularity and body capacity and it is a trait that will have a slightly different grading in beef breeds when compared to dairy breeds in a similar way that angularity does. Whilst

a slightly higher chine is desirable for meat production, it usually means that an animal will have higher maintenance needs, especially when grass fed.

The following are some of the characteristics to consider when looking for a good chine placement and apologies for repetition of some of the above information.

- A chine bone that has length and is just slightly higher than the shoulder bones will indicate a well-balanced animal. It can be slightly higher in cows than bulls in beef breeds, but not as high as in dairy breeds.
 - A chine bone situated in such a position ensures a long body that gives a high yield of the most profitable forequarter cuts.
 - It also provides the launching place for a strong rib attachment. This ensures a deep, pear shaped spring of ribs that provides plenty of heart room and lung capacity.
 - It is a key to body depth.
 - A well-balanced chine placement will lead to a direct increase in saleable meat yield, high milk production from dams and provide a deep body capacity that gives the animal the ability to increase feed intake and feed conversion efficiency.
 - An extremely high chine in bulls can lead to calving problems because of too much neck extension leading to a longer gestation and increased birth weight so there is an optimum height for the chine which will vary slightly between beef and dairy breeds.
 - When the chine bone is considerably lower than the shoulders, the animal's body capacity decreases.

WHAT MORE

At a time when the challenges of making a living in any form of agriculture are growing, recent events would indicate that producers, especially livestock producers, are going to have to add another factor to their growing list of considerations to factor into their business plan. This is the growing objection to traditional management strategies that are being challenged by animal rights and vegan proponents.

Certainly, in a democratic country, these people have a right to voice their opinion and lobby for what they see as necessary changes to protect animals. Unfortunately, as in so many areas of our lives, there are radicals who are not prepared to balance all the facts presented and can only see their own point of view.

I studied philosophy for 2 years and I think that maybe everyone should have at least some insight into this subject. Maybe it needs to be added to the school curriculum to teach young people from any early age how to look at all possible scenarios for any given topic. I must admit that Philosophy is not exactly a riveting, attention getting subject and to be quite honest, at times, downright boring. However, when it came to assignment and examination time, if you were not able to equally present both sides of the issues in question, you were failed.

I don't want to get into all the arguments for and against animal rights and veganism. I think there are actually two issues here. One is related to human health and diet and the other is around animal welfare. Everyone has the right to eat what they can acquire from whatever suitable source. However, we also need to remember that everyone is different and therefore not everyone will eat the same food or require the same level of, or variety of, nutrients and minerals present in the food that they eat.

I would like to just comment on why people think so differently about things and what is in their personality that causes them to act that way. I don't have any real answers to why people act the way they do, but I think that people in primary industries need to

understand how these radicals think and so that they can come up with smarter ways to protect themselves that will also gather a tremendous wave of public approval and support.

Personally, I find it difficult not to be biased given my background in agriculture and it is challenging to write this without really venting how I feel about the threats the industry is facing from a source that would not be able to live without agriculture in one, at least, of its many forms.

In one way, what has been happening with animal activists and vegans protesting against sound, scientifically justified agricultural practices should never happen.

It is fairly obvious that these people are bored and so most likely on the brink of depression. Whilst they may be very creative in developing ways to get their message across to the wider community, they don't seem to be able to come up with many creative alternatives to what they are protesting against and also probably have difficulty seeing any other constructive long term future for themselves and so tend to want to reduce everyone else's future.

This boredom, which often leads to depression, comes from a lack of ability to communicate internally with our emotional parts. Our emotional parts are the internal part of our kinaesthetic or feeling sense, one of our main senses. In fact, research has shown that around 40% of the population are dominant in this sense.

In today's world, so much of what we do is done by the push of a button and often with little or no thought on our part. We have, or are, becoming part of a robotic system that doesn't have to think for itself. This has reduced the need for us to work things out for ourselves and be responsible for the outcomes.

Boredom is a direct result of a loss of our ability to fully communicate with our creative part, one of our internal emotional parts. When this happens, our creative part gets to feeling neglected and unwanted so basically goes to sleep or bludges on us.

When you add this to narcissism and fear, it makes for a volatile mixture where the ability to think rationally becomes more challenging.

Certainly, these protestors are being creative in how they are protesting, though in most cases it is nothing different to what protestors have been doing now for centuries. To believe not only in what they do in terms of what they see as the wrongful treatment of animals, but also to believe that they can break the law is also a good insight into their personalities and their psychics. From a psychological perspective, it is difficult not to ignore the selfishness of these people. Are the issues they are raising what is truly driving them or is it a personal need to be seen to be important and leave their footprint on the world?

To date the protests we have seen have been relatively peaceful and that is something to be grateful for. Let's hope that reason continues to prevail in this regard and that both sides can stop and listen to, and most importantly, respect each other's position.

Whilst there is a lot of general public support in the cities for primary producers, the agricultural industry needs to continue a strong promotion of the many positives about food production to counter the views of the minority radical groups that are threatening the livelihoods of many good, hardworking people.

Thank you for your continued interest in our newsletters, our website and our book. Please feel free to order one of our books and become familiar with the CLMS system and the directions we are taking in the overall scheme of animal and food production for human consumption

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US ABOUT ANY ITEMS IN THIS NEWSLETTER, ON OUR WEBSITE OR IN OUR BOOK. WE WELCOME PRODUCER INPUT AND INTEREST AND WANT TO INVOLVE YOU IN WHAT WE ARE DOING.

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