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EDITORIAL

Welcome to our latest newsletter. Seasonal conditions in Australia have certainly improved in many of our drought affected regions in recent months, especially with useful follow-up winter rain in the southern grain belt areas which is a major change from the last couple of years. I hope that conditions in your part of the world are at least manageable for you. Whatever the case, I am sure you have had similar challenges previously and are adept at coping with them.

The spanner in the works or the big unknown at present is what affect the COVID-19 restrictions will have on agriculture. It is certainly going to be a different world as we experience the easing of restrictions, wherever you are in the world. Let's hope that agricultural trading and marketing can return to some form of normality before too long.

It will take many businesses a long time to recover from this current restrictive environment we have and are experiencing, especially following on from the many areas of our country that have been affected by drought and bushfires. In many respects, we have not had time to recover from one before the other has occurred.

Sadly, there will most likely be a number of businesses which will not survive in our rural communities. Our thoughts are with those that experience these types of hardships and heartaches at their losses. I know that the country spirit will come to the fore and do its very best to support those who are impacted by these recent events.

There is little doubt that many businesses have had to rethink their direction and adjust to the changes that are occurring. Fortunately, we are seeing a lot of creativity and inventiveness as businesses make these adjustments and, in most cases, will come through this experience being much more efficient and productive. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that even an event such as this will change the way our

bureaucracy operates so this will decrease the speed of change.

WHAT'S (BEEN) HAPPENING

*Our plans for future travel pretty much rest in the hands of what government restrictions are still in place over the next three months. At this stage we are not sure how the COVID-19 situation will affect our planning. If it is possible, we will travel to the Northern Territory for the Coodardie Bull Sale on Wednesday the 19th. August and possibly make some calls in Central and Nth. Qld on the way there or back. The plan is to also visit NSW in September.

*We are also planning a one day field day near Pomona in Qld. in the near future and will monitor the current corona virus situation before setting a date.

* We are still very keen to hold more field days in other 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 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.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

For sale, Coodardie Brahman Females for sale Registered (or eligible to be) Australian Brahmans
Heifers through to cows - will consider selling in small/individual lots or large draft - approximately 150 head available
Genetically quiet
High rating CLMS assessed herd

Currently running with Coodardie Bulls (high scoring CLMS)

Closed herd, Cherokee base

Reds & greys, polled, dehorned and horned Bred and raised in tough NT conditions (ticky country).

* The annual Coodardie Bull Sale will be held on Wednesday the 19th. of August this year. Catalogues for the sale will be available prior to the sale and on line participation is welcome.

*The annual Clunie Range Angus Bull Sale will be held on Friday, August 7, 2020 at 1:30 pm.

*We remain happy to promote the sales of other breeders and would like to put them in the newsletter, so please let me know the details.

LOOKING AND SEEING

Just thought I might add an observation as much as anything else here and it certainly doesn't apply to everyone. In fact, there are many in the agricultural industries who it does not apply to. On the other hand????

What I am referring to is the way our society has developed in such a way that it has not encouraged our powers of observation and creativity to notice and work with what nature has given us, both from a human perspective and a technological perspective.

It is certainly more prevalent in our city environments, but unfortunately can be seen creeping into country areas as well. The challenge for us is to be able to balance the technological changes that have been advanced greatly over the last 70 years with our own human instincts. Most of the growth in technology has meant a change from predominantly physical work to much more mechanical use for many activities and agriculture is right up there with the main adaptors of new technology.

The introduction of automation and chemicals into agriculture has changed the way we farm more since World War two

than at any other period, if not in all of history. The question is – How has it affected the way we maintain the nature/technology balance?

In some ways, it has made us lazy in how we observe what is happening in nature while we rush ahead with the advances we are being sold to grow more, faster etc. Now we must advance and many of you are doing a great job in keeping the balance.

In the beef industry, it is gratifying to see that the most thoughtful producers are continuing to see the big picture and recognise that there are many components to a well-balanced animal and are not being side-tracked by influences that are solely looking for financial gain.

Quite a lot of the traits that we have identified as being important in the selection of high quality animals were identified many years, probably centuries ago in some cases, by very observant cattlemen well before we had any of the advanced technology that we use in the industry today. They learnt the relevance and importance of these traits by observing their repeatability in their herds. Certainly, the herdsman and women of centuries ago, who spent all day with their herd to guard them against predators, had little else to do but observe their cattle and the surrounding environment.

Unfortunately, the pace that we allow ourselves to be propelled through life at present means that we rarely have the time needed to just sit/stand and watch our animals and their behaviour. Sure, we have developed alternative methods to judge or measure our animals, but that has led us to have that space between them and us where the real understanding of the animal is discovered. If you like, it is a little like being an expert machinery operator

without really understanding how the machine works mechanically. If it breaks down, they can't fix it.

BREED OF THE QUARTER GELVIEH

The Gelbvieh breed (pronounced 'Gel-fee') originated in the three Franconian districts of Northern Bavaria, South Germany in the 1800s. It was once a triple-purpose breed for meat, milk and as a draught animal. In the mid-19th century, several breeds of local German Red-Yellow Franconian cattle were combined into what would eventually be the Gelbvieh breed. Gelbvieh translates from the German, literally, as 'yellow cattle'.

The new breed was officially formed by 1920.

In 1958, the German government imposed a stringent progeny testing programme on the breed in a deliberate strategy to improve performance in milk and meat production traits. They used AI extensively and applied objective measurement in the selection for productivity, maternal characters, fertility and calving ease, as well as carcass quality.

Gelbvieh have been introduced to several countries around the world, including Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, Canada, the United States, Australia, and South Africa, primarily through the use of artificial insemination and some live export.

The breed was transported to North America via semen in the mid 1970's. As soon as it arrived in the USA it was immediately subjected to close scrutiny in the massive comparative breed experiments which were just then starting at the Meat Animal Research Centre at Clay Centre in Nebraska. In the USA, Gelbvieh have become a research driven breed; driven by the research findings at the Clay Centre in Nebraska. The results of this research have been so noteworthy that 70% of cattle ranchers near the Clay

Centre and South Eastern Nebraska, now run Gelbvieh cattle or cross-breeds in their herds.

In 1979 the breed was taken to Australia via Scotland by Jim Swanee and Greg Lithgow, who used the semen over Hereford cows. From here the breed has increased in numbers and is now a well-known breed.

Through selective breeding, polled animals are now also prevalent in the breed.

The breed is reddish gold to russet or black in colour, with strong skin pigmentation and fine hair making them ideal in temperate to arid conditions. They are medium to large in size, have a long body with above average muscling.

Gelbvieh cattle are known for their high rate of gain and feed efficiency, and were originally selected for easy growth, quick maturity, length of loin, leanness, docility, and longevity. They are able to adapt to many different rangelands and climate conditions. Gelbvieh females were selected to be very maternal with strong fertility, mothering instincts, good udders, and strong milk production. They are also known to have smaller bodied offspring, allowing for ease of calving.



Gelbvieh are medium to late maturing by normal standards. They can not only be used as terminal sires, but their heifer progeny can most certainly be kept as breeding females as well. Gelbvieh have the earliest puberty of any beef breed (only dairy breed Jersey is earlier), so in normal cattle country, Gelbvieh can be joined at 13 months to calve at 22 months - instead of at 24 months with other breeds.

Originally Gelbvieh were bred for milk production as well as beef and they have



very good udders and milking ability.

Gelbvieh bulls withstand the sun quite contentedly while British and most other European breeds seek the shade. They have a short coat and smooth skin. When seed ticks bite Gelbvieh, the blood flow to the bite region is constricted so that the ticks are isolated and starve. These features of Gelbvieh are currently being researched. They are a large framed, muscular breed not too dissimilar to a Simmental, Charloais or Limousin. Gelbvieh are also known for their quiet disposition and docility.

Heat Tolerance and Tick Resistance: They have tolerance to both heat and ticks and have been able to stand such conditions in both South Africa and Queensland in Australia.

Gelbvieh are a unique breed in the beef industry as they combine strong maternal traits with outstanding growth rates and excellent muscle development.

Gelbvieh cattle are used in many crossbreeding programs around the world as they are a complementary cross over both British and Tropical breeds.

CALVING CAPABILITY

The aim of a breeding cow is to produce a strong, healthy calf that displays the positive traits of both parents. Once a calf is conceived there are still a lot of factors to consider in ensuring a safe birth. The main ones include:

- a) nutrition
- b) body conformation
- c) environmental factors.

a) Keeping cows in good condition is a key to them being able to present good calves and grow them through to weaning. Ideally keeping cows in condition score 3 or above (on a 1–5 scale) at calving provides the best opportunity for a successful calving. Beware though that an over fat cow may well have problems especially if fat is reducing the size of the birthing canal. This score range is also important if she is to get back into calf again within the 85-day window to produce a calf each year (i.e. in that 12 month time frame). The body condition of cows at the time of calving will determine how soon they start cycling and return to the bull.

The most important times for the cow to have adequate, high quality nutrition are the month prior to calving and when the calf is around the three months of age. Another important factor to bear in mind is that a calf will perform best on the same type of pasture that its mother was consuming during her gestation with that calf.

b) body conformation – Good confirmation is essential for ease of calving as is described at the end of this section. The hind quarter size and shape and angle of the bone set between the pins, hooks and thurl is critical for easy calving as can be seen from the diagram below. What we have now added to in terms of our knowledge and ability to select for calving ease is through the use of linear measurement. This takes the guess work or dependence just on our eye to select for easy calving cows.

There is a direct correlation between these measurements. If cows are having difficulty calving, selecting a bull with narrower shoulders will not solve the problem because the rump dimensions will also be smaller. Remember that masculine bulls give you feminine heifers/cows.

The shape and set of the loin area is related to the rear quarter and butt. When the loin area is not well set and straight or slightly rounded, then the hips and pins will not be balanced. It is more important to look for the positioning of the hook, pin and thurl bones to alleviate this problem. The angle at the thurl to the hooks and pins should be 90° - see below.

Rump width is an important factor in calving ease and therefore the start a calf gets in their life. It should be 2.5 inches wider than its length. The wider the rump is than long is a high fertility indicator. A high rump width percent is indicative of early maturity and ease of keeping. Bulls with higher rump width percent usually have wide shoulders, deep chest and a more acceptable scrotum. With good rump width% the animal normally has a better chest and shoulder area.

The percentage of the rump width to the rump height is also an important measurement in determining ease of calving. The rump width should be around 48% of the rump height in bulls and 44% in cows to assist in ease of calving. The minimum rump width% is 40% of rump height. The wider and deeper the rump and flank the higher the maternal characteristics. The wide deep rump represents femininity, reproductive and calving efficiency.

Flank girth to heart girth is also important in making the calving process more efficient. The flank girth should be at least 2 inches larger than the heart girth at 12 months of age. The greater the flank circumference is than the heart girth the higher the fertility.

c) Environmental factors - There is a lot of experimenting happening today in getting different breeds to adapt to environments that are not ones they have developed from over many years. Sometimes this can be done successfully with good management and by not going too much from one extreme to another. Ultimately, though, as

I have discussed previously, the best results are usually obtained from running herds in climates that they were originally developed and bred in. This includes calving ease and adaptability as well as a whole range of other factors relative to breeding a profitable herd.

CHARACTERISTICS.

The desirable features for this trait include:

- Low angular hips.
- A long maternal, concave rump showing a dip through the plates.
- Wide pins and low thurl situated in the centre of the back end of the animal. The angle from the pins to the thurl and the thurl to the hooks (top of the hip bone) should be 90 degrees.
- Angular hind-quarters and a reduced frame stature will help eliminate many structural defects and calving difficulties.
- The vulva should be straight up and down.
- An animal with high pin bones will lead to poor drainage of the cervix, high hooks and thurls are thus pushed back reducing the overall pelvic area. There are also muscular, convex shaped rumps that lead to calves being born with a muscular rump which increases the chances of hip lock during birth.
- A cow should have a calf that is 7% - 8% of her body weight and will wean a calf that is 55% of her body weight or more.
- Always check to ensure that the calves have a navel cord at birth and that they are quickly on their feet and suckling. Good cows will consistently produce calves that do these things.
- An extremely high chine in bulls can lead to calving problems, especially in beef cattle, 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 between beef and dairy breeds. As we have discussed previously, this variation in chine height between beef and dairy cattle is often determined by the amount of butterfat available during their early growing period from birth to 6 – 9 months.

The figures below show how the variations in the angles between the pins and thurl and thurl and hip will have a major influence on the whole confirmation of the rear end and the calving channel in a cow. The other reference to the rear end shape of a cow can be determined by linear measurement, something else we have discussed in earlier newsletters.

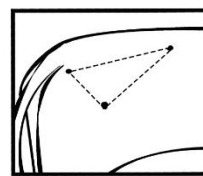


FIGURE 1

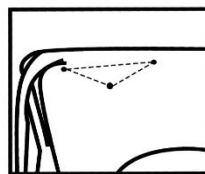


FIGURE 2

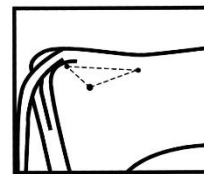
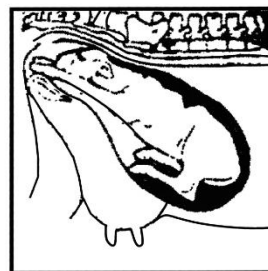


FIGURE 3



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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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