Technical Support Available to Members

Are you confused about how to understand the vast range of genetics tools and technologies that are available? Do you want advice regarding the application of the different genetic tools within your stud operation?

As a member of a Breed Society that is participating in the SBTS project, you have access to ongoing support and assistance in the use and understanding of all the different genetic technologies that are available, such as BREEDPLAN, BreedObject Selection Indexes, Internet Solutions, TakeStock & Gene Markers. To access technical support, simply contact the designated member of the SBTS team that is responsible for providing assistance to your Breed Society (see below list). Assistance will primarily be provided through phone and email consultation, while property visits are also available when required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical Consultant</th>
<th>Breeds</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Byrne</td>
<td>Hereford Poll Hereford Murray Grey</td>
<td>(02) 6773 3357</td>
<td><a href="mailto:andrew@sbts.une.edu.au">andrew@sbts.une.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Duff</td>
<td>Blonde d’Aquitaine Charolais Devon Gelbvieh</td>
<td>(02) 6773 2472</td>
<td><a href="mailto:christian@sbts.une.edu.au">christian@sbts.une.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex McDonald</td>
<td>Limousin</td>
<td>(02) 6771 1648</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alex@limousin.com.au">alex@limousin.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
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*** Online Information ***

In addition to technical assistance, members also have access to a comprehensive range of support material that is available from the SBTS website. Support material ranges from an extensive range of easy to read tip sheets through to more detailed booklets that provide an in depth guide to applying the different genetic technologies within your herd. The website also contains information about upcoming SBTS news & events. The SBTS website address is:

http://sbts.une.edu.au
Across Country Selection Indexes

The BreedObject website (www.breedobject.com) has recently been modified to enable Australian Selection Indexes to be calculated on animals recorded with overseas Breed Societies (eg. New Zealand) and vice versa.

There are two major advantages of this enhancement. Firstly, Australian breeders can now access Australian Selection Indexes on any overseas animals that they may be interested in, while secondly, Australian breeders can now provide the overseas Selection Indexes for their animals to interested international clients.

To provide members with more detailed information regarding how to calculate across country Selection Indexes, a tip sheet has been compiled (titled Across Country Selection Indexes). The tip sheet is available from either the BREEDPLAN Documents / Tip Sheet section of the SBTS website or by contacting the designated SBTS Technical Consultant for your breed.

Performance Recording During Drought

One of the challenges facing beef producers across Australia is the ever increasing occurrence of drought. Drought presents many obstacles to the management of a beef enterprise with countless operational, financial and emotional hurdles testing the resolve of beef producers. While often not on the top of the priority list, one of the considerations that managers of a stud cattle operation need to make is the impact that the drought (and consequent management practices) has on both the genetics and performance recording requirements of their herd.

If you are in any doubt as to the best performance recording drought strategy for your particular situation, please do not hesitate to contact staff at SBTS. An easy to read tip sheet has also been compiled to assist members. The tip sheet is available from either the BREEDPLAN Documents / Tip Sheet section of the SBTS website or by contacting the designated SBTS Technical Consultant for your breed.

Revisions to Trial Net Feed Intake EBVs

The Animal Genetics & Breeding Unit (AGBU) has recently conducted major research into feed efficiency and the calculation of the trial Net Feed Intake EBV (nb. currently only available for Hereford & Angus animals). This research resulted in several major findings, including:

- Net Feed Intake (NFI) when measured in young animals post weaning appears to be a different trait to when NFI is measured in feedlot finished steers. Whilst there is a positive relationship between the two traits, some animals do rank differently. Consequently, two trial NFI EBVs will now be calculated as opposed to the single trial NFI EBV that was available previously. The new trial EBVs have been titled NFI-P (Post Weaning) & NFI-F (Feedlot Finishing). It is still not known how either of the NFI traits that have been identified relate to feed efficiency in mature cows.

- The relationship between NFI & the levels of Insulin Like Growth Factor (IGF-1) in the blood is significantly lower than the initial research suggested. In addition, there is a different relationship between IGF-1 and the two NFI traits (ie. post weaning v's feedlot finishing). Members considering recording IGF-1 are strongly advised to contact staff at SBTS to discuss the new findings.
Inclusion of Gene Markers into BREEDPLAN

A project is now underway to develop a process whereby Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) can be enhanced by incorporating genotype information from DNA tests. SmartGene for Beef is a collaborative R&D project between Catapult Genetics, Beef Genetic Technologies CRC, the Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit (AGBU), the Agricultural Business Research Institute (ABRI), Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA), Cornell University and Breedlink Pty Ltd. The Queensland Government also provides co-funding.

The first component of the project will be the genotyping of 14,000 DNA samples from animals involved in the Beef CRC I & II projects. DNA samples will be tested for the 12 commercial gene markers currently available (ie. 4 x tenderness, 4 x marbling, 4 x feed efficiency). Extensive phenotypic information is available on these animals and comparison to the results from the 12 gene marker tests will allow estimation of gene effects by AGBU scientists. Subject to these results, AGBU will then aim to develop a strategy to incorporate the gene marker results into the calculation of the EBVs.

Upcoming GROUP BREEDPLAN Analyses

A number of GROUP BREEDPLAN analyses are scheduled for Breed Societies participating in SBTS in the coming months. Please do not hesitate to contact the SBTS team should you require any assistance or advice in the lead up to these GROUP BREEDPLAN analyses. A summary of the cut off dates for submitting performance information to ABRI is provided in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Cut-off date for data submitted on paper forms</th>
<th>Cut-off date for data submitted electronically (eg. email, web, excel)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hereford/Poll Hereford</td>
<td>November 2nd</td>
<td>November 9th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray Grey</td>
<td>November 16th</td>
<td>November 23rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limousin</td>
<td>November 30th</td>
<td>December 7th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorthorn</td>
<td>December 7th</td>
<td>December 14th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simmental</td>
<td>February 1st</td>
<td>February 8th</td>
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Staff Departure

At the end of October, Benita Davis will be leaving the SBTS team.

Benita Davis has been a Technical Officer within SBTS since the establishment of the project in late 2005. Benita has played an integral role in the development and delivery of the different services offered by SBTS, with particular involvement in the workshops and property visits.

The SBTS team would like to sincerely thank Benita for her invaluable contribution to the SBTS project and wish her all the very best with her future endeavours.
Wallawong Murray Greys get Closer to their Clients

Cold and blustery weather didn’t deter the crowd that flocked to “Derwent Park”, Mullaley, NSW, for the “Better Bull Buying” workshop hosted by Lachlan and Kate James on Saturday, June 16th, 2007.

Co-Principals of Wallawong Murray Greys - Lachlan and Kate - were the first to stage a workshop of this kind being offered by SBTS under the package titled “Closer to Your Clients”. The James’ viewed the workshop as a real opportunity for commercial producers to benefit from gaining a better understanding of cattle genetics. With their bull sale being held soon after on July 19th, the workshop was a timely event to ensure their bull buying clients understood and knew how to make effective use of the BREEDPLAN data being presented on their bulls.

Conducted by SBTS in conjunction with the Tamworth Murray Grey Breed Promotion Group, the practical nature of the day fostered excellent learning opportunities and interaction between participants and presenters. Both seedstock and commercial cattle breeders attended the day, which involved them in discussion about Estimated Breeding Values and how to interpret them, as well as hands-on sessions in the yards appraising cattle with the aid of EBVs. A selection of the Wallawong herd was also on display for attendees to look over, including cows and calves and all 2007 sale bulls.

A number of other seedstock producers have also opted to offer their clients an invaluable educational opportunity while showcasing their cattle at the same time by hosting a “Closer to your Clients” workshop in 2007. These include Yalgoo Poll Hereford Stud, Wobramurra Simmental Stud, Wirruna Poll Hereford Stud and Mawarra Hereford Stud.

The SBTS team wish to commend all the above producers on their excellent facilities and warm hospitality, which contributed to making the days a great success.

Co-Principals of Wallawong Murray Greys, Lachlan & Kate James, with SBTS Technical Officer Christian Duff

SBTS will again be offering members the opportunity to host a “Closer to your Clients” workshop in 2008. Members interested in hosting a workshop are encouraged to contact staff at SBTS to register their expression of interest.