Charlotte Fox joined the BREEDPLAN processing team in August, 2004. She has an honours degree in Agriculture from Adelaide University (Roseworthy College). Charlotte has a good practical background in sheep and cattle production from her involvement in family properties. Her enthusiasm and passion for seedstock breeding has seen her elected as Chairperson of the National Angus Youth Programs. An enterprising and versatile person she tried her hand at tennis journalism while a undergraduate at Roseworthy. Her current BREEDPLAN responsibilities include Angus (Southern States), South Devon, Droughtmaster and Charbray.

Manuela Taboada

Manuela Taboada has recently joined the ABRI team as a graphic designer and Portuguese translator. Manuela was brought up on a cattle ranch in Brazil and has degrees in computer science, industrial design and marketing.

Brazil has huge potential as a market for Australian cattle genetics. Its cattle herd has reached 170 million. In 2003, Brazil used 4.25M straws of beef cattle semen and 1.75M straws of dairy cattle semen. There are also markets for live cattle for breeding and embryos.

Manuela’s first job at ABRI was to translate the Brahman Internet Solutions application into Portuguese. This will assist a Brahman delegation that is travelling to Brazil in May, 2005 to engage with local producers and industry officials.

Manuela is also available to breed societies to translate marketing information into Portuguese and create visual images for the Web and in the printed media that will be attractive to a Brazilian audience. As an example of her skills, she has done the desktop publishing for this newsletter, very professionally I hope you agree.

BREEDPLAN breeds top mobs

A dramatic disparity in performance between the best and the worst groups of steers has forced a backgrounder in Victoria’s Yarra Valley to change buying patterns.

This follows revelations created by using the NLIS identification system to track performance. The startling discovery was a difference in daily weight gain of more than one kilogram a day between the best and worst groups.

The backgrounder purchases 1000 Angus steers each year for the property at Yarra Glen, east of Melbourne. They are sorted into grazing groups by weight and rotated through grazing cells and sold off to feedlots as optimum weights are reached.

Prior to NLIS tags, the only identification was by visual ear tags and the task of identifying individual steers at weighing and then sorting the data into groups by origin was too time consuming.

The new tagging system has enabled management to track individual steers through their stay. It was quickly discovered that the best performing steers came from herds concentrating on bulls with BREEDPLAN figures and the worst came from herds using non-BREEDPLAN bulls.

In 2003, lines of steers were bought from 12 different breeders. The top mob gained 1.6 kg/day off grass and the bottom mob averaged 0.6 kg/day.

The top three performing mobs were from properties using BREEDPLAN recorded bulls and the bottom three were from properties with no BREEDPLAN history, prompting the following comment from the backgrounding manager: “We now know where to buy and not to buy our steers and are prepared to pay a serious premium for those that make us money. We will only buy from breeders that do not use BREEDPLAN backed bulls if we absolutely have to and then at a discount”.

Extract from Farm Weekly(WA) 20/1/05. While BREEDPLAN figures would make a major share of these differences, there could also be differences caused by nutrition on the breeding properties.

Brian Sundstrom

Graduate Positions

ABRI is increasing its team of BREEDPLAN processors and also forming a national extension team. Young graduates with a passion for the beef industry may register their interest in the above positions with Steve Skinner:

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