Six Breeds Join

2004/05 has seen a significant push into the UK market, with ABRI securing contracts with six Breed Associations for the use of BREEDPLAN International for their pedigree and performance recording programs.

The six breeds represent over 40% of the pedigree beef sector in the UK. Historically, performance recording in the UK has been delivered to breeders not via Breed Associations, but through a separate Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) funded body. This is similar to Australia 20 years ago, when NBRs delivered the performance program, and Breed Associations were involved in pedigree recording only. By making the move to BREEDPLAN, these Breed Associations have eliminated duplicate recording for breeders, reduced the costs, and created opportunities for themselves by becoming actively involved in the genetic progress of their breed.

The use of BREEDPLAN offers these Associations increased opportunities for future involvement in global or across-country genetic evaluations, and access to a range of technologies previously unavailable to small or medium-sized Associations. All groups have full access to ABRI’s Internet Solutions (see p. 4), with sale catalogues, pedigree and EBV searches being extremely popular and well-used.

Relative to Australia or North America, these Breed Associations may appear quite small (in cattle recorded), but historically their importance has been central to commercial cattle populations in major beef breeding countries.

The Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society (AACS) was the first UK breed to use BREEDPLAN. With herdbooks dating back to 1862, AACS is the original source of the world populations of Angus. They currently record 12,500 calves a year, with 260 members in the BREEDPLAN performance program. Since August 2004, AACS has operated the integrated BREEDPLAN International pedigree-performance system from their Perth Scotland office. With the release of their first BREEDPLAN EBVs (and $Index) in January 2005, AACS are now in full production, with the world-renowned Perth February Sales further show-casing BREEDPLAN EBVs to a wide audience of seedstock and commercial buyers.

The other UK breeds now using BREEDPLAN are: Simmental (5,500 registrations); Hereford (4,500 reg., history back to 1846); Beef Shorthorn (1,500 reg., back to the world’s first herd book in 1822); South Devon and Belgian Blue. Some of these associations have the systems installed in their offices and some use the AACS Perth office facility. Belgian Blue still have their pedigree recorded at Holstein and monthly downloads are merged with performance data. While these different needs created challenges, the flexibility of the BREEDPLAN system has proven sound.

A spirit of cooperation now exists between these Associations with the formation of a users Group (BREEDPLAN Performance UK). This functions similarly to the Australian BREEDPLAN Technical Liason Group - meeting periodically to discuss issues and technical developments related to BREEDPLAN and performance recording in general.

The future now looks brighter for these breeds in the UK, with opportunities for the analysis of new traits, breed-specific Indexes targeting specific markets and across-country or global evaluations.

Murray Scholz

Aberdeen-Angus Breedplan

308

NETHERTON FIGO C244

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born</th>
<th>20/05/2003</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sire</td>
<td>NETHERTON ROYAL SOVEREIGN A672 (UK542697 100072)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dam</td>
<td>NETHERTON FRANCES X63 (MD8 X63 23)</td>
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Sale Card from February 2005 Perth Sale Lot 308

The top-priced bull, lot 308, sold for 30,000 guineas, approx. $77,000 AUD. This photo during a snowstorm

Aberdeen Cattle Society, Pedigree House, Castle Park, Perth Scottish Phill 1800