Southern Beef Technology Services (SBTS)

A new genetics extension program has been launched in January 2006 known as Southern Beef Technology Services (SBTS). SBTS is a joint initiative of Meat & Livestock Australia, the Agricultural Business Research Institute and 14 Breed Societies that run the majority of their cattle in Southern Australia namely Hereford, Poll Hereford, Murray Grey, Shorthorn, Charolais, Limousin, Simmental, Red Angus, Wagyu, South Devon, Devon, Red Poll, Blonde d’Aquitaine and Salers.

Dr Rickards stressed that importantly “SBTS will act as a valuable feedback mechanism to the BREEDPLAN development team in the Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit and the operational team in ABRI”.

The services offered by SBTS will be delivered by a team of four technical officers – Benita Davis, Christian Duff, Michael Beattie & Andrew Byrne. All four have both a rural background and significant experience regarding the processing of BREEDPLAN performance data, the running of GROUP BREEDPLAN evaluations, the technical components of BREEDPLAN and related technologies, the extension of genetic technologies, the operation of modern Breed Societies, and the services offered within Internet Solutions.

They will be supported by experienced beef cattle consultants including Bob Freer, Alex McDonald & Peter Speers. All possess over 30 years experience in the beef industry and will provide an invaluable mentoring program that will aid and assist the SBTS project. (Six of this seven-person team are in the photo).

Dr Rickards said that the SBTS Project would complement the very successful Tropical Beef Technology Services Project in Northern Australia. In combination the two projects will give cattle breeders access to a well co-ordinated National technical support service.

The overall aim of SBTS and TBTTS is to maximise the rate of genetic progress within Australia’s beef industry. BREEDPLAN has been identified as the world leading genetic evaluation system for beef cattle, but we need to ensure that our industry is well informed so that it can make the best possible use of this technology.

For further information regarding Southern Beef Technology Services, please contact:
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Matias Suarez

Matias commenced work at ABRI in August 2005 and has recently completed a Masters of Science at UNE, majoring in quantitative genetics. Matias has demonstrated his passion for cattle breeding and genetics by earlier completing a Masters of Agriculture at UNE, majoring in animal production, following his Bachelor of Veterinary Science degree that he received from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Matias has gained considerable experience in the Argentinian beef industry. He spent 5 years working as a veterinary consultant and farm manager, with direct responsibility for more than 2,000 cows. These on-farm skills and his language skills (Matias’ native language is Spanish and he has excellent skills in English and Portuguese) have ensured that Matias has become a valuable member of the team servicing ABRI’s clients in South America.

Matias’s current responsibilities at ABRI are for the BREEDPLAN processing for Brahman and Santa Gertrudis, as well as assisting with research and development on some datasets.

MLA provides support to the development and extension of a range of BREEDPLAN technologies.