Enhancements made in the 2011 Devon GROUP BREEDPLAN Analysis

A number of enhancements have been implemented to the BREEDPLAN software used for calculating EBVs on Devon animals within the 2011 Devon GROUP BREEDPLAN analysis. These enhancements will all result in the calculation of improved BREEDPLAN EBVs and are part of the normal evolution of the BREEDPLAN software.

1. Addition of New Zealand Data

For the first time, the Devon GROUP BREEDPLAN evaluation involves the analysis of the performance data from the separate databases of the Devon Cattle Breeders Society of Australia (including data from several American herds) and the New Zealand Red Devon Cattle Breeders Association.

The database for the New Zealand Red Devon Cattle Breeders Association has recently been converted to an integrated pedigree/performance database that utilises ABRI's BREEDPLAN International system. Historically there have been genetic linkages between the Australian and New Zealand Devon herds. This has come about because of the transfer of Australian-bred genetics to New Zealand (and vice versa) and through the usage of the same genetics from other countries (principally the United Kingdom). ABRI subsequently investigated the feasibility of running a GROUP BREEDPLAN analysis that combined the pedigree and performance data from both the New Zealand and the Australian databases.

As a result of this testing the 2011 Devon GROUP BREEDPLAN analysis has been run as a Trans-Tasman analysis, incorporating all performance that is recorded on Devon animals on the Devon Cattle Breeders Society and the New Zealand Red Devon Association databases. Previously data from only a limited number of New Zealand herds was included in the GROUP analysis.

2. Updated Genetic Base

The genetic base is a historical group of animals that forms the benchmark within the Devon BREEDPLAN analysis. It allows for comparison of the EBVs from one analysis to the next. A group of animals (defined by a range of birth years) is normally set to have the same EBV average from one run to the next.

In the 2011 Devon GROUP BREEDPLAN analysis there were changes implemented to the genetic base. As a result, it is not possible to compare the 2011 Devon GROUP BREEDPLAN EBVs with GROUP or INTERIM EBVS calculated in earlier analyses. Further, the base animals and their average EBVs have no relationship to any other breed’s base animals or average EBVs and therefore, EBVs from the Devon GROUP analysis cannot be compared to EBVs from any other breed’s analysis.

Should you have further queries regarding any of the enhancements that have been implemented into the Devon BREEDPLAN analysis, please do not hesitate to contact Ashlee Austin at SBTS by phone on (02) 6773 3056.