World Brahman Congress 2002

Around 2500 breeders from many countries will be converging on Rockhampton from April 15-19 for the World Brahman Congress.

The program is varied and includes property visits, a technical conference, launch of gene marker tests for tenderness, prime and feeder cattle show, trade show, stud cattle show, rodeo and post conference tours.

The Brahman breed has a great deal to celebrate. From an initial importation of just 18 head in 1933, the Brahman population has grown to 3.2 million head and their genetics influence 50% of Australia’s beef herd. An independent evaluation, conducted in 2001, estimated the benefit of Brahman genetics at the farm gate to be $10.2 billion and the benefit to the total economy of $31 billion since 1970!

The Brahmans have been leaders in the application of BREEDPLAN technology in Northern Australia. Despite the logistical difficulties of collecting detailed performance records from large herds run under extensive conditions, the Brahman GROUP BREEDPLAN includes over 240,000 performance observations enabling EBVs to be calculated for a wide range of growth, fertility and carcase traits.

The Brahman animal and performance database is available on-line at www.brahman.com.au and receives over 100,000 enquiries per year. Each year the ABBA enters its Brahman Week catalogue of around 1000 lots on ABRI’s Internet-based sale cataloguing service. This catalogue receives thousands of hits prior to and during the sale and is the largest single catalogue entered on ABRI’s facilities.

ABBA’s General Manager, John Croaker, has made a major contribution to the establishment of national BREEDPLAN projects in Thailand and the Philippines. Brahman has also been the first breed association in South Africa to install an integrated pedigree/performance system and their breeders will be represented by a large delegation.

A coup for the Congress will be a keynote address to be given by Dr Christopher Delgado on “The Livestock Revolution – What is in it for Beef”. Dr Delgado of the International Food Policy Institute in Washington USA was co-author of a landmark paper that has predicted a doubling in demand for meat and milk products in 40 years. Our beef industry needs to understand what is driving this revolution and how our producers can derive maximum benefit from it.

It will be an exciting time for Rockhampton in mid-April. Our BREEDPLAN team salutes the Brahman breed and sends our best wishes for a very successful World Congress.

Arthur Rickards