Elrose commits to BREEDPLAN

Rodger and Lorena Jefferis, with their children Grant and Brooke, run “Elrose” Brahman Stud under extensive commercial management in north west Queensland. The Jefferis’s have a long association with the breed being among the first to introduce Brahman genetics to the region in the late 1950’s.

Located 70km south of Cloncurry “Elrose” covers some 32,000 ha. Soil types vary noticeably, ranging from red hilly country growing buffel and spinifex to heavier pebbly black soil and Gidyea. The north west of Queensland is noted for its extremes in temperature and rainfall. Summer is punctuated by periods of high temperatures and monsoonal storms. The majority of the 400 mm rainfall occurs between December and April.

While structural soundness is important to all breeders, it is vital in north Australia’s extensive beef country with its big paddocks and infrequent water points. “It is not uncommon for cattle in this region to walk up to 8km from water” illustrates Rodger.

The nature of the country necessitates well adapted females. “From time to time we have introduced females to “Elrose” stated Rodger “but we have had more success with home bred females with proven fertility in our environment”.

The Jefferis’s have been active in the bull market in recent years setting a new record for an Australian bred Brahman bull when they paid $60,000 for Lancefield Ambition in 1998. Ambition is rated in the top 5% of Brahman BREEDPLAN for growth, carcase weight, RBY% and EMA, and his dam line has exhibited high fertility under the extremely dry conditions central Queensland suffered in the 1990’s. The Jefferis’s have a simple philosophy when buying bulls. “A good bull is a sound investment, not an expense”. This has certainly proven to be true for Ambition when the first five sons offered at auction more than recouped his purchase price. The Elrose sire battery was further enhanced at the 2001 Tartrus-Lancefield sale where Rodger and Lorena outlaid $87,500 for Lancefield Signature to complement Ambition daughters.

Balanced selection is the goal at Elrose. “Fertility of the dam line is a key priority” explains Rodger. “This is used in conjunction with EBVs, carcase data and assessment, structural soundness and temperament. We are looking forward to further development of Days to Calving EBVs in Brahman to aid us with fertility”.

The Jefferis’s commitment to their seedstock enterprise is substantial. This year fourteen single sire herds will be joined for 120 days, a short joining period by local standards. In an area where bulls are commonly run at 4-5%, Elrose sires are worked much harder. Two year old bulls are generally mated with 30 to 40 females for their first season, with older bulls given larger mobs, at times up to 70 females.

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In addition to paddock sales, Elrose bulls are marketed at the Cattle Country bull sale, Cloncurry. The Jefferis’s in 2001 sold 28 year old Ambition to Lancefield Signature at $87,500.

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In conjunction with brother Graham, Tartrus Brahman Stud, the Annual Tartrus – Lancefield sale has been conducted for 28 years. The 2001 sale included 190 lots. The 112 bulls set a new Australian Brahman record selling to $87,500 with an average of $11,821, and 16 heifers averaging $14,875.

Jeff is survived by his wife Ann, four sons and their wives, Andrew & Anna, Scott & Lizette, David & Julie and Mathew & Janelle, and nine grandchildren.

Obituary

The Australian beef industry lost one of its most respected members with the passing of Jeff McCamley, Lancefield Brahman Stud, on 5 January 2002.

Jeff and his wife Ann moved to ‘Lancefield’ and introduced Brahman cattle in 1958, seeking better adaptation to heat, parasite and nutritional stresses imposed by the sub-tropical central Queensland environment. In 1964 they registered Lancefield Brahman Stud. From this beginning the Lancefield operation has grown to some 2,500 registered and 3,500 commercial Brahman breeders.

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Tropical Cattle Technology Services.
A joint initiative between eight tropical beef cattle societies, Meat and Livestock Australia’s North Australia Program and ABRI.

Jeff McCamley