BREEDPLAN provides genetic trend reports for individual herds and breed societies. I have selected a sample of current breed trends which I feel are generally favourable and which I am pleased to commend. I acknowledge that breeds/herds have differing priorities, so am not suggesting everyone would have these priorities. (A Hereford/Poll Hereford example, with good progress in carcase EBVs, was featured in the 2002 edition of this newsletter).

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**Genetic trends**

**Breed changing over time**

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**Limousin Docility**

Docility is of course important in all breeds for safety and also the emerging links with meat quality (see p7 & 11). Compliments to Limousin breeders in their significant progress since EBVs became available 4 years ago. A full story in last year’s BP News.

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**Angus Carcase**

Although yield% and marbling (IMF%) are negatively correlated, breeders have been able to bend this by selecting bulls favourable in both. This is an important breakthrough particularly for people targeting marbling markets. EMA (at constant weight) is rising well and fat only declining slowly (as breeders cautious about female fertility links?). These trends are largely responsible for the $ Index gains shown one page 7.

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**Brahman Female Fertility**

Days to calving is the BREEDPLAN female fertility trait. Lower figures indicate cows rejoining quickly and shorter calving intervals. Brahman progress is clearly seen in the orange line. Signs of progress are emerging in recent years for eye muscle area (EMA) and yield%, while holding surface fat steady.

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**Angus mature and birth weights**

As with most British breeds, 600 day wt is continuing to rise, but breeders have done a very good job in holding birth wt down. There are also signs of mature cow wt not rising as quickly as 600d wt. The mature wt EBVs need careful interpretation however, as they do not at this stage take cow condition into account (e.g. low mature wt can at times have a component from cows with low condition at weaning).
Searching breed databases.

BREEDPLAN’s Internet Solutions technology for accessing breed databases continues to break new barriers. From a conservative start in 2000 with 10,000 hits per month, use has skyrocketed to 700,000 hits this January. Options have been continually expanding, eg the graphic display option pictured left, has been progressively installed by Societies since mid-2002. (Click on the bar graph icon beside the normal EBV listing to display these graphs).

Some exciting new features were added this year including the option to customise your reports. Eg: just display and print fields and/or EBVs of interest. An example is shown on page 5, where the New Zealand sale catalogue graph shows only 7 EBVs. Passwords, administered by your Society, are required.

Murray Scholz and Christopher de Crespigny, of ABRI

Corporate governance

The policies for the commercialisation of BREEDPLAN International are developed by a sub-committee of ABRI’s Board under Chairmanship of well-known stud and commercial cattleman, Anthony Coates. These policies are put up to the ABRI’s Board for adoption. The Board contains a mix of business, scientific and cattle breeding expertise.

From left to right is members are: Arthur Rickards (Managing Director), Peter Speers, Jock Laurie, Ian Locke, Anthony Coates, Mark Bice, Edward Wright (Chairman). Absent, Professor Stuart Barker, Geneticist. Six peak industry Councils such as the Cattle Council of Australia and Beef Improvement Association of Australia have representatives on the Board. Through this mechanism, ABRI’s Board truly represents the grass roots interests of the cattle industry.