

# BEEF SELECTION NEWS

**BreedObject**  
on the web

Newsletter, March, 2004

----- <http://www.breedobject.com> -----

## Client focus and trait 'balance' seen as keys

Client focus and trait balance are increasingly being embraced as keys to successful beef breeding. One example of this is the continued growth in the development and application of BreedObject \$Indexes in the industry.

There are now **ten breeds** where breed-ratified \$Indexes have been developed and made available on the recorded animals of the breed. Between one and five Indexes are available in each breed. The market-production system niches targeted by these Indexes represent more than 70% of the production situations that comprise the Australian industry.

In alphabetical order the breed groups (with number of Indexes in parentheses) are:

**AACo. Composite (1)**  
**Angus (4)**  
**Brahman (1)**  
**Charolais (2)**  
**Hereford & Poll Hereford (5)**  
**Limousin (3)**  
**Murray Grey (2)**  
**Shorthorn (4)**  
**Simmental (2)**

## Sale and semen catalogue listing integrated with breed services

A major advance has been the recent integration of the site's sale catalogue listings with the listing services provided by breed societies. The process of listing a sale or semen catalogue is achieved **through your breed society**. This ensures there is only one listing process.

Once listed, catalogues **automatically display on 'BreedObject on the web'**, as well as on your breed society website. This means catalogue listings are also available to breeders & buyers who have their own \$Index/es.

## In brief

'BreedObject on the web' selection facilities for breeders and buyers have been upgraded. They include 'live' access to breed society bull sale listings across breeds, the capacity to customise your own \$Index on-line for immediate application, & a facility for accessing EBVs of your own herd so that you can immediately apply your own \$Indexes.

.. Funding assistance for this development was provided by the Commonwealth Department of Communications, Technology and the Arts, through the 'Information Technology On Line' (ITOL) program.

At the time of writing, there were 42 sale and 23 semen catalogues available on the site, representing eight breeds (<http://www.breedobject.com>).

Contact your breed society for all requests to list a sale or semen catalogue.

## On-line ability to develop your own \$Index

\$Index applications are now supported by an on-line facility, in 'BreedObject on the web', for deriving your own Index. One or more of your own \$Indexes can be easily developed, and applied immediately, on-line. Applications can be to EBVs of animals from your own herd, to sale or semen catalogues, or to published sire listings.

*(Editor's note: We were not able to keep up with the many earlier requests received from individuals to develop specific \$Indexes. Our apologies. This new on-line facility is our response to those requests).*

## About \$Indexes

Indexes of EBVs calculated with BreedObject are overall, or 'aggregate' EBVs. They summarise **BREEDPLAN** EBVs into single figures for different types of market-production systems. Breeders use them in selection, and to help clients. Buyers are using them to short-list bulls, and finding them helpful at sales.

## Accessing and using your own \$Index

Your \$Indexes, once developed, can be accessed whenever you are 'signed in' to 'BreedObject on the web'. Your Indexes are always available (unless you choose to edit or delete them) and they display only for you. It follows that when you are developing your own Indexes you also need to be 'signed in'.

You should expect that some \$Indexes you develop will rank animals quite similarly to one or more breed \$Indexes. In other cases they may be quite different.

There is new Information available on the site (from the Home page), including on how to decide whether you need your own \$Index. Use your own \$Index to

- assist your selection program
- better meet the needs of specific clients, or
- better breed for your own production needs

## Three things to remember about how \$Indexes are named

1. While breed \$Indexes often have market-oriented names, these Indexes are **just as concerned with cow herd performance as they are with steer performance**. (This is unless the \$Index is for a 'terminal' case, in which case that would be clearly indicated).
2. When you derive your own \$Index, and give it a name, this automatically displays under your stud or property name (that specified when you first register). It is good policy to **always refer to your stud or property name** as part of the Index name **when referring to your Index**.
3. Indexes calculated with BreedObject are like other EBVs. They can be compared only if they are for the same Index, and only when they apply to the same breed. So don't misinterpret similar sounding names in different breeds as meaning they can be compared - **\$Index values can only be compared within a breed**.

## Structural soundness

BUYERS: Don't forget the basics. Check your short-listed bulls for structural soundness. Or ask (eg. use the email facility and vendor details available) what's known about their health and soundness.



BREEDPLAN Corner

## EBV accuracies: some basics

An EBV's accuracy reflects the amount of performance & pedigree information used in its estimation. Values range from 0 (lowest) to 1 (highest). Other points:

- ◆ records taken on the individual and on any of its relatives all contribute to accuracy. Relatives have reduced effects the more distantly they are related to the individual
- ◆ accuracy is increased by having large groups compared, eg., with condensed calving & keeping groups together until key records are taken
- ◆ accuracies change over time as more information becomes available
- ◆ accuracies are a guide to how much an EBV could change (equal chance up or down)
- ◆ minimum accuracy cut-offs for an EBV to be displayed are set by the individual breeds

Further information: Brian Sundstrom ([suno@abri.une.edu.au](mailto:suno@abri.une.edu.au)) or

Click on 'BREEDPLAN', from the home page, to go to that web-site, where a series of BREEDNOTES describes most aspects of BREEDPLAN.

## What about the accuracy of \$Indexes ?

\$Indexes are as accurate as the information included in them. **If the important EBVs on an animal have low accuracy, you should expect any \$Index on the animal to also have low accuracy.**

Breeds have minimum accuracy cut-offs that have to be met in order for EBVs to be displayed. These cut-offs are also used to control the displayability of \$Indexes. The same breed cut-offs are used to control the displayability of your own \$Indexes.

## Contact us

Your feedback is always appreciated. Contacts:

Brian Sundstrom ([suno@abri.une.edu.au](mailto:suno@abri.une.edu.au))

Wayne Upton ([wupton@pobox.une.edu.au](mailto:wupton@pobox.une.edu.au))

Steve Barwick ([sbarwick@pobox.une.edu.au](mailto:sbarwick@pobox.une.edu.au))

This edition compiled by Steve Barwick, Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit (AGBU) and NSW Agriculture Ph: (02) 6773 3481 Fax: (02) 6773 3266. AGBU is a joint venture of NSW Agriculture and the University of New England.