



BEEFnews

HUNTER VALLEY, UPPER MANNING
& CENTRAL COAST

SPRING 2005

NSW Department of Primary Industries, www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/beefnews

A quarterly newsletter for beef producers of the Hunter Valley, Upper Manning and Central Coastal areas of NSW.

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NSW DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

Production: September – December

Ian Blackwood, Livestock Officer (Beef Products), NSW DPI, Paterson

Keep track of those calves by;

- Recording the number of calves born every 21 days (or each week or each day... it's up to you!) Use this information to draw up the calving profile of your herd. This helps you plan to have calves when you want them born.
- Record the cows that calve when you do the above.

All that Bull;

- Check over the bulls for breeding soundness (legs, feet, walking mobility, testicle soundness, prepace swellings)
- Keep their fat score at 2-3
- Supplement to keep their fat score in this range
- Check teeth in 5yr old plus bulls and 2yr old bulls
- Vaccinate for Vibriosis and '5 in 1'
- Non-coastal bred 2yr olds must be vaccinated with Ephemeral Fever (3 day sickness) by Christmas

Did you drench and lice treatment your bulls back in the autumn. If not a salvage drench should be done now, before joining. The warm weather will kill the lice, and your bull(s) won't be looking their best for the cows!

Calf Marking

This operation is the time to;

- ☑ Vaccinate all calves with 5 in 1 / 7 in 1
- ☑ Provide a tattoo ID, especially to heifers likely to be replacement breeders
- ☑ Apply NLIS devices, only if this suits using the devices for herd management purposes
- ☑ Apply any management ear tags (apart from NLIS ear tags)
- ☑ 'mother up' cows/calves if you keep records of this detail

Calves can be given their 1st vaccination 4 weeks before marking, then their 2nd vaccination at calf marking. This helps minimise tetanus risks especially when calves are castrated after 12 weeks of age.

Calves first vaccinated at marking must be done 4-6 weeks later to ensure immunity. Calves first vaccinated at marking and then again at weaning (6 mths later) have never had their immunity fully developed.

It is your risk if you use this program because the science of immunity is not with you.

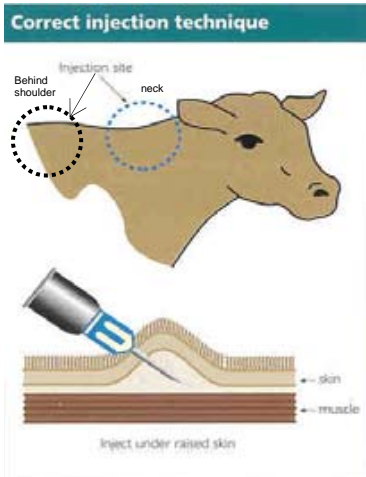
Bulls Out

- ☑ Check to see if the bulls are working the cows. Remember, the cows have to find the bull too!
- ☑ Keep an eye out for lameness (replace the bull immediately)
- ☑ Don't keep the bull/s out for more than 4 cycles (84 days) in any one group
- ☑ 3 cycles (63 days) is better than 4 cycles (84 days)

Remember not to join young bulls and older bulls together in a multiple sire joining paddock. The younger bulls get dominated by the older bulls and often knocked about. You may not get all the calves you want.

Bovine Ephemeral Fever

Alan Glassop, District Veterinarian, Gloucester Rural Lands Protection Board



B.E.F. is a sub-cutaneous (under the skin) injection.

Use a needle that is:

- 16 gauge
- 12mm long

What is it?

Bovine Ephemeral Fever (BEF) also known as “Three Day Sickness”) is an insect borne viral disease of cattle. It is transmitted by species of mosquitoes and midges.

Clinical signs include fever, lameness, stiffness and salivation. Economic costs in both dairy and beef cattle include loss of milk production, poor growth and death in young unweaned cattle. Bulls and pregnant cattle show the most severe clinical signs.

Mortality can be from 2-4% and sick animals up to 30%. Loss of fertility in bulls can also result.

When does it occur?

In this area the seasonal spread is usually from December until late April. However, BEF can sometimes occur both before and after this period.

Can I vaccinate against BEF?

Websters have 2 vaccines that help prevent BEF:- a modified live vaccine which is available through a Veterinarian only or an inactivated vaccine available from your local outlet.

In this area vaccination should be carried out in October/November, prior to the BEF Season.

Those cattle who have no previous BEF vaccination history require two initial doses, 4 weeks apart. Cattle previously treated with either the live or activated vaccine need only require an annual booster.

Animals treated previously with the modified live vaccine may automatically switch to a programme of the ‘NEW’ inactivated vaccine and vice versa.

For more information contact your local District Veterinarian

Livestock Producer Assurance (L.P.A.) and the NVD/Waybill

Ian Blackwood, Livestock Officer (Beef Cattle), NSW DPI, Paterson

This is a Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and Safemeat program. The only section of the NVD/Waybill of interest to NSW DPI is parts A & D which cover the Transported Stock Statement under the Stock Diseases Act in NSW.

In NSW there is no requirement, under the Stock Diseases Act, that states it is mandatory to supply a NVD when you sell cattle. You must however complete the Waybill either as the Waybill sections of the NVD or as a Transported Stock Statement.

The NVD is a commercial decision from your peers in the industry.

Remember, that you will 'sign-up' to join the LPA scheme and that the declarations you make must be truthful. For telling "porkies" you get into trouble!

For more information on the LPA and the NVD/Waybill go to www.mla.com.au/lpa or phone 1800 683 111.

The LPA requires you to keep records and because the Scheme is audited (no cost to the producer) they will be reviewed by the auditor.

No Tags ... want to sell?

If your NLIS order has not arrived and you need/want to sell cattle... then you can!

However, you need to follow the few rules;

1. Contact your RLPB and ask for "emergency tags" to be provided. Provide your P.I.C. number, using your PIC Card and the date you placed your NLIS devices order, the number and description of stock you plan to sell and the selling date
2. The RLPB will sell you these tags. Prices do vary between boards.

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3. You apply the tags as you would normally (before the cattle leave home).

These emergency tags can be either an ear tag device or a tail tag. You need to apply your existing PIC tail tag as well.

Emergency tagged cattle can be sent to Saleyards, direct to slaughter or to another property. But if they are tagged with an emergency device as a tail tag and sent to another property (not with the same PIC)... then you must apply an orange NLIS device in the right ear, that belongs to that property.

P.I.C. Cards



Your P.I.C. will be printed here.

Back in June or July you should have received your P.I.C. “swipe” card.

This card carries the Property Identification Code (P.I.C.) unique to an individual, partnership, company or other cattle entity and linked to the land under management.

The card is used when you;

- Order approved NLIS devices
- Buy or sell stock
- Register to join Livestock Production Assurance (LPA)
- Complete National Vendor/Waybill declarations
- Complete Travelling Stock Statements and Animal Health Statements for cattle

If you have more than one PIC as part of your business then you should have received more than one card. Be sure to use the appropriate card for the transfer details you wish to effect.

If you lease or agist country then the owner of the land will have the PIC card. You need to make an arrangement with the owner to access the card details for livestock movements to be provided to the NLIS.

GO FOR FEED QUALITY WHEN GROWING FORAGE SORGHUMS

Neil Griffiths, District Agronomist, Tocal, NSW DPI, Paterson

A range of summer forage crops (forage sorghums etc.) have been trialled at Tocal over the past 2 seasons to compare yields and feed quality. Management was best described as 'average' with yields expected to increase with improved plant establishment, weed control and fertiliser use.

Results in Table 1 show some differences between varieties in both yield potential and feed quality. However, the main factor affecting both was growth stage at harvest. This is highlighted in the following summary:

Averages from Table 1

Growth stage	Days growth	Yield t DM/ha	ME MJ/kg DM	Crude Protein
1m tall	30	2.94	9.3	18.2
2m tall	55	8.72	8.4	10.2
Heading/grain	91	22.99	7.8	7.9

It is easy to get high yields by letting forage sorghum get taller and more mature, the challenge is to have feed quality to allow milk production or weight gain.

Grazing or harvesting when the crop is between 60cm (**NB:** Prussic acid poisoning risk if graze too young) and 1m tall would further reduce yields and increase feed quality.

Several cultivars regularly showed above average feed quality:

Nutrifeed: is a hybrid pennisetum forage rather than a forage sorghum. It does not have prussic acid poisoning.

These trials again showed that Nutrifeed can grow well and produce above average feed quality with correct management. Past experience has shown that it requires warm soil and good sowing conditions for successful establishment, and it will be killed if mown for hay/silage or slashed too low.

Pacific BMR: BMR (brown mid rib) sorghums generally show reduced yield and higher feed quality than traditional forage sorghums. Pacific BMR showed both features in these trials. Yields were slightly below average but feed quality was significantly higher than traditional cultivars.

Not all BMR cultivars are the same! Two other BMR cultivars were included in the trials. Choice BMR had the highest feed quality of all forage sorghums in the trial but yield was much lower than others. Revolution BMR yielded above average but it's feed quality was also about average.

Some popular cultivars showed they can yield well but were consistently below average in feed quality. Consider results in Table 1 when choosing which forage sorghum to grow and how to manage it.

These trials were funded by NSW DPI with seed supplied by Pacific Seeds, Pioneer Seeds and Hylan Seeds. DIDCO (via Dungog-Gloucester Dairy Development Team) contributed cost of feed testing.

Table 1. Forage Sorghum yield and feed quality

Cultivar	Harvested at 1m tall			Harvested at 2m tall		
	Yield (1) t DM/ha	ME (energy) (2) MJ/kg DM	Crude Protein (2) %	Yield (3)	ME (3)	Crude Protein (3)
1. Bettagraze	3.41	9.2 (8.7 - 9.8)	17.7	9.13	8.3	10.5
2. Choice BMR ^a	1.41	9.9 (8.6 - 10.4)	17.0	7.78	9.4	9.6
3. Cow Pow	3.25	9.0 (8.7 - 9.3)	17.3	9.41	8.6	8.9
4. Everlush	2.39	9.3 (9.1 - 9.4)	19.1	6.97	8.0	11.7
5. Hunnigreen ^b	2.82	9.2 (8.5 - 9.7)	18.3	9.48	7.9	10.0
6. Lush	3.17	9.0 (8.7 - 9.7)	16.5	13.52	7.9	8.9
7. Nectar	3.04	9.2 (8.1 - 9.3)	17.0	8.82	8.2	9.5
8. Nutrifeed ^{bc}	2.95	10.1 (9.6 - 10.5)	23.3	7.43	8.7	14.9
9. Pacific BMR	2.56	9.7 (9.2 - 10.1)	18.6	7.10	9.1	10.9
10. Pacific 8386	3.75	9.2 (8.9 - 9.6)	16.8	8.54	8.4	10.5
11. Revolution BMR	2.94	9.3 (9.1 - 9.6)	17.7	8.40	8.1	9.3
12. Sugargraze	2.83	9.3 (8.8 - 9.9)	17.0	8.74	8.8	9.6
13. Superdan	3.57	9.0 (8.5 - 9.5)	16.3	8.94	8.1	10.2
14. Sweet Jumbo	3.12	9.1 (8.8 - 9.6)	17.2	7.84	8.6	11.4
Average	2.94	9.3	18.2	8.72	8.4	10.4

(1) Average of 4 cuts at approx. 1m high (range 90 – 120cm high) (1 cut in season 2004, 3 cuts season 2005.) Average 30 days growth.

Note: plant establishment, weed control and fertiliser input on these trials described as low to medium.

Notes:

^a Choice BMR suffered disease in 2005

^b in year 2004 the first harvest of trial was at approx. 2m+ tall, several varieties had poor regrowth compared to year 2005 when all harvests were at approx. 1m tall

^c Nutrifeed yield from 2005 only

- (2) Feed quality is average of 1 cut in 2004 and 2 cuts in 2005
 (3) Results from 1st harvest in 2004, 55 days growth

When heading

Cultivar	2004				2005			
	Days growth	Yield	ME	CP	Days growth	Yield	ME	CP
1. Bettagraze	--				--			
2. Choice BMR	76	10.47	8.5	7.3	91	14.43	9.0	5.1?
3. Cow Pow	115	37.11	5.6	5.2	--			
4. Everlush	--				91	18.67	6.4	6.5
5. Hunnigreen	115	46.12	6.6	4.8	91	22.44	6.6	5.5
6. Lush	--				--			
7. Nectar	101	26.52	7.5	7.6	91	16.02	8.6	6.0
8. Nutrifeed	--				--			
9. Pacific BMR	101	22.30	7.8	7.8	91	16.84	8.8	7.1
10. Pacific 8386	--				91	22.18	6.5	5.8
11. Revolution BMR	69	19.90	7.6	7.2	--			
12. Sugargraze	101	27.04	8.4	7.6	91	25.98	7.7	5.5
13. Superdan	--				--			
14. Sweet Jumbo	--				91	18.88	6.7	6.2

Would you like more Beef Information!

There is a lot of out there so to save yourself time here is a list of websites that you may want to select some "favourites" from. To see and download the Useful Cattle Websites list click here.