



LRF NEWS

Welcome Back and Happy New Year!

Happy New Year! We trust that you all had a restful and enjoyable holiday season. As we embark on the journey of 2025, the LRF team is delighted to welcome you back. This year holds exciting prospects and opportunities for growth and innovation within our community.

We are thrilled to announce that we have several new online courses and activities planned, designed to enhance your skills and knowledge. Stay tuned for upcoming announcements regarding these offerings. Our commitment to providing valuable resources and support remains steadfast, and we look forward to achieving great milestones together.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns you may have. We are here to assist you and ensure a successful and fulfilling year for everyone.

Wishing you all a prosperous and productive 2025!

LRF Annual General Meeting 2025

We are excited to announce that our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on **February 19th in Bloemfontein**. This is a significant event for the LRF, and we encourage all members to attend. Attending the AGM is crucial as it provides an opportunity to stay informed about the company's performance, strategic direction, and future plans. It also allows you to voice your opinions, ask questions, provide feedback, and influence decisions. Additionally, the AGM is a great chance to network with colleagues, management, and stakeholders, fostering stronger professional relationships.

Following the AGM, we will hold the first member's meeting of the year. This meeting will provide an additional platform for members to engage in more detailed discussions and collaborate on upcoming initiatives.

We look forward to seeing you there!

RMIS Report

RMIS released its Red Meat Industry Report in December 2024, offering a comprehensive overview of the international and domestic red meat industry. This report analyses the key drivers shaping supply, demand, and prices, providing valuable insights for industry stakeholders. Their goal with these reports is to help the industry capitalize on opportunities and address challenges to ensure sustainable profitability and enhance the reputation of South Africa's red meat sector.

The report covers global and domestic beef and sheep dynamics, addressing important topics such as Climatic Conditions, Animal Diseases, Livestock Numbers, Meat Production, Consumption, Trade, and International Price Dynamics.

In summary, the RMIS reports a positive outlook on South Africa's red meat industry future. Looking ahead into 2025, slight price increases are projected for both beef and sheep meat, provided the industry maintains a disease-free status and market access. The report further acknowledges that the South African red meat industry faces challenges such as high feed prices and reduced consumer spending power, however the domestic red meat sector has significant growth potential if it can effectively address these issues and leverage market opportunities.

To read and access the full report, click on the link below:

[RMIS Full Report](#)

Monthly Tipsheet and Video Series: January Focus - Birth Weight

We are excited to announce a new monthly tipsheet and video series, where we will focus on specific traits, why you should record them, how to record them and how to submit your records to your breed society. Each month, a one-page tipsheet and video will be released covering all the information you need to know! For January, our focus is on **Birth Weight**.

Why is it important to record Birth Weight?

- High birth weights are associated with calving problems.
- Very low birth weights are associated with poor calf vigour and post-birth growth performance.

How to record Birth Weight:

- Use a scale: Bathroom scale, commercial scale, etc.
- Record within 24 hours of birth.
- Measure to the nearest kilogram.
- Record the whole calf crop, including stillborn calves.
- Assign different performance groups if dams were treated differently before the birth of the calf, as this could influence the calf's weight.

How to submit Birth Weight recordings to the society:

- Submit with calf registrations.
- Use the supplied Excel spreadsheet or a compatible herd management program, such as HerdMASTER.

Interpreting Birth Weight EBVs

- Moderate BW EBVs are usually more favorable.
- For example: a bull with a BW EBV of +2 kg would be expected to produce lighter calves at birth, with a lower risk of a difficult birth, than a bull with a BW EBV of +6 kg.
- This means that, on average, calves from a bull with a BW EBV of +6 kg are expected to be 2 kg (6-2/2 – only half of the genetic diff. passed to offspring) heavier at birth compared to calves from a bull with a BW EBV of +2 kg BW

To access the one-page Birth Weight tipsheet and the one-minute video recording with all the details you need to know, click on the links below:

[Birth Weight Tipsheet](#)

[Birth Weight Video](#)

LRF COURSES

Free Online Course: Understanding and Interpreting EBVs

Our first free online course of 2025 is here! Join us on February 5th, from 17:30 to 18:30, for an informative session with Izaan du Plooy and Kobus Bester from the LRF on **Understanding and Interpreting EBVs**.

This course will delve into the importance of Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) and how to interpret them effectively. Understanding EBVs is crucial for making informed breeding decisions and improving herd genetics. This fascinating topic will provide valuable insights into enhancing livestock performance and productivity.

To join this valuable session, please RSVP by filling out the Google form below:

[Understanding and Interpreting EBV Course RSVP](#)

HerdMASTER/BREEDPLAN NEWS

HerdMASTER

Reminder to all our HerdMASTER 4 users to migrate to HerdMASTER 5. We urge all our users to make use of the free migration as development on HerdMASTER 4 will be discontinued.

Important: All sync users do not restore your database. Please contact the office to schedule a time to migrate your database on the server.

Process for migrating to HerdMASTER 5 (HM5):

1. Minimum requirements Windows 10
2. Download HM5 using: <https://www.abri.com.au/h-get-herdmaster>
3. Select the Bundled installer package (Online)
4. Double click the download to install and follow the prompts.

Restore a backup from HerdMASTER 4 onto HerdMASTER 5:

See the how to video: <https://youtu.be/B-6LgJBH4y4?si=2SjRHZEe3bdvKla>

Take note:

The backup is not backwards compatible and a backup from HerdMASTER 5 cannot be restored on HerdMASTER 4. Once you have restored your backup on HerdMASTER 5 continue using HerdMASTER 5.

You do not have to uninstall HerdMASTER 4 immediately. You can uninstall at a later stage once you are happy that all your data in HerdMASTER 5 is correct and working.

Once you have downloaded and installed the update, please contact the office to migrate your HerdMASTER 4 license to HerdMASTER 5

BREEDPLAN

"Genetics in the Paddock" Podcast

Check out the "Genetics in the Paddock" podcast, hosted by Emily Johnston, a Genetics Development Officer with NSW DPIRD. This podcast delves into the latest advancements in livestock genetics, featuring engaging conversations with scientists, researchers, and industry leaders. Learn about cutting-edge breeding techniques and genetic traits that enhance livestock profitability, sustainability, and productivity. Whether you're a seasoned producer, curious consumer, or science enthusiast, this podcast offers valuable insights into how genetics is revolutionizing agriculture.

Catch the latest episode on common misconceptions that arise when using the BREEDPLAN genetic evaluation service for beef cattle. Several topics are covered such as low heritability traits, low accuracy, cheating the system, breeding values being the only important factor and more.

Click the link below to access this exciting podcast and their exciting episodes!

[Apple](#)

[Spotify](#)

[YouTube](#)

