



LRF NEWS

Gear up for the 17th Annual LRF Stockman School!

We are thrilled to invite you to the **17th LRF Stockman School**, an unmissable event that will take place from **8th to 10th October 2025**. This year, we're embracing the theme "**Smart Stockmanship: Back to Basics**", focusing on the fundamental principles of livestock production while incorporating practical, forward-thinking strategies to meet today's challenges.

This incredible three-day event promises to be packed with insightful lectures delivered by leading experts from South Africa and around the globe. From cutting-edge research to tried-and-tested practices, these sessions will offer something valuable for everyone. In addition to the lectures, attendees will enjoy hands-on practical sessions where theory meets practice. These activities are designed to deepen your understanding and give you actionable skills you can take home and implement straight away. For those looking to delve deeper, we'll also feature engaging breakaway sessions where smaller groups can explore specific topics, interact directly with experts, and exchange ideas with fellow delegates.

The LRF Stockman School is more than just a learning event—it's a chance to connect with passionate individuals, exchange knowledge, and gain fresh perspectives to elevate your stockmanship skills. Space is limited to 200 delegates, so make sure you secure your spot!

For more details on the LRF Stockman School and what to expect, click on the link below. Let's get back to basics and discover smarter ways to approach stockmanship—see you there!

How to Register for the 17th LRF Stockman School:

Bookings are now open! Secure your spot at the 17th LRF Stockman School by clicking the link below to book. To confirm your booking, complete the registration form and submit your proof of payment to Charmaine Alberts. Take advantage of the early bird registration: register before **31 July 2025** to receive a **R500 discount** on your booking fee! Bookings close on **1 October 2025** or earlier if capacity is reached.

Email: charmainealberts8@gmail.com / Phone: **+27 82 922 3747**

[Stockman School Information](#)

[Register Here!](#)

LRF BGP2 Year-End Report

Year 1 of the second phase of the Beef Genomics Program (BGP2), denoted Year 4, ran from April 2024 to March 2025, with eight breed societies, under the LRF's auspices, actively participating in the initiative. The below report provides a key summary of BGP2 Year 4's outcomes.

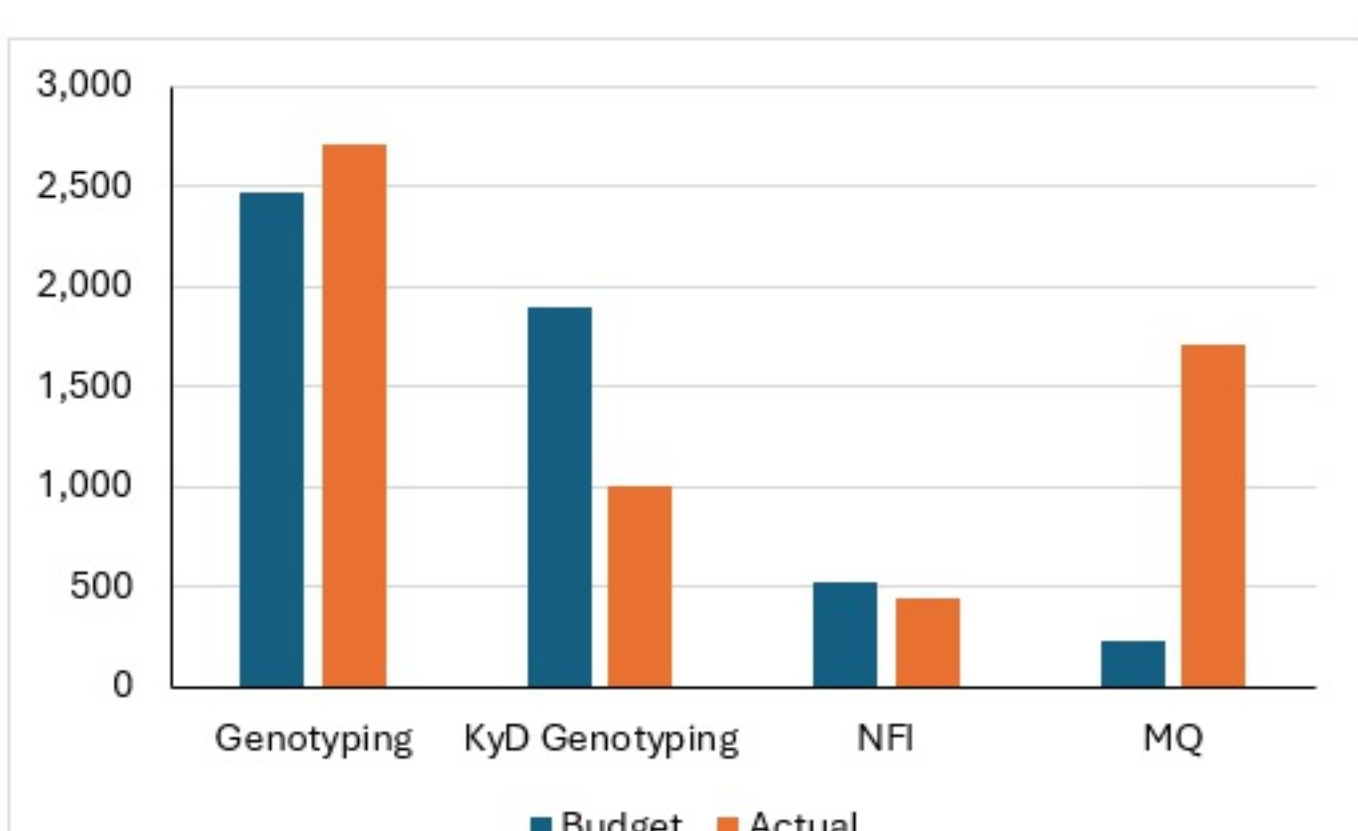
1. Management Summary

BGP2 officially started on 1 April 2024 when TIA paid the funding for Y4 over to the ARC. During the first 60 days, the BGP team focused on the implementation of SOP's (Standard Operating Procedures) required for execution and negotiations related to SNP array procurement where-as the respective Societies established their respective plans.

Given the fact that all performance was executed subsequent to the start-up, the collective performance as reflected below is testimony to a great professional and dedicated effort by each Society and the LRF team in close liaison with the BGP team at ARC BTP.

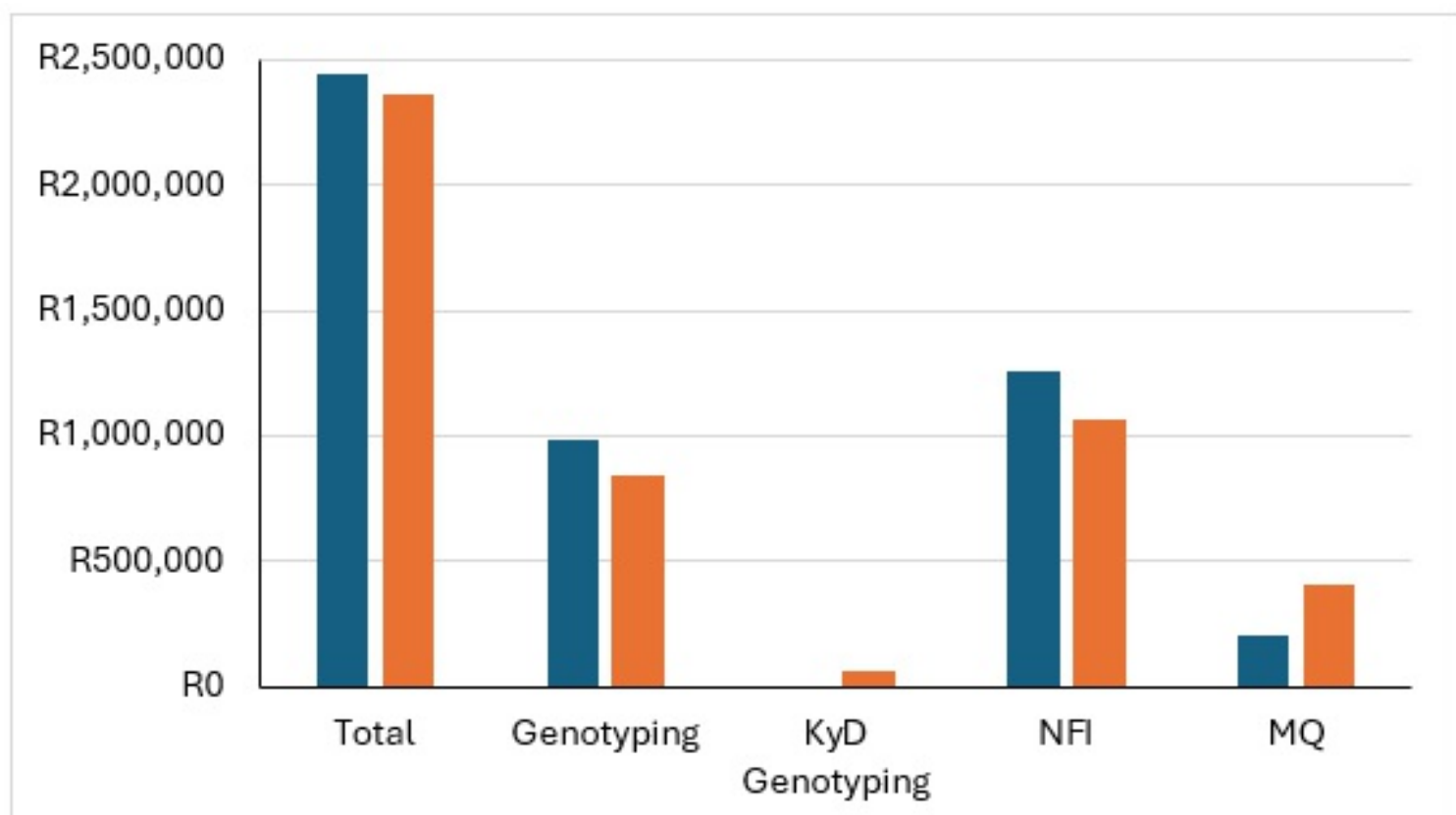
2. Tests Conducted:

Genotyping tests exceeded budget, partly due to the reallocation of Net Feed Intake (NFI) funds. NFI tests, which are costly and require strict data structures, fell 15% below budget, prompting breed societies to shift funds towards increased genotyping and meat quality assessments. Meat quality testing significantly outperformed expectations, with 1,712 tests conducted—six times the budgeted amount.



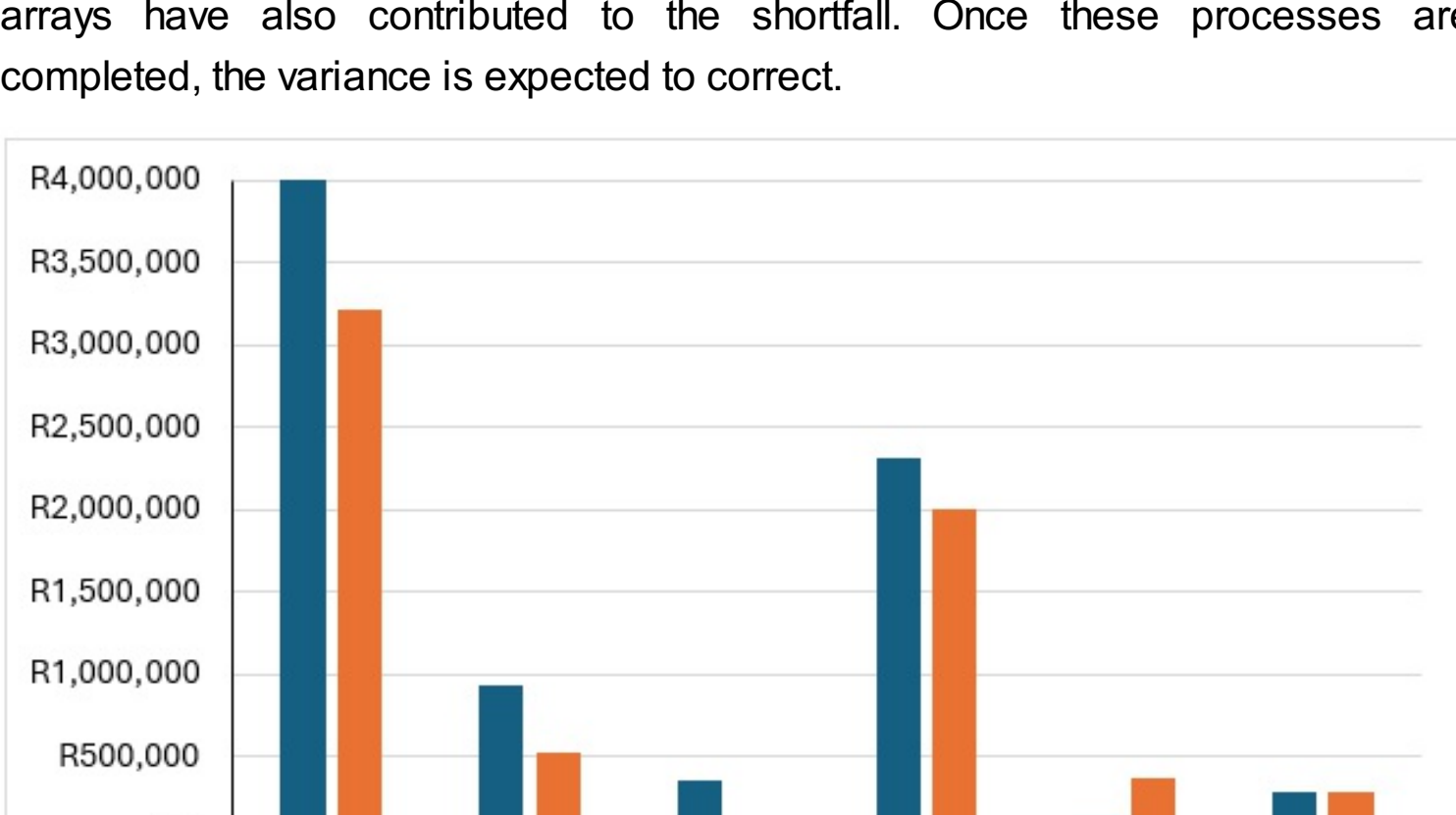
3. Utilisation of Subsidy Funds:

Overall, Year 4 saw a 3% under-utilisation of project subsidy funds. However, three Societies changed service supplier, where the SNP-array was procured under the Project. After taking this into account, fund utilization will be above budget.



4. Industry/Breeder Contribution

A 20% variance in industry contributions was observed which was mainly due to genotype samples still being processed at laboratories, delaying invoicing for breeders and societies. Pending approvals for BTP to use Neogen's GGP SNP-arrays have also contributed to the shortfall. Once these processes are completed, the variance is expected to correct.



The LRF extends our sincere appreciation to all the Societies for their dedication and hard work throughout Year 4. Their commitment to genetic improvement continues to drive progress in the industry, and we look forward to another successful year ahead in BGP2 Year 5!

Monthly Tipsheet and Video Series: April Focus – Animal Carcass Traits

Each month, the LRF focuses on a key trait, explaining why recording matters, how to record accurately, and how to submit your records to your breed society. It's all the information you need, presented in an easy-to-follow one-page tipsheet and a concise video!

March's spotlight was on Days to Calving. If you missed it, don't worry—catch up now! Access the one-page tipsheet and 2-minute video below to stay informed and up-to-date.

[Days to Calving Tipsheet](#)

[Days to Calving Video](#)

For April, our focus is on Animal Carcass Traits

What are Animal Carcass Traits?

Animal carcass traits includes Real-time Ultrasound (RTU) scanning data and abattoir carcass data. Animal carcass traits (eye muscle area, subcutaneous and intramuscular fat) are measured using RTU scanning and are an indication of the actual carcass yield and quality.

Why is it important to record Animal Carcass Traits?

Recording and submitting carcass trait data enables BREEDPLAN to calculate carcass trait EBVs. Carcass trait EBVs allow identification and selection based on carcass merit. Carcass traits are moderate to highly heritable, thus selection for carcass traits can contribute to relatively fast genetic improvement in these traits.

- **Eye-muscle area:** A good indication of overall muscling (saleable meat yield) of the animal.
- **Rib- and Rump fat:** Measures of fat cover which is also an indication of onset of puberty and may be correlated with female fertility, early maturing and easier marketing off the yard.
- **Intramuscular fat:** Indication of meat quality (tenderness, flavour and juiciness).

Requirements for RTU Scanning

- RTU data can be recorded on animals that are between 300 – 800 days of age when measured.
- Most animals are scanned around 600 days of age.
- Scanning data must be recorded by a BREEDPLAN accredited ultrasound scanning technician.
- Bulls and heifers (scan all animals as far as possible).
- Animals must be scanned within a contemporary group.
- Animals must be in good condition, to pick up the variation in measurements between the animals (usually from March to June).

Carcass EBVs

Eye muscle area (cm²):

- Estimate of genetic difference between animals in eye muscle area at 12/13th rib site in a standard weight steer carcass.

Rib fat (mm):

- Estimate of genetic difference between animals in fat depth at the 12/13th rib site in a standard weight steer carcass.

Rump fat (mm):

- Estimate of the genetic difference between animals in fat depth at the P8 rump site in a standard weight steer carcass.

Intramuscular fat (differences in percentage) :

- Estimate of genetic difference between animals in intramuscular fat (marbling) at the 12/13th rib site in a standard weight steer carcass.

To watch the three-minute video and access the one-page tipsheet on recording and understanding Animal Carcass Traits, click the links below:

[Carcass Traits Tipsheet](#)

[Carcass Traits Video](#)

LRF COURSES

Mastering Contemporary Groups and Linkages

On the 23rd of April 2025, the LRF hosted its third free online course of 2025, delving into **Contemporary Groups and Linkages**. Presented by Dr Mario Belfa and Izaan Du Plooy from the LRF, the course explored the ins and outs of contemporary groups and linkages—why they're critically important, how to form groups correctly, and the vital role they play in genetic evaluations.

If you missed the live session, don't worry! You can access the recording on our YouTube channel

[Contemporary Groups and Linkages Live Recording](#)

Next Free Online Course: Data Submission on Excel Spreadsheets

Date: 13th May 2025

Time: 17h30 – 18h30

Presenter: Izaan Du Plooy (the LRF) and Jody Young (Technical Officer at Simbra Breed Society)

The LRF's next free online course will provide guidance on submitting recorded data using the BREEDPLAN-provided Excel spreadsheets. Led by Izaan Du Plooy from the LRF, the course will explain which forms to submit for traits recorded, ensuring that participants fill in the documentation correctly. Additionally, the session will highlight common mistakes to avoid to ensure accurate data submission. Jody Young, Technical officer of the Simbra Breed Society, will also be joining the session to share insights on the do's and don'ts of data submission, helping breeders improve the accuracy of their records. Don't miss out!

RSVP: Please confirm your attendance by filling out the Google form below

[RSVP Data Submission Course](#)

HerdMASTER/BREEDPLAN NEWS

HerdMASTER:

The LRF has uploaded a step-by-step guide on recording and submitting Days to Calving data to the breed society. This video walks you through the process in HerdMASTER, ensuring your records are accurately recorded and successfully submitted.

Watch it now!

[Submitting Days to Calving data](#)