SEPTEMBER 2026

LRF NEWS

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Remembering Johan Styger

It is with great sadness that the Livestock Registering Federation (LRF) and its affiliated breed societies mourn the passing of Johan Styger on the 24th of September 2026.

Johan began farming cattle in 1978 and established the BTB Simmentaler stud near Hartbeesfontein in 2004. He dedicated his life to genetic improvement in beef cattle and made a significant contribution to the development and implementation of various trait selection indexes across several breed societies. He generously shared his knowledge through publications, lectures and the Stockman School.

His achievements included the LRF Stud Breeder of the Year (2016), ARC *National Beef Cattle Improvement Hero* of the Year (2021) and the LRF Certificate of Merit Award for Special Services to the Industry (2024). He also served as President of the LRF and on the Simmentaler Breed Improvement Committee. Johan leaves a lasting legacy of scientific rigour, integrity and dedicated service to the livestock industry. His wisdom, generosity and steady leadership will be deeply missed.

He is survived by his wife, Annemarie, their three daughters and their families. Our sincere condolences to Annemarie and the entire family.

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CALENDAR
- 7-9th October 2026: Stockman School

www.lrf.co.za



The September 2026 issue of LRF-TS News is now available!

LRF-TS News is a biannual publication for LRF members across South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, bringing you the latest technical information, industry developments and news from the LRF. The September 2026 edition features a selection of informative and relevant content carefully curated by the LRF Technical Services team.

In this issue, we take a closer look at BreedLOGIC, calf health, genomics, the latest LRF news and happenings, and much more. Whether you're looking to stay up to date with developments in livestock breeding, strengthen your knowledge of animal health, or keep informed about what's happening across the LRF, there's something for everyone. We encourage all our members and industry colleagues to take some time to read the latest edition and make the most of the information and insights included. The full September 2026 issue is available to access on our website, so head over and have a read today.

Stay informed. Stay connected. Keep up with the latest from LRF Technical Services!
Access LRF TS News via our website:

LRF TS Newsletter

18th LRF Annual Stockman School – One week to go!

The countdown is on! The 18th Annual LRF Stockman School is happening next week, from the 7th to the 9th of October 2026, at the Aldam Holiday Resort. This year's theme, 'Unlocking the Beef Value Chain', promises three days of valuable insights, practical knowledge and meaningful conversations around one of the most vital sectors of livestock production.

The LRF is delighted to announce that Mr. Willie Aucamp, Minister of Agriculture, will be delivering the official opening address at this year's LRF Stockman School!

Please note that registrations for this year's event are officially FULLY BOOKED! We are overwhelmed by the incredible response and look forward to welcoming all confirmed delegates to Aldam for three days of world-class industry insights and networking.

See you at the Stockman School!

For more information, contact Charmaine Alberts:
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Stockman School Programme



Monthly Tipsheet and Video Series: September Focus – Embryo Transfer (ET) Calves

We are excited to announce the next monthly tipsheet and video for our 2026 series. Each month, a one-page tipsheet and video will be released covering all the information you need to know! For August, our focus was on Understanding Genetic Linkage.

Access August's one-page tipsheet and 2-minute video below to stay informed and up-to-date.

Understanding Genetic Linkage Tipsheet

Understanding Genetic Linkage Video

For September, our focus is on Embryo Transfer (ET) Calves

How does the analysis of ET calves differ from those calves that result from natural mating and/or AI programs?
- While the performance of ET calves is similarly analysed to the performance of calves resulting from natural mating and/or AI calves, the calculation of BREEDPLAN EBVs for ET calves is more complex as the maternal effect of the recipient dam on the performance of the ET calf needs to be taken into consideration.
- To enable the calculation of EBVs for ET calves, BREEDPLAN requires information about the recipient dam.

Why does the recipient dam have to be taken into account when calculating BREEDPLAN EBVs for an ET calf?
- While the recipient dam doesn't influence the genetics of the ET calf, there are maternal effects on the embryo and the resulting ET calf that are attributable to the recipient dam.
- BREEDPLAN requires recipient dam information so that these maternal effects can be accounted for when analysing the performance of ET calves.
- For example, consider a situation where two full sibling embryos are implanted into recipient dams of different breeds.
- One embryo is implanted into a purebred beef breed cow (e.g. Hereford) while the other embryo is implanted into a purebred dairy breed cow (e.g. Holstein).
- These recipient dams are run together in the same paddock through their pregnancy, over calving and up to weaning of the resulting ET calves.
- At weaning, the ET calf reared by the dairy breed recipient dam is considerably heavier than the calf reared by the beef breed recipient dam.
- As these two full-sibling ET calves are of similar genetic merit and raised in the same environment, the difference in their weights is more likely due to the greater maternal ability of the dairy cow recipient, than due to the genetics of the calf.

How is the recipient dam taken into account when calculating BREEDPLAN EBVs for an ET calf?
- BREEDPLAN takes account of the maternal effect of the recipient dam on the performance of the ET calf through two main steps.
- Firstly, ET calves will only be analysed in a contemporary group with other ET calves.
- Secondly, BREEDPLAN will account for the maternal effect of the recipient dams by either:
 - A. Further breaking up the ET calves into groups of calves that have all been reared by recipient dams of the same breed (which have made a similar maternal contribution). For example, ET calves out of Brahman recipient dams could be placed into the same contemporary group; however, they could not be placed into the same contemporary group with ET calves out of Hereford recipient dams. This method is currently used in the vast majority of BREEDPLAN analyses.
 - B. Analysing all ET calves in the same contemporary group, but with adjustments to the performance of the ET calves to account for differences in the maternal effect of their recipient dam. These adjustments are made based on the breed of the recipient dam. This method is currently only used in a minority of BREEDPLAN analyses.

What recipient dam information does BREEDPLAN require?
- For calculation of EBVs for ET calves, BREEDPLAN requires that, at a minimum, both the dam breed and breed of the recipient dam be recorded.
- In addition, it is recommended that breeders also submit an approximate year of birth for each recipient dam.
- This is important as BREEDPLAN makes adjustments to the performance of a calf based on the age of their recipient dam.

How do I record recipient dam information?
- Recipient dam details should be recorded with your breed society when you are recording the ET progeny.
- As such, you should contact your breed society for information regarding their particular recording requirements.

What strategies can be used to optimise the effectiveness of performance recording for ET calves?
- It is imperative that breeders undertaking ET programs record recipient dam information for their ET calves.
- If recipient dam information is not recorded for an ET calf, its own performance will not be used in the calculation of its EBVs.
- Instead, the EBVs calculated for the ET calf will simply be midparent values based on the EBVs of its sire and donor dam (e.g. biological dam).
- As, in the majority of analyses, BREEDPLAN will only directly compare the performance of ET calves that have been reared by recipient dams of the same breed (depending on the method used to account for the maternal effect of the recipient dam), the choice of recipient dams should be carefully considered before undertaking an ET program.
- If recipient dams of multiple breeds are used, the performance of the ET calves will potentially be split into a number of small contemporary groups.
- This can significantly limit the usefulness of this information to the BREEDPLAN analysis.
- Therefore, breeders are strongly encouraged to select recipient dams of the same breed. Doing so will maximise the number of ET calves being analysed in the same contemporary group.

Access September's one-page tipsheets and 2-minute video below to stay informed and up-to-date.

ET Calves Tipsheet | **ET Calves Video**

LRF Online Courses

Catch up now: BreedLOGIC Introductory Online Session

On the 2nd of September the LRF with Caitriona Millen from ABRI hosted an informative session that provided an overview of BreedLOGIC and what users can expect from the new software.

If you missed it, don't worry, you can catch up now on the LRF YouTube channel:

BreedLOGIC Introductory Session

5 October: Workshop with Caitriona Millen – ABRI

The LRF is pleased to welcome Caitriona Millen from ABRI for a workshop on Monday, 5 October, from 09:00 to 12:00, followed by a light lunch and informal networking. The session will cover BreedLOGIC and the latest BREEDPLAN developments, with an opportunity for attendees to raise topics and questions of interest. Participants are encouraged to submit discussion topics in advance.

Date: 5 October 2026
Time: 09h00 – 12h00
Venue: Bloemfontein

Contact Isaan Du Plooy for more information
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HerdMASTER/BREEDPLAN NEWS

HerdMASTER

HerdMASTER Online Is Finally Here!
Experience the next evolution of herd management with BreedLOGIC Herd—the browser-based platform built for current HerdMASTER users and new herds alike. Whether you are in the office, on the laptop, in the bakkie, or at the yards on your phone, your herd data goes everywhere you do.

Why Upgrade to HerdMASTER Online?
- **Zero Installation & Upgrades:** Open a browser tab and start managing—no software installation or manual updates required.
- **Seamless Data Migration:** Easily carry over your existing HerdMASTER 4 or 5 data and existing license.
- **Direct Exports:** Send data straight to BREEDPLAN and your breed society, or select animal lists for registration.
- **One Unified Login:** Access Herd, Database Search, and Registry all under a single BreedLOGIC login.

Be Part of the Exclusive Closed Beta
We are opening registration for our early-access Beta version, and we want your input to refine the platform before full release.
- **Register Before 31 October:** Places are limited—sign up before 31 October to secure your early access.
- **Testing Phase:** The Beta testing period will run through mid-November.
- **Have Your Say:** A feedback survey will be distributed following the test period to capture your suggestions and operational needs.
- **Full Rollout:** The final official rollout is scheduled for December / January!

Secure Your Spot Today
Be among the first to test HerdMASTER online and shape the future of herd management software.
Register your interest at: breedlogic.com.au/beta
Phone: +27 81 8444 853 | Email: jeanne@lrf.co.za

