

# Newsletter August 2012

Hi folks,

Hope this finds everyone enjoying the sunshine!!

I have attached some documents that will be of interest to everyone. NOW make sure you look out for these points so you get all the information!!!

1) Application for Inspection, this needs to be completed if you wish to have an inspection, send it to Carmen and cc to Maree. It gives details of what you need to have organized.

2) The preliminary inspection form used to record the animals and give a grade. There is also a breed standard at the bottom of this page, click on breed score to get a page which details the breed standards in Mashona Cattle. Also included at the bottom of the page is a detailed picture of a bull.

## What's been happening?

- Dave Holness and Carmen Stubbs, senior inspectors, went to Henderson Research Station for an inspection in June. Milton and Maree were learner judges.
- Another inspection took place at the Lock's in Macheke in July. Mark and Carmen Stubbs senior inspectors Helen Lock and Patrick (cattle foreman from Stubbs) learner inspector and Maree, junior inspector.
- Inspection planned for Makoholi on the 7th September.
- The Lock's bull is in having semen taken at the moment. More details to follow about purchasing of straws.
- Harare Show is coming up and there will be Mashona Bulls on sale there as well as entries into the various cattle sections.

Herdmaster .....it's a good program Contact [admin@lit.co.zw](mailto:admin@lit.co.zw) for more details

Why use Headmaster to keep records?

1. It forms an integral part of your herd management by keeping a proper database of all you animals
2. It allows you to differentiate between good and poor performing animals
3. Produces a yard sheet (Reports|Other|Yardsheet) that allows you to a) keep record of the number and id of your animals in the camp and b) easily enter the required information

4. Produces over 60 different reports. Try the Efficiency Report (Reports Animal Reports Production Reports Efficiency) or Phenotypical Report (Reports | Animal Reports | Phenotypical Report) or Projected Weight Dates (Reports | Animal Reports | Projected Weight Dates) as a start

### Some Cattle reminders

TICK CONTROL .Farms with a Theileriosis or brown ear tick problem should dip at recommended intervals especially during July and August when brown ear tick nymphs are active and picking up thirleria infection from carrier cattle

Check dip tank for sand build up from the rains. Winter is a good time to clean it out for the summer challenge

COWS Have cows pregnancy diagnosed this will help with the winter maintenance program, and will show up any fertility problem. Do not feed empty cows.

HUSBANDRY Check bulls. Get a vet to check fertility and for general health and foot problems. If the bull cannot walk it is useless. If it is infertile it is going to cost you on lost income

WEANING Make sure you have adequate roughage and food. Use spot on to control flies. This will help with eye problems

MAKE A WINTER FEED PROGRAM IF YOU WANT THE COWS TO GET IN CALF NEXT SEASON AT THE CORRECT TIME.

SOME AREAS HAVE LOTS OF GRASS .YOU NEED TO SORT **FIRE BREAKS AND HAVE A FIRE FIGHTING PLAN.**

GRASS IS THE CHEAPEST FOOD YOU CAN GET.

Article adapted from Peter Jackson, Coopers Rep. Marondera

## **WHY I LOVE MASHONA CATTLE**

By J.J.Jackson

My association with cattle started at birth. Those days, in our area, when a son was born to a farming family a heifer was marked for him. So a heifer was marked for me. My father did dairy ranching like so many other farmers in those days, and like them he had Red Poll cattle. How I loved those cattle, and I thought that the more curly the hair the more pure the blood. But oh those cattle were the source of many tears. How easily they died! And for a cattle loving little boy like me it was heartbreaking.

Then a neighbour of ours gave my older brother and me each a donkey. And how I loved my donkey! It was not very long, however, before another neighbour, who was in need of a donkey, came to visit. He was an old man, and a close family friend. Then he asked me, would I swap my donkey for a heifer? Now how could a little boy say no to someone so senior and so close?

So I said goodbye to my donkey, and in its place I received a short, dark red Mashona heifer with wrinkles on its forehead and loose banana size scurs for horns. I often followed the cattle into the veldt, and have always been mesmerized by the picture of cattle grazing.

It was not long before that heifer produced a calf. And after that she calved regularly every year. And her calves survived. Soon I was the lucky cattleman of the family. Some years later I felt so sorry for my elder brother who was now way behind me in cattle numbers in spite of having had an 18 month start on me. I gave him two of my animals.

Then I started growing up and went to University on grants and loans and little else. But toward the end of my course a heavy expenditure was looming. I wrote and asked my father to sell my cattle for me. He did, and sent me the money, so many pounds, so many shillings and so many pence. With that money I bought an engagement ring. It was the best investment I ever made. That was real LOBOLA.

Much later in life when I started farming I had the best start any cattle farmer could wish for. Through the Cold Storage Grazier Scheme I was allocated one hundred Mashona type heifers that had been purchased in the communal lands. And I knew what bulls to put to them. It was Mashona bulls, some from Makoholi and others from Keith Harvey. Those cattle steadily filled the farm, then another, and another. And they saw all my children through university.

So now you know why I love Mashona cattle.

Mashona Cattle of Zimbabwe by Dr. D.H.Holness page 40

“The main merits of the breed may be summarized as

- thoroughly adapted to the local sub-tropical environment
- ideal temperament
- beneficial behavior patterns
- excellent fertility
- outstanding cow productivity

- valuable growth and efficiency traits
- specific carcass conformation and quality traits

The future of the Mashona must be to emphasize the role and abilities of the cow. Now that the high level of productivity of the Mashona cow under veldt conditions has been clearly established, these benefits can be harnessed to provide a productive advantage to the beef enterprise.

Whether the Mashona cow is used in a pure breeding system or as a dam line for terminal cross breeding with larger exotic sire breeds, these benefits will still accrue. In the latter situation, further advantages can be achieved by careful consideration of the most effective cross for the particular enterprise.

The efficiency of reproduction remains by far the most important economic trait in beef production. Wider use of Mashona's in commercial enterprises can be expected to increase calving and weaning percentages. In turn, this will lead to increased offtake of slaughter stock "

#### Zimbabwe Herd Book

Date Beef School 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September 2012

Venue ART Farm, 16.5km peg, Alpes Rd/Calgary Close (opposite Wingate Golf Club) Harare

Theme Introduction to Good Management Practices

Cost \$300.00 (150 places)

Booking [admin@lit.co.zw](mailto:admin@lit.co.zw) 04 756 600 04 772 915 Old Show Office, Exhibition Park (showground's)

#### Speakers

Don Trimmer, Head of Beef Genetics Department, Accelerated Genetics (USA):

Global Trends in the World Beef Market, Genetic Progress in the US Beef Cattle

Clive Marshall, Botswana Meat Corporation, Botswana: Weaner Production, Beef Value Chain

Michael Bradfield Agri BSA, RSA. Genetic Improvement :Benefits for Commercial Producers

Japie Jackson, Veterinarian& Cattle Producer, Zimbabwe: Veld Management and Animals Physiological Requirements

Doug Bruce, Bargrove Veterinary Consultants, Zimbabwe: Animal Health Calendar

Jaco Erasmus Cattle Producer, Zimbabwe: Economics of Beef Production in Zimbabwe

John Crawford, Cattle Producer, Zimbabwe: Practical: branding, tagging, castration, dehorning

Mark Hayter, Auctioneer & Cattle Producer, Zimbabwe: Practical, fatstock judging, carcass evaluation

Below are the prices from the National Bull Sale

	DESCRPITION	AVG	Rank	HIGHEST	Rank	LOWEST	
HEAD		PRICE/HEAD		PRICE		PRICE	
71	BRAHMAN BULL	3,016.20	5	6,750.00	1	1,800.00	\$ 214,150.
13	BEEF MASTER BULL	2,938.46	6	3,800.00	6	2,500.00	\$ 38,199.9
10	SIMBRA BULL	1,920.00	9	3,100.00	7	1,500.00	\$ 19,200.0
7	TULI BULL	2,321.43	7	2,650.00	8	1,900.00	\$ 16,250.0
5	SIMMENTAL BULL	3,840.00	4	6,000.00	2	3,100.00	\$ 19,200.0
3	BORAN BULL	4,966.67	2	5,600.00	3	4,300.00	\$ 14,900.0
2	SANTA GERTRUDIS BULL	2,000.00	8	2,000.00	9	NIL	\$ 4,000.00
1	DROUGHT MASTER BULL	5,000.00	1	5,000.00	4	NIL	\$ 5,000.00
1	BLONDE D' AQUITAINE	4,000.00	3	4,000.00	5	NIL	\$ 4,000.00
113							\$ 334,900.
48	BRAHMAN HEIFER	1,710.42	1	2,650.00	1	1,150.00	\$ 82,100.1

13	SIMBRA HEIFER	1,184.62	3	1,300.00	3	1,000.00	\$ 15,400.00
10	TULI HEIFER	980	4	1,000.00	4	800	\$ 9,800.00
4	SIMMENTAL HEIFER	1,600.00	2	1,600.00	2	NIL	\$ 6,400.00

\$  
113,700.

A pen of 5 pregnant Mashona heifers were on the National Bull Sale plus 3 bulls for display. The reserve price was not reached so the cattle went back to Bluegums.