

# Zimbabwe Herd Book

Newsletter – January 2012

Dear Breeder

Incredulously 2011 has passed and we are mid-way through January 2012, and while I must apologize for the limited communications, I can assure of many positive developments and activity.

The Zimbabwe Herd Book is merely a registering body for breed societies and to this end it is most encouraging to record increased activity and resuscitation of a number of societies, namely:

- Dorper Sheep Breeders Society of Central Africa. This is the only society to have held an AGM every year and on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2011, held their AGM at Carswell Feedlot where we were treated to display of excellent Dorpers;
- Tuli Cattle Society continues to be the most active society and is making tremendous strides to update performance records with a drive to obtain estimated breeding values (EBV's);
- Brahman Society of Zimbabwe has signed up a number of new members and has been active with inspections of appendix animals;
- Zimbabwe Boran Breeders Society has encouraged a number of new breeders to register cattle on the appendix scheme;
- Mashona Cattle Society has also recently been resuscitated and held their AGM on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

The table below summarises the status of the Herd Book as at the end of December 2012. The stud industry is represented by 15 beef breeds, two dairy and one sheep and it is encouraging to record an increased number of animals.

	Number Herds	Number Animals	ZHB Staff
Ayrshire	1	7	Edmore
Beefmaster	4	352	Edmore
Blonde d'Aquitaine	1	26	Florence
Bonsmara	1	126	Mildret
Boran	2	570	Edmore
Brahman	20	2710	Mildret
D/Master	1	101	Edmore
Dorper	4	505	Florence
Hereford	1	91	Edmore
Holstein	1	71	Edmore
Limousin	2	45	Edmore
Mashona	1	66	Edmore
Simbra	4	241	Mildret
Santa	3	132	Edmore
Simmental	5	437	Mildret
Senepol	1	109	Edmore
Sussex	1	39	Edmore
Tuli	9	1485	Florence
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>7036</b>	

Just before the Christmas shutdown, we were fortunate to have had a week-long training session with Ann Hayward from the NSBA (the expenses being equally met by ABRI Australia, AgriBSA and ZHB). This training session was most instructive and we now have a better understanding of BreedPlan (the bureau software programme) enabling us to provide a much improved service to clients.

We have started to generate and disseminate a number reports to all breeders and these include:

- a list of all the birth notifications captured on the new system (i.e. from September 2010);
- a list of 'held' birth notifications requiring further information. These will be held for 6 months before being automatically deleted;
- an 'inspection' list. All birth notifications are automatically captured on the calf book (CB) and are only upgraded to final register (RE) on inspection. Where societies are NOT requiring inspections, we will be reliant on breeders to complete and return their own inspections before animals attain three years of age. ***A further requirement is that a DNA sample must be submitted in order for animal to be upgraded from CB to RE;***
- a herd list. Please check and advise the bureau of animals no longer active in your herd;
- a full herd list of all animals in your list. Please take time to check information and advise us of corrections, particularly parentage and incorrect appendix status.

You will also note that fertility data is being made available and in many instances age at first calving is greater than 60 months and inter-calving period (ICP) is greater than 1000 days obviously reflecting missing birth data. Once again we appeal to breeders to assist in the process of upgrading your data.

Please be reminded that you can also view your data and those of fellow breeders on the internet. Visit the Breedplan Southern Africa website (<http://breedplan.co.za/>), select Zimbabwe and then breed of interest.

### Performance Recording

We have started to receive significant quantities of performance data and where possible our data will be combined with the SA and Namibian breed runs (BLUP analyses) to generate estimated breeding values (EBVs), the best estimate of an animal's net genetic worth for a specific trait.

At the outset we encourage breeders to capture and submit weights recorded at birth, 200, 400 and 600 days and scrotal circumference at 18 months ( $\pm 600$  days). It is imperative to submit data of animals similarly treated and recorded at the same time. For example, for W200 (weight at 200 days), it is suggested that the whole calf crop is weighed on a particular day before first calf is weaned from its dam and when the average age is close to 200 days. For this trait, all calves must be between 80 and 300 days of age. Again, there is a wealth of information on performance recording and BREEDPLAN on the internet (especially the Technical sections) and I encourage breeders to visit the ABRI (<http://breedplan.une.edu.au/>) and AgriBSA (<http://agribsa.co.za/>) web sites for further information.

Breeders on HerdMASTER are gaining proficiency and we are now receiving large volumes of data (births, performance and fate data) electronically, significantly reducing turn around time and improving data accuracy.

Along with the Namibian Stud Book Association (NSBA), the Zimbabwe Herd Book has joined the Livestock Registration Foundation (LRF) based in South Africa which essentially represents all breed societies subscribing to the BREEDPLAN data capture and performance evaluation system. Under the leadership of Dr Michael Bradfield, the LRF hosted the third 'Beef School' in October last year. The School was oversubscribed and all five Zimbabweans that attended came away with renewed vigour having participated in some brilliant presentations. The next Beef

School will be held 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012. Following the success of the Beef School in South Africa, the Namibian Stud Book Association will be hosting the 'Meat Production School' from 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> March. For further information please visit the AgriBSA website (<http://agribsa.co.za/>) and the NSBA website (<http://www.nsba.iway.na/>) or contact our offices.

### Discipline

We fervently appeal to breeders to assist us with timeous data capture and processing and to this end we will invoke the following measures:

- Herd lists to be submitted by 29<sup>th</sup> February, late submissions will attract penalty fee of \$50;
- Levies of \$3 per animal born before 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 due by 30<sup>th</sup> April. Late payments will attract late payment fee of \$50 per month and levies not settled by 30<sup>th</sup> June will result in automatic suspension;
- with effect 1st March, all births must be submitted within 180 days. Birth notifications submitted after 180 days will attract a late penalty fee of \$5 per birth and birth notifications after one year will not be accepted (animal will only be eligible for the appendix register).

### Front Office

We have three members of staff to assist with your data queries: Mildret, Edmore and Florence. Each staff member is responsible for specific breeds (see above table) and we request that you use [trace@lit.co.zw](mailto:trace@lit.co.zw) which is accessible by all members of staff.

Kind regards

Mario Beffa

For: Zimbabwe Herd Book