



BUFFALO News

Official newsletter of the Australian Buffalo Industry Council - Vol 4 No 1 - JUNE 2004



Wetlands backdrop for national TV TenderBuff cook-up

The superior cooking qualities of Australian TenderBuff will be showcased to television audiences around the nation in August.

Popular Australian TV chef Geoff Jansz, who hosts Channel Nine's mid-morning cooking show, *Fresh*, has been filming in the Northern Territory this month. TenderBuff will be

among a range of speciality foods he will feature on a half-segment being produced about his Territory visit.

Jansz, accompanied by another national television identity, Darwin-based Ben Dark (*Getaway*), chose the perfect backdrop for filming of his culinary creativity with a TenderBuff scotch fillet. He set up his cooking utensils on the outdoor deck of the *Window on the Wetlands* visitor centre, which overlooks the Adelaide River floodplain.

ABOVE LEFT: Ben Dark watches as Geoff Jansz prepares his warm buffalo salad. **LEFT:** The finished product.



Buff industry launches new website

The Australian Buffalo Industry Council's new website went on-line in April this year.

There has been a good response so far, with lots of valuable feedback from industry representatives around the the country.

Anyone who has not yet checked out the website is encouraged to get onto the computer and have a browse.

You'll find a wide range of useful information and contacts, plus some informative links that are of interest to the buffalo sector. The ABIC website is:

www.buffaloaustralia.org

Kiwis eye off our dairy buffalo

The emergence and growth of Australia's buffalo dairy industry is drawing keen interest from countries on both sides of the Pacific.

ABIC reports that New Zealand is very interested in importing milking buffalo from Australia and health protocols are currently being negotiated with a view to trade starting in the near future.

Chile is also keen to purchase Australian milking buffalo in the future and health protocols are now being worked out so that this South American market can be accessed by Australian milking buff producers.

Check out our new ABIC Website - www.buffaloaustralia.org

7TH WORLD BUFFALO CONGRESS

WHERE?

Manila -The Philippines

WHEN?

20-23 October 2004

THEME?

*Buffalo-based Enterprises:
Challenges and Opportunities
in a World of Changing
Trade Regulations and
Consumer Demands*

SPONSORS?

International Buffalo
Federation

**MORE DETAILS WILL
BE MADE AVAILABLE
AS THEY COME TO HAND**

BUFFALO *News*

*Contributions on any matter of
interest to Australia's buffalo
industry are most welcome and
can be sent to, or discussed with:*

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Minister tours Top End buffalo farms

Northern Territory Primary Industry Minister Kon Vatskalis took some time out from the office recently to familiarise himself with the local buffalo industry.

Minister Vatskalis and his Ministerial Advisor Ray Clarke visited the properties of Top End buffalo breeders Dallis Wilschefski on Old Bynoe Rd and Ernie Schluep at Darwin River. They also took a quick tour of the Government-run Beatrice Hill research facility where they were able to see the animals involved in the current RIRDC sponsored AI program, and be given an overview of the Tenderbuff program.

PICTURED ABOVE: Ernie Schluep (left) chats with Minister Vatskalis (centre) and Mr Clarke about buffalo farming.

Promoting Aussie buffalo on the international front

NT Buffalo Industry Council Executive Office Neil Ross has been busy again in the first half of this year bolstering international interest in Australian buffalo and buffalo products.

Neil attended the recent Brunei International Trade Fair to promote the potential for the Sultanate to import more live buffalo and buy meat.

During the same trip, he visited neighbouring Sabah to catch up with business people interested in importing Australian buffalo to be used as 'beasts of burden' in local palm oil plantations.

Neil has also travelled to Jakarta this year to meet with Indonesia's Director General of Livestock Services to discuss industry issues including Indonesia's demand for Australian buffalo and protocols for importing Australian buffalo into that country.

"There is a good demand for buffalo to be imported live into Indonesia because of their shortage of slaughter animals, but we just need to get the import protocol sorted out," he said.

NTBIC is also currently working on an import protocol for sending buffalo into Sabah.

RIRDC Buffalo Research Project

Project researcher Barry Lemcke reports on progress so far

A total 23 head of mixed breed buffalo, ranging from Swamp to pure River (the majority being heifers and of 7/8 River breeding) were used in an artificial insemination (AI) trial at Beatrice Hill Farm during March 2004.

The group was able to be pregnancy tested at seven weeks post AI, thanks to the Camel Industry's Executive Officer Peter Seidel making available an Aloka real time ultrasound for our use.

We are also indebted to Ian Gray from the Northern Territory Rural College for giving us a day in training a group on what to look for on the screen of the machine.

We were able to detect a total of eight pregnancies and, according to some of the literature, this rate in heifers is not too bad.

The heifers that became pregnant were all inseminated into the uterus, ie the cervix was penetrable using the AI pipette.

The standard Brazilian recipe was used with a double insemination 12 hours apart, using synchronising drugs of GnRH and prostaglandin.

The Victorian Department of Agriculture is also thanked for its expertise and guidance. It is planned to do

a second round of AI in the non-pregnant heifers in August this year then put the balance to the bull.

Nearly all the animals in the purebred River cow group have finished calving for the year and after two months from the last calf, will also be inseminated.

Variations on the recipe will be tested to try and eliminate the need for a second AI straw to be used, as this makes the procedure much more expensive when using the imported Italian semen. If timing is correct one insemination should be enough. Further literature research will be done to try and fine tune the recipe, and with access to the camel industry's ultrasound, the time between synchronisations should be dramatically reduced, depending on the earliness of pregnancy confirmation.

A penis diversion operation on a buffalo bull may also aid in detection of heat and hence timing of insemination improved.

WHERE ARE THEY?

The response to a request for buffalo owners to complete the national buffalo herd survey form included in the last newsletter has been very disappointing, with only a handful of forms returned to NTBIC.

This information is vital if the buffalo industry is to continue receiving research funding through RIRDC.

We urge you again to please complete the survey form and return it to NTBIC by post or by fax. We also ask that you pass on this request to anyone you know who has buffalo and who has not received a copy of the form, or provide their details to NTBIC for follow-up.

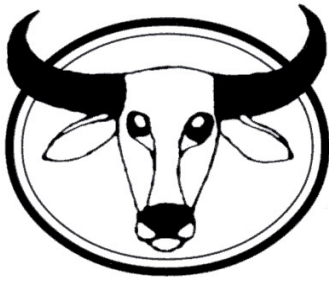
Information gathered from this survey will help identify future research projects and also provide the base information required to start up a buffalo 'stud book', which will become essential as crossbreeding and AI work continues.



ABOVE: Vet Gehan Jayawardhana artificially inseminates one of the project buffalo at Beatrice Hill Farm.

BELOW: The ultrasound machine, displaying the image of a foetus on screen.





STATE *by* STATE

Buffalo news from around the nation

VICTORIA

The Victorian Buffalo Breeders (VicBIC) will hold an open day on Sunday 4 July 2004 to coincide with its Annual General Meeting.

The venue will be Geoff and Neroli Eddy's property in Gordons Rd at Numurkah.

Participants will be shown around the farm, which holds more than 150 swamp and riverine buffalo of different ages.

Interested visitors will also be shown how to make buffalo farming viable in the southern states - and will be supplied with a tasty lunch.

The Eddy's buffalo pies took out the top honours in the Best Gourmet Game Pie in Australia Award in 2003. They also have many other products that they will discuss and display. People interested in attending should contact Neroli on Phone (03) 5865 5475.

QUEENSLAND

ABIC President Bob Cook wrote to Queensland Premier Peter Beattie to express the industry's concern about an anomaly that forces Queensland farmers to pay a permit fee of \$318.50 per annum if they want to take up buffalo breeding.

Buffalo breeders pay nothing in other states/territories, except in NSW where \$50.00 is required for the first year and \$20.00 per annum thereafter.

The letter pointed out to Premier Beattie that this discrepancy discriminated against Queensland farmers and had a negative effect on employment opportunities and tourism.

The Queensland Government's response came through Environment Minister John Mickel who stated that the Government had no plans to revise the permit requirements.

The ABIC board has expressed disappointment at the response and will continue to lobby the Queensland Government and Opposition parties to bring Queensland's legislation in line with other states/territories.

Maud Creek export buff



Buffalo at Graham Michell's Maud Creek property near Katherine ready to be loaded for export through Darwin for the Brunei supermarket trade.

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ABIC WEBSITE - www.buffaloaustralia.org