



CBV 02-0556 Gandhi XL



CBV Update

Time constraint and season gets two Alfs to combine our update for Christmas 2009.

As we approach Christmas it is turning out to be a very challenging year. Some of our properties are now down to between 300mm to 400mm of rain for 12 months. Pastures grew large volumes last wet season, which finished early and we have found ourselves in a situation where our grass has no protein and the cattle require a lot of energy to digest it. This is resulting in rapid loss in body condition in breeders and lack of gain in dry cattle.

This is a reality of what can happen in the dry tropics, so we have taken some management action to prevent falling into a pastoral hole that we cannot climb out of. It is important to stay one step ahead of this season; then if it breaks and rain arrives early, all is well. If it does not, *we are still in the drivers seat to meet our production targets needed for the coming year. No room for excuses.*

All dry cows that were pregnancy tested in calf last April, but failed to deliver a calf have been removed and sold from the breeding herds, giving more room to the working cows and boosting cash flow. Early born calves have been weaned as it is much more economic to supplement a weaner than a cow and calf. All properties are well finished the calf crops.

In years like this it highlights one of the advantages of having an *early* calf crop, of *highly adapted* cattle. The work from these cows is done, and the stress on

them is off. If you own cows that are calving now, that could become a real liability if rain does not arrive pronto. This is one reason we put so much emphasis at CBV on having the majority of calves born in the first three cycles (August – October). This year has meant these cows will need to conceive on very low nutrition and body condition. We only keep those cows achieving a *pregnancy on time*, and this will ensure us of a very adapted, highly fertile group of cows that work regardless of seasonal conditions thrown our way.

All of the CBV sires are selected from this aggressive selection process, for many generations. Bulls mated from 1st October are holding condition well. *Self help works best, in any tight situation.* After years of observing breeders here, it still amazes us to see lactating cows in low body condition eating very dry, poor quality grass and still cycling; that is exactly what is happening at CBV. This selection for genuine efficiency is now in its 29th year, and solid. As always, we will wait for the pregnancy test results before getting too excited!

On behalf of the CBV team we would like to thank you all for your strong and loyal support through 2009, and to wish all you a Joyous Christmas and Happy Wet New Year.

In combination, all the best to you from

Alf and Alf Jr.

Predictable, Functional Genetics....

Fertile, Gentle, Growthy & Adapted....

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CBV in Latin America.

Alf Collins Jr



*Cattle at the Zuccolillo Family Property
"Don Pedro" Paraguay*

During October and November I spent three weeks in Brazil and Paraguay visiting with CBV clients and friends in both countries. The fact that CBV has so much in common with these countries in climate, production, costs, and challenges always makes it an enjoyable visit. We have been active in Latin America since 1991.

In parts of Brazil they had received a major season turnaround, and received more than four times their monthly rainfall for the month of October. The amount of water and ability to grow grass in some areas of Brazil is simply amazing. Another stand out was that the **cattle prices**, while I was there, were at \$80-\$120 per head more than we are receiving in Australia. **No MSA, LPA, NLIS; no property audits, and no extra book keeping.** These countries **are selling into the same markets as Australia.** Cows are sold 180kg HCWT plus with no discount for grading and males are mostly sold entire with milk and two teeth with no discount for grade.



Cattle at the Prata Family Property in Brazil

If we think that our hype about alleged meat quality, and elaborate book keeping systems and costs in Australia will keep us competitive in the global meat market, I suggest that we think again. Here, I am certain that bureaucrats are ignorant in commerce.

I saw large herds of breeders all in early calving bands by month of calving and using CBV genetics. These producers are starting to make some real waves. Brazil beef exports, I was told, are now 28% of production with the same amount of cattle, and turn off age reduced from four to six years of age down to three years of age or less, over the last fifteen years.

Large areas of very good country in Brazil are now under sugar cane and in these areas cattle producers are feeding cattle with by-products from the sugar mill with excellent results. I also visited two large feedlots one of 10 000 head and the other 40 000 head in the wet tropics using grass silage and grain fattening entire males for export to Europe and Russia.

In Paraguay I was privileged to address the CEA 40th annual conference in Asuncion. This is the second time that CBV has presented at this conference. As Paraguay has no research body the producers conduct or source their own research. They bring in speakers from all around the world, and apply new ideas to their own properties then share and compare their practical experiences between each other. This is a very well organised event and pleasure to be part of.



Directors and Presenters for the CEA Conference

As a result of **their own research and development efforts**, I saw large areas of improved pastures in both wet and dry tropical areas. Pastures of Buffel, Rhodes, Panicum, Leucaena, Brachiaria, stylos and other legumes are rapidly gaining momentum. In an area known as the Chaco, I saw some country very similar to some of Central Queensland's best country. They receive 700mm to 1200mm of rain, and soils are very high in phosphorus. It was extremely dry while I was there, just like here, and still the cattle were in excellent condition.

There are some very organised and progressive cattle producers in Paraguay still developing and growing their businesses with a 'can-do' attitude that was a great experience to be around. Paraguay is also exporting beef into Europe for a higher price than we are achieving in Australia, and they will continue to grow these markets, I am sure.

CBV has formed an alliance with Araucaria Genetics Marcelo Vezozzo in Londrina, Parana, Brazil so this means semen is always available from some of our leading sires for most regions of Latin America. Some of these bulls have already proven results in Brazil and some are outstanding new sires. For semen, contact either CBV Australia, www.cbv.com.au; or Marcelo Vezozzo www.argen.com.br Ph 55 43 3315 3500 or email vezozzo@argen.com.br.

We take our involvement for the last two decades with cattle producers in Latin America very seriously, and are dedicated to a long and profitable development of our mutual interests. I appreciated the effort that many people made, for the success of my travels. Thank you very much.

Alf Collins Jr





In brief, of staff movements at CBV



Thank-you to Scott and Victoria Finger, with Jack, Angus, Maggie & Max. The Finger family has concluded three years management of Tondara Station, during which time they have achieved some outstanding milestones. Everyone of the family has been involved in the advancement of the property and its level of function, on all fronts.

This involved the budgeting of cash and resources, land and pasture development, stock recording, marketing, cattle husbandry, and the tidiness of homes and gardens and sheds. Victoria's garden plan is beautiful. The gardeners amongst you will fully understand what is needed in time and commitment to achieve this result. They brought a level of personal effort to Tondara that was a great credit to them all. What was outstanding was how both Scott and Victoria and each of their children backed each other, and contributed personally for the big picture of Tondara and its cattle. They achieved a pinnacle to have over 60% of their calf crop born, branded and paddocked by 30th September, 2009....Brilliant.

Their grasp of pasture management, learning on the run, gave me great joy. To see those keen children each develop from Gove town kids, to competent bush kids on motor bikes and horses was splendid.

They will no doubt be a great asset in their new pursuits with their integrity, attitude and application.

The coal mining industry and the Health department will benefit greatly. Thank you very much.



Welcome to the Conaghans

Mick and Lara Conaghan, with Madeleine, Campbell and Reade, have moved from Gove to manage 'Gundaroo' Station at Nebo. Mick was reared just down the river 25 km, at 'Barmount' Station, and Lara was CBV cattle manager for three years, until they married. They bring broad experience to us.



Tony and Iria Carrett and Samantha and Luke have moved from 'Gundaroo' Station, to manage 'Tondara' Station, 80 km NNW of Collinsville, where they first started with us as casuals some three years ago. They have immersed themselves in all phases of management and mobility, gaining knowledge and experience rapidly. Tony thrives on the challenges.

Matt Boyd continues as overseer there, and ensures smooth transition. Thanks to Matthew for his keen efforts this year, fitting in so well to family life with the Fingers, and keen interest in the seed stock herds, both at Tondara and Belah Valley.

Humility in the face of Natures marvels seems more appropriate than arrogant assertions that we can forecast and even control a climate that is ruled by the sun and stars..

~Nigel Calder, "The Chilling Stars"~



CBV Newsletter

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CBV is committed to supplying quality genetics to our clients. We would appreciate your feedback and thoughts on our cattle and publications.

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We would like to expand the contact list for our newsletter distribution. We would appreciate email or postal addresses of progressive and interested people.

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If you would like to discontinue your CBV subscription please notify me,

I would like to wish all readers and their families a Merry Christmas and a safe New Year,

Dallas...