

Australia's National Beef Exposition  
7 May to 12 May 2012



James Lawrence Pavilion  
Bos Indicus Room

Wednesday 9 May 2012  
9.00 am to 11.00 am

## Tools for achieving sustainable profits for northern herds

Hosted by



### Presentations and speakers include:

#### **Financial management for the northern beef business**

##### ***presented by Phil Holmes***

While some individual beef businesses in northern Australia are prospering, the broader industry is trying to service crippling debt, re-build herd numbers after a dry decade and keep finance houses at bay as land prices continue to fall. As well, too many northern beef herds are chronically under-productive as a function of management and genetics. Unfortunately for too many northern beef businesses, there is more pain to come. That's the bad news.

The good news is that it need not be like this. Acquiring the necessary business skills, making genetics work for you rather than against you and having a deep understanding of the key business and herd profit drivers will open up a whole new world. You make the critical transition from running a herd or a property that gives you a day job, to running a business.

#### **Management systems for northern beef herds *presented by Ian Braithwaite***

In northern beef production systems, seasonal mating is difficult and year round mating systems are therefore the norm. However, in order to remain profitable and sustainable, herd management systems need to be developed that time calving and subsequent re-mating of cows to coincide with the time of the year when the most feed is available, the wet season. Variability in rainfall means stocking rate needs to be adjusted at the end of each wet season to match the available pasture during the following dry season.

Ian has developed production systems for northern beef herds that allow this to occur. His systems aim to get the majority of cows calving at the right time of the year while providing management options for cows that don't. Ian will outline the

importance of replacement heifer management, bull selection and nutritional management and provide a step by step “how to” guide to developing a more effective northern beef breeder management system for your herd.

## **Using your records to better define production problems *presented by Lee Taylor***

To effectively describe production problems in extensive beef herds, good production records are a must. Lee will highlight what can be done with production records to identify problems, likely causes and suggest some possible solutions.

### **About the speakers:**

#### **Dr Phil Holmes**

Phil is the principal of Holmes & Company, a Sydney and Wagga Wagga based firm providing business information to agriculture and other non-agricultural small businesses.

Holmes & Company advise corporate and family farm businesses that extend from the New England of NSW to Victoria, the Bass Strait Islands, Tasmania, South Australia and the Northern Territory. Holmes & Company also advises national and multi-national firms who provide essential inputs for Australian agriculture.

Phil’s special interests are commercial beef production, agricultural sustainability, finance and equity investing and general business performance. He is currently completing a PhD on the environmental and economic sustainability of arid rangeland beef production. Phil chairs the board of directors of a number of private companies.

#### **Dr Ian David Braithwaite**

Ian is arguably the leading bovine and beef production veterinarian in Northern Australia with over 30 years’ experience in the northern cattle industry. His skills were honed managing the health and disease eradication of the Stanbroke cattle herd numbering 200,000 head in the mid 1980’s. He currently advises to the leading corporate and private cattle herds in north Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia. His interests are in sustainable whole herd beef production systems, including the financial, management and operational aspects. He is currently influencing the management of over 120,000 head of cattle for clients, and also has an intensive grazing operation of his own turning off 550 steers annually from his own property in Far North Queensland.

#### **Lee Taylor**

Lee is a senior livestock veterinarian with Pfizer Animal Health based in Toowoomba. Lee has over 20 years’ experience as a veterinarian working in both intensive and extensive cattle production systems in Australia and north America.

Pfizer Animal Health supplies a comprehensive range of research based animal health products to the cattle industry in Australia. This includes a wide range of antibiotics, drenches, vaccines and genetic tools. Lee provides technical support for these livestock products and their application across northern Australia. There is a saying that describing the problem is half of the solution and better defining production problems is an area where Lee has a special interest.