



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development



beefup FORUM

Fitzroy Crossing, WA

THURSDAY 7 – FRIDAY 8 MARCH 2024

Hear about the latest on-farm R&D

•
Have your say on R&D priorities in your region

•
Gain insights, tools and next steps to beef up your business

Welcome

BeefUp Forums are held throughout northern Australia and are developed by regional Working Groups in collaboration with the BeefUp Coordinator (AA&P Events) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA). The Kimberley BeefUp forum is brought to you by MLA, the Kimberley Pilbara Cattleman's Association (KPCA) and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).

Thank you to the Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee (RBRC) for their support in planning this event.

Thank you also to our event sponsors – Milne AgriGroup, Grundfos, and Lakeside Minerals.

MLA's BeefUp Forums have been developed to:

- give you an opportunity to see and hear about what industry are delivering in R&D, adoption programs and support services
- highlight current and completed research that is relevant to you
- hear about your regional RD&A priorities
- provide practical tools and information to beef up your business.

BeefUp forums are about helping northern beef producers identify ways to improve the productivity and profitability of their beef enterprises. After today, use this booklet to find the information, tools and contacts you need to put your ideas into action.

Event location

Fitzroy Lodge and Rodeo Grounds

277 Great Northern Highway
Fitzroy Crossing, WA 6765

Forum Coordinator Contact

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AA&P Events

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About MLA

Meat & Livestock Australia Limited (MLA) delivers research, development and marketing services to Australia's cattle, sheep and goat producers. MLA has approximately 50,000 livestock producer members who have stakeholder entitlements in the company.



Program

Thursday 7 March	
11.30am	Registrations open
12 noon	Lunch at Fitzroy Lodge
Movers and shakers – opportunities for the Kimberley’s beef industry	
1.00pm	Welcome Barb Camp / Chair, Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee
1.10pm	Market insights Sarah Strachan / Group Manager – Adoption & Commercial Services, MLA Valeska / Regional Manager – South East Asia, MLA Spencer Whitaker / Market Development Manager – Asia Pacific, MLA
1.40pm	What’s new in the Kimberley Panel discussion with Q&A, facilitated by Harriet Bawden, MLA Sarah Strachan / Group Manager – Adoption & Commercial Services, MLA Trevor Price / Program Manager – Northern Beef Development, WA DPIRD Bron Christensen / CEO, KPCA
2.20pm	Afternoon Tea
Innovation in the Kimberley	
2.40pm	AgTech - a producer’s perspective Mel McDonald / Northern Hub Node Manager, KPCA Chris Morrow / Producer, Nerrima Station Jo Stoate / Producer, Anna Plains Rick Ford / Producer, Fossil Downs Station
3.40pm	Travel to Fitzroy Rodeo Grounds
Buying better bulls	
4.00pm	Current and emerging genetic selection tools Matt Wolcott / Australian Genetics & Breeding Unit
4.30pm	Pick your bull Facilitated by Matt Wolcott
5.10pm	Bull soundness assessment Michael Laurence / Program Manager – Animal Wellbeing, MLA Jonathan O’Donnell / Broome Cattle Vets
5.40pm	Wrap-up Barb Camp / Chair, Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee
5.45pm	Return to Fitzroy Lodge for drinks and dinner

Friday 8 March

7:00 am	Breakfast
What's in store for 2024	
8.00am	Welcome Barb Camp / RBRC Chair
8.05am	Strategies for managing variable seasons and markets David McLean / Resource Consulting Services
9.00am	Harvest Road's integrated beef supply chain Ben Dwyer / Chief Operating Officer, Harvest Road
9.30am	Looking to the season ahead Panel discussion with Q&A, facilitated by Barb Camp Anne Marie Huey / Producer, Dampier Downs Ben Dwyer / Chief Operating Officer, Harvest Road Jardine MacDonald / Rangelands NRM David McLean / Resource Consulting Services
10.15 am	Morning tea
Tackling some of our regional challenges	
10.30am	Finding the best team Panel Q&A facilitated by Lauren Bell /KPCA James Camp / Producer Beth Schafer / Producer Raqual Humphries / Remote Contract Cooks John Boote / DroverAg Agricultural Recruitment
11.30am	R&D for animal wellbeing Michael Laurence / Program Manager – Animal Wellbeing, MLA
12 noon	Wrap-up Barb Camp / Producer Chair, Kimberley RBRC
12.15 pm	Lunch served (take-away option for those wanting to hit the road)
1.00pm	Close



RBRC Representatives



Chair

Barb Camp

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Barb came to the Kimberley in 2017 after completing a degree in Equine Science in the UK. Since then, she has been passionately involved in the Northern Beef Industry. This love for research and progression in the industry of animal husbandry led her becoming of Chair of the Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee in 2022 following on from assisting her husband James in the same role previously. Barb and her family currently manage Napier Downs Station on the Gibb River Road.



Secretary

Annie Bone

P: 0419 921 659

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Annie is a Beef Development Officer in DPIRD's Northern Beef Development team, based in Broome. Not coming from a farming background but having an eye for adventure, 2020 saw her relocate north for a stint on a cattle station in WA's Gascoyne region.

She has an interest in regenerative agriculture and is keen to focus on the continuous improvement of the region's pastures, livestock nutrition, drought preparedness, animal welfare and herd genetics. Annie leads the phosphorous supplementation trial for northern WA and is Secretary of the Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee.



Anne Marie Huey

P: RBRC Representative

E: annemarie@dampierdowns.com

Anne Marie Huey grew up on a small cattle property in North Queensland. She has been co-managing Dampier Downs Station for the last eight years.

Prior to becoming a full-time pastoralist, Anne Marie spent around ten years working as a research assistant and extension officer for the Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australian governments.

Anne Marie also operates an agricultural consultancy business and works with the Northern Australia Climate Program through the University of Southern Queensland.

MLA Representatives



Harriet Bawden

Project Manager – Northern Beef Adoption
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: hbawden@mla.com.au

Harriet is an agricultural communications and extension professional with a focus on supporting on-farm adoption of new research, technologies and practices. She is currently the Project Manager for Northern Beef Adoption at MLA. Harriet works closely with industry and project partners across Queensland, NT and northern WA to deliver programs including BeefUp forums, the EDGENetwork and FutureBeef.



Sarah Strachan

Group Manager – Adoption & Commercialisation
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: sstrachan@mla.com.au

Sarah oversees the delivery and development of the Meat Standards Australia (MSA), Producer Adoption, Livestock Genetics and On-farm Sustainability programs within MLA. These programs are driven by the ambitions of the Red Meat 2030 plan to grow the investment in adoption to help double the value of sales from high quality Australian red meat.

The programs achieve this by converting research into commercial services for businesses along the entire supply chain, as well as supporting the goal of the red meat industry becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This includes providing a diverse range of options for producers to engage with and apply research outcomes into their production systems such as the well-known EDGENetwork, Producer Demonstration Sites and Profitable Grazing Systems programs.

Sarah has a Bachelor of Rural Science from the University of New England and has worked with MLA for over 20 years, spending 18 of these working in the MSA program.



Michael Laurence

Program Manager – Animal Wellbeing
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: [mlaurence@mla.com.au](mailto:m Laurence@mla.com.au)

Michael joined MLA in March 2020. He is the Program Manager of the Animal Wellbeing portfolio where he has responsibility for research and adoption investments in animal health, welfare and biosecurity. Michael has been a cattle veterinarian for 24 years and has practiced in rural Australia and the UK.

He was head of production animal medicine as an academic at Murdoch University for the 14 years up to his appointment at MLA. His research focus during this time was on the measurement of the pain of surgical husbandry as well as disease management in intensive supply chains. Michael continues to supervise PhD students and conduct research, and has a passion for translating improvement in on-farm animal welfare into measurable value for producers.

Speakers and Presentations

Welcome



Barb Camp

Chair of Kimberley RBRC

E: jcbm@live.com.au

Notes



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Thursday, 7 March – Day 1

Movers and shakers – opportunities

Kimberley's beef industry

Market insights



Sarah Strachan

Group Manager – Adoption & Commercialisation
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: sstrachan@mla.com.au



Valeska

Regional Manager – South East Asia
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: vvaleska@mla.com.au

Bio:

Valeska is the Meat & Livestock Australia Regional Manager for Southeast Asia. She has been with MLA since 2015, working across animal health, trade and marketing areas. With her veterinary background, Valeska is strongly passionate about livestock management and good meat production. Prior to joining MLA, Valeska was with the Australian Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry and worked across policy and program areas before being posted to Indonesia in 2011.



Spencer Whitaker

Regional Manager – South East Asia
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: swhitaker@mla.com.au

Bio:

Spencer Whitaker is MLA's Market Development Manager – South East Asia. In this role, Spencer works within the livestock export program to develop and implement strategies across the Asia Pacific that support market growth, productivity improvements and sustainability of the livestock export trade. Spencer also works with the South East Asia in-market team to deliver market knowledge and grow customer demand for Australian red meat and livestock in Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines.

Session overview:

Australian red meat has a key position on the world stage as a trusted source of high-quality protein. Whilst Australia is not the largest exporter, it remains competitive in markets with ability to pay and increasing disposal income.

This session will provide an update on the trends, issues and opportunities affecting key domestic and export markets for Australian beef and livestock.

Snapshots:

Domestic

Australia remains the largest single destination of Australian beef. Cost of living challenges have shifted the focus to items with 'better value' for shoppers, diners, retailers and foodservice operators. Australian red meat is well placed to continue to meet this demand, with its quality, taste and uniquely wide mix of products, as well as current lower prices.

China Mainland

China Mainland has been Australia's largest red meat export market by volume for several years, despite on-going market access challenges. Long-term import demand drivers are strong, as China's affluent consumer base continues to expand.

United States (US)

Products that put emphasis on health, sustainability or animal welfare have been gaining traction, particularly with affluent consumers. Continued communication of our strong value proposition remains critical to maintain and elevate our position in the market.

Japan

Japan remains a critically important trade partner for the Australian red meat industry - with a long-established place in the market that is considered very well suited to a variety of Western and Japanese-style everyday meals.

MENA and South-East Asia

The young, and increasingly affluent consumer base in MENA and South-East Asia is driving red meat consumption.

In MENA, there is growing acceptance of packaged meat products purchased from modern retail, with exports growing in both volume and value. However for both food security and traditional celebrations, being able to buy live animals remains important to them. Israel and Turkey are interested in high-value cattle, and many are fattened in local feedlots before being sent on to processing.

In South-East Asia, Indonesia is Australia's largest red meat and livestock export market, with the largest middle class in the region. Cattle primarily come from northern Australia, and most are fattened in Indonesian feedlots for several months before being processed.

Through the Live Export Program, a joint initiative between MLA and LiveCorp, staff work closely with the Indonesian feedlot industry, and with the Animal Welfare Officers (AWOs) employed in feedlots and abattoirs to help train staff and oversee compliance with Australian regulations. They also provide workshops to improve the knowledge of Indonesian farmers about breeding and looking after cattle.

Vietnam already enjoy beef in local dishes quite frequently and are spending more on premium and imported red meat products as disposable incomes increase.

Next steps:

- 1. Download MLA’s latest Global Market Snapshots - mla.com.au/prices-markets
 - 2. Find out more about the Live Export Program through the LiveCorp website – livecorp.com.au
-

Notes

My action items:

What's new in the Kimberley



Sarah Strachan

Group Manager – Adoption & Commercial Services, MLA

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Trevor Price

Program Manager

Northern Beef Development, WA DPIRD

E: Trevor.Price@dpird.wa.gov.au

Bio:

Trevor Price joined the Department of Agriculture and Food, WA in December 2016 as the Manager Productivity and Profitability for the Northern Beef Futures Project. He started his working life as a stockman in the Northern Territory after graduating from Katherine Rural College. In the early 2000s he established a Beef Seedstock operation in north-west NSW breeding tropically adapted *bos taurus* bulls.

Trevor is currently the Program Manager Northern Beef Development with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development based in Kununurra.



Bron Christensen

Chief Executive Officer

Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen's Association

E: ceo@kpca.net.au

Bio:

With more than 25 years' experience across a wide range of industries including beef, cotton, irrigation and rural health, Bron is the new CEO of the Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen's Association. Raised on a mixed farming/grazing property in Theodore, Central Queensland, Bron and her husband own and operate their own grazing property in her hometown.

Bron has also served in key leadership roles including Executive Officer with The Leucaena Network, Secretariat for the North Australia Beef Research Council (NABRC), Company Secretary for Theodore Water Pty Ltd and Regional Manager and myBMP Auditor for Cotton Australia. Bron has served on various boards and advisory groups including Chair of the National Farmers Federation (NFF) Farm Business and Economics committee, a member of AgForce's Ag Business committee, and as a Director on the Central Queensland Health and Hospital Service (CQHHS). Bron brings extensive experience in leadership and project management for the betterment of the Australian agricultural industry.

Session overview:

There are many organisations working together to deliver regionally-relevant investment in R&D, adoption programs, support services, marketing and policy to enhance the profitability and sustainability of the Kimberley beef industry. This session will highlight some of those investments.

The panel, representing Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen’s Association (KPCA) will provide an update on priorities put forward by producers at previous regional events and respond to audience Q&A.

This includes:

- opportunities for improved pastures
- biosecurity
- market access and pathways to market
- supply chain diversification and value-adding
- carbon neutrality and environmental credentials for beef businesses
- improved tools for on-farm decision making and livestock production.

Next steps:

- Sign up to myMLA for a one-stop-shop of personalised information and programs near you – mla.com.au/mymla
 - Subscribe to our newsletters – MLA’s *The Weekly* and KPCA’s *Monthly milestones*.
 - Talk to representatives from MLA, DPIRD and KPCA at the event today.
-

Notes

My action items:

MLA's EDGEnetwork® (EDGE) delivers northern research & development and helps red meat producers improve productivity and profitability. Face-to-face workshops allow producers to develop new skills, learn from others in the industry and access the latest research, leading to effective practice change in their businesses.

Grazing fundamentals EDGE

Foundations for grazing production

A one-day workshop to give you a broad understanding of grazing production system components and the core, scientifically-backed principles to optimise grazing land productivity.

Breeding EDGE

Build a more reproductive herd

A three-day workshop to evaluate the performance of your breeding program and identify strategies for higher productivity and reduced reproductive loss.



Nutrition EDGE

Nutrition fundamentals to hit production goals

A three-day workshop to understand optimal use of supplements and the nutrition required to reduce mortality, improve fertility and boost weight gains in your herd.

Image: Tim Scholtz

Business EDGE

Know your business, grow your business

A two-day workshop to enhance your financial management and improve business efficiency and profitability. You will also develop strategies to deal with financial risk and external market factors.



Grazing land management EDGE

Strategies for long-lasting grazing potential

A three-day workshop to thoroughly understand your grazing environment and strategically manage your grazing business to optimise land condition and productivity in the long-term.

Carbon EDGE

Taking carbon from a concept to an action plan

Carbon EDGE is a new two-day training program for the red meat industry, providing participants with an understanding of the opportunities for emissions reduction and carbon storage activities in a livestock grazing business.



Innovation in the Kimberley

AgTech - a producer's perspective



Mel McDonald

Northern Hub Node Manager,
KPCA

E: kimberleymanager@kpcanet.au

Bio:

Mel is passionate about beef production which supports healthy landscapes and thriving communities. Having enjoyed a great variety of roles in the northern beef industry from Jillaroo to Assistant Manager and Regional Landcare Facilitator, to now working both with the Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen's Association as well as with her partner, Dave, in their own beef business.

The KPCA Node Manager role, supported by the Northern Hub, enables Mel to play a key role working with producers to ensure their ideas and issues are being heard as well as ensuring new programs are developed so that resources hit the ground to provide support where needed most. Mel delights in merging what producers are saying with opportunities to bring resources to the Northwest to share, cooperate, learn, try and/or implement things to improve beef production as well as the health and happiness of landscapes, people and communities.



Chris Morrow

Producer
Nerrima Station

E: chris@emanuelbrothers.com

Bio:

Chris manages Nerrima station and has been in his current role for nine years. Nerrima is 203,000ha and runs a self-replacing herd of 15,000 red Brangus cattle.

The vision at Nerrima Pastoral company is to maintain a highly productive herd with a maximum sale yield. Nerrima runs a fully segregated control mated herd, which has boosted productivity by 20% within the past four years. With the use of an electronic data collection system over the past nine years the team have been able to gather accurate data for every animal on the station. They can make critical management decisions and forecast accurately which is a key tool in the business.

**Jo Stoate**

Anna Plains Station
Napier Downs

E: jostoate6725@gmail.com

Bio:

Joanna grew up on Anna Plains Station in the Kimberley and attended Port Headland School of the Air. After completing boarding school in Perth, she attained a Bachelor of Business in Agribusiness from Marcus Oldham Agricultural College in Geelong. Joanna was an assistant manager on a cattle station in the Northern Territory and now manages Anna Plains Station alongside her parents. Joanna is passionate about improving productivity through the use of technology with a strong focus on land condition and the natural environment.

**Rick Ford**

Producer, Fossil
Downs Station

E: Rick_ford@hancockagriculture.com.au

Bio:

Rick was born and raised on his family's cattle property in Central Queensland. Upon completing school he obtained his commercial helicopter licence and headed to the NT flying and working on the ground. It was here that he met his wife Stacey and they were soon married, followed by four little girls. At age 28 he moved west to the Kimberley to manage Springvale station.

He saw the Kimberley as a place that was abundant in natural resources and held huge potential for growth in agriculture. Over the past 15 years he has been a very active member of the Kimberley's beef producing community and was one of the founding members of the KPCA, a much needed association for the North West. For the past eight years Rick has called Fossil Downs Station home. He is also WA General Manager for Hancock Agriculture.

Session overview:

It is an exciting time to be involved in the north west pastoral industry, with technological advances now available and continually developing to assist in our day-to-day operations. Rugged technologies, proven for use in harsh climates and remote areas, are changing the way pastoralists operate with real savings being realised through things like reduced travel to check on bores, improved decisions from herd data records, new ways to assess weight gains, pasture availability, pasture quality, and genetics, and much more.

Producers and industry can assist one another to navigate the wealth of options available and to make informed investment decisions. Through open and honest communication amongst producers, support personnel and technology providers the whole industry can advance. This session will explore some of the ways Kimberley producers are using tech and provide an account of their experiences for others to learn from.

“Satellite remote sensing represents a revolutionary tool used in modern agriculture and land management, offering unparalleled insights and benefits for enhancing productivity, sustainability, and decision-making” Rick Ford, General Manger Hancock Agriculture WA.

Key messages:

- New technology is improving and can help pastoralists with day-to-day operations.
- Variety provides options for different needs and preferences of users.
- Independent information can be sourced from peers, industry groups and various independent websites.
- Through open and honest communication amongst producers, support personnel and technology providers the whole industry can advance.
- Satellite remote sensed pasture data can assist with:
 - informed decision making around pastures, carry capacities and stocking rates
 - sustainability and improved land management
 - working to optimise dates around lick supplementation.

Next steps:

- KPCA Website: Kimberley and Pilbara local and independent fact sheets and resources: kpca.net.au
- FutureBeef: Producer experiences and other independent information: futurebeef.com.au
- MLA AgTech ROI Calculator – launching March – find it via myMLA > tools
- AgTechFinder: An independent marketplace helping Australian farmers and producers search, sort, and compare AgTech solutions
- AgTech Cetral: News plus a products and services directory. Part of the Beef Central Network: agtechcentral.com
- Australian Feedbase Monitor – sign up via mymla (mla.com.au/mymla)

Notes

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Information for producers

The Australian Feedbase Monitor is a world-first tool to help producers improve grazing management, forage budgeting and ground cover.



The Australian Feedbase Monitor provides:

- access to farm-level rolling monthly pasture biomass estimates for every Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) account holder, updated every five days
- regionally calibrated predictions based on more than 6,000 sites, using world-leading satellite monitoring and data analysis systems
- data showing the trends in pasture growth and ground cover dating back to 2017
- support for more objective and accurate feed budgeting, leading to sustainable grazing management decisions.

How will this tool help producers?

The Australian Feedbase Monitor will offer multiple benefits to producers and the wider red meat industry including:

- supporting more objective and timely grazing decisions allowing an increase in production and the ability to meet market specifications
- avoiding environmental or welfare issues in grazing enterprises due to increased ability to monitor and report on ground cover and pasture status and trends
- increased consumer confidence in the environmental stewardship of red meat producers.

How to sign up

Want free access to the Australian Feedbase Monitor? The free subscription to this tool can only be accessed by MLA members via [myMLA](#), so make sure you've registered for [myMLA](#) and linked it to your current Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) account: [mymla.com.au](#).



Not an MLA member?

You can still access the tool if you're not currently an MLA member:

- apply to be an MLA member (this process can take up to two weeks) at [mla.com.au/membership](#)
- sign up for a paid subscription through Cibo Labs: support@cibolabs.com.au

[mla.com.au/afm](#)

AFM news and updates: Sign up for MLA's e-newsletter, *The Weekly* ([mla.com.au/enews](#)), subscribe to *Feedback* magazine ([mla.com.au/feedback](#)) or follow MLA on social media.

Help with using the AFM: support@cibolabs.com.au

MLA membership support: membership@mla.com.au or 1800 023 100



Buying better bulls

Current and emerging genetic selection tools



Matt Wolcott

Australian Genetics & Breeding Unit
UNE

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Bio:

Matt has worked with the Animal Genetic and Breeding Unit (AGBU) since October 2004, to develop and improve genetic evaluation technologies for beef cattle breeders. Key areas of research have included new traits to describe female productivity in tropically adapted beef breeds, with a focus on reproductive performance and cow body composition. He is leading a new WA State Government funded project which aims to help beef breeders in the Kimberley and Pilbara develop breeding objectives which focus on profitability, and to develop new selection tools which will be tailored to WA's northern production systems and markets.

Session Overview

The choice of bull has a profound effect on the long-term performance of a breeding herd. This is because the average cow will produce six to eight progeny in a lifetime in the commercial herd while the bull may produce 120–150 progeny in four to five years of his working life.

Consequently, most genetic gain in a herd occurs through the bulls used. More than 80% of potential improvement in commercial herds depends on the bulls used relative to the females.

Therefore, your bull selection decisions will usually determine the direction of genetic change in your herd. The bulls used over the last few generations largely determine the genetic composition of any self-replacing herd.

For reproductive performance and genetic progress to be achieved, select and retain bulls:

- with measured genetic merit in economically important traits required to meet herd breeding objectives
- that have passed an ACV BULLCHECK® examination at purchase
- that are physically sound for at least several seasons without breaking down
- that can sire many calves in the shortest possible time at each mating period.

In a mating program, the purpose of bulls is to deliver the genetics to the progeny through fertilisation of the desired number of cows.

To achieve this objective it is important to use bulls that:

- are structurally and reproductively sound
- have adequate production of high-quality sperm and semen
- have good libido
- have a good temperament, e.g. slower flight speed (or time)
- are free of reproductive diseases and genetic mutations.

The failure of a bull to reproduce can be an expensive exercise because of production losses.

A fertile bull will impregnate 60% of 50 normal cycling females in one cycle and 90% of 50 normal cycling females in three cycles:

- 30 females in the first cycle
- 12 females in the second cycle
- four females in the third cycle.

Bulls can also be selected to genetically improve the reproductive performance of the breeding herd by producing replacement heifers that reach puberty at an earlier age and have higher ability to cycle during lactation, i.e. have a reduced post-partum anoestrous interval. The Days to Calving (DTC) EBV and the scrotal size (SS) EBV can be used to achieve this goal, in addition to selecting bulls with high values for semen traits.

Key messages:

- Well-constructed selection indexes can identify bulls which will drive profitability in your herd.
 - Index effectiveness is dependent on recording in the stud sector for traits of economic importance.
 - Stud breeders can be informed by trait weightings to develop a targeted recording program to meet their clients' breeding objectives.
-

Next steps:

- There is excellent information on understanding and applying BREEDPLAN EBVs and selection indexes at: breedplan.une.edu.au/help-centre/
 - Bred Well Fed Well is a one-day workshop on improving productivity and profitability through good breeding and feeding: mla.com.au/bredwellfedwell
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Notes

Bull soundness assessment



Jonathan O'Donnell

Broome Cattle Vets

E: jonathon@broomecattlevets.com

Bio

Hailing from a farm in Victoria originally, Jonathon O'Donnell stands out as a seasoned veterinarian making waves in the challenging top end of Australia. With roots deeply embedded in farming, he brings a unique perspective to his work.

With a passion for animal welfare, Jonathan promotes the use of pain relief in animal husbandry practices. He is keen to see genetic improvement in the northern beef herds and strongly supports cull cow sales. His extensive experience and commitment make him a trusted leader in advancing agricultural practices in the Kimberley region.

Session Overview

A BULLCHECK® examination provides assurance to the purchaser of the bull that at the time of examination he was shown to be reproductively sound. Bulls will still need to be monitored for injury, disease and nutrition status which may impact bull fertility after the examination.

The BULLCHECK® examination involves assessing, by a veterinarian, each of these key components to provide an indication of likely fertility. It is carried out prior to sale or purchase; and annually for existing bulls.

Such an examination involves:

- checking that the bull's overall structure including legs, feet and external reproductive organs are free from defects
- assessing the sheath, scrotum and testicles
- measuring and recording scrotal circumference to ensure it is within the acceptable limits
- palpating of the testicles to check for normal tone, size and function
- collecting a semen sample for microscopic examination to assess the quality and percentage of normal sperm.

Bull buyers are reminded to be familiar with and seek the Australian Cattle Veterinarians (ACV) BULLCHECK® Certificate of Approval, which is designated by the ACV symbol in association with the following five categories:

- scrotum
- physical
- semen
- morphology
- serving if indicated.

The BULLCHECK® examination is not an absolute guarantee of fertility. The report indicates risks associated with reduced fertility at the time of testing. The examination is not a genetic evaluation of reproductive traits, but an indication of the animal's present reproductive function.

Bull buyers should be aware the sale and relocation process may have a temporary impact on fertility. This may be due to the bull's exposure to stress from the auction process, relocation, poor nutrition and possibly diseases they have not previously experienced. For this reason, bulls should be purchased at least two months before mating to allow time to acclimatise and adjust in their new environment before mating commences.

Next steps

- Learn more about setting a breeding objective and selecting animals through the Breeding EDGE workshop: mla.com.au/edgenetwork

Notes:



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REGISTRATIONS OPEN

**SCAN
FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION**

5-6 September 2024

Sandfire Roadhouse Pilbara, WA



Friday, 8 March – Day 2

What's in store for 2024

Strategies for managing variable seasons and markets



David McLean

Chief of Delivery
Resource Consulting Services

E: dmclean@rcsaustralia.com.au

Bio:

As RCS' Chief of Delivery, David McLean specialises in ensuring that people have the knowledge, support and inspiration to perform at their best in agriculture. He provides a combination of hands-on experience, technical knowledge, facilitation skills and high-level analysis.

David originates from fifth-generation sheep and cattle grazing family from south-west Queensland, Australia. He received first class honours in a Bachelor of Agricultural Science, Rural Technology and holds a Cert. IV in Training and Assessment along with training and extensive research in facilitation, communication, ecology, production systems and business analysis. He started his association with RCS as a client on a large time-control-grazing property between Richmond and Croydon in north Queensland. During this time, he was involved in all aspects of managing the intensive grazing business, along with agistment enterprises on properties ranging from Georgetown to Boulia.

After working at a practical level with principles promoted by RCS, David started full time work as a professional advisor and educator with the company in 2007. Now Chief of Delivery, David is leading a devoted team of professionals as they work with producers across Australia. David's background, combined with his professional approach, has led him to become a highly sought-after presenter and consultant across Australia. He delivers the full suite of RCS education programs including the Farming and Grazing for Profit Schools and Executive Link facilitation. He also provides on farm and remote one on work with businesses across Australia.

This session is supported by the West Kimberley LDC as well as KPCA and the Northern Hub through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.



Harvest Road's integrated supply chain



Ben Dwyer

Chief Operating Officer
Harvest Road

E: Ben.dwyer@harvestroad.com

Bio:

Ben Dwyer is Harvest Road's Chief Operating Officer for Agribusiness – Pastoral, Backgrounding and Feeding Facilities.

He is a senior executive in beef industry operations with an in-depth understanding of cattle and beef integrated supply chains.

Ben has extensive beef industry and pastoral experience, spending several years working across the top end of Australia, in the east Kimberley, NT and North Queensland, as well as overseeing properties in the Pilbara, Central, Southern & Western Queensland and Northern NSW. Through these experiences he has developed an in-depth understanding of the Australian cattle and beef supply chain potential.

Ben is focused on genetics, animal welfare and building biodiversity in the productive and arid rangelands while driving profitability into the cattle and beef industry.

Session overview:

Harvest Road:

- Harvest Road's vision is to deliver Australia's best sustainable produce to the world.
 - With six generations of agricultural heritage and a deep commitment to sustainability.
 - Using innovative technology and methods to produce the highest quality food products.
 - Providing ethical and sustainable market-leading agricultural food, representative of the best Australia has to offer.

Our integrated supply chain:

The integrated supply chain consists of leaseholds in the Kimberley, Pilbara and Gascoyne regions, and three intensive farming aggregations. The system integrates extensive breeding, extensive backgrounding, intensive backgrounding, feedlot, processing, utilising the strengths of regions in WA. Harvest Road's current integrated supply chain delivers approximately **13%** of Harvey Beef's total processing capacity, which leaves **86%** of Harvey's processing capacity to be sourced from WA beef producers. The purpose of building an integrated supply chain within the WA cattle industry is consistent quality and quantity of end products from Harvey Beef, through seasonal and market cycles and engage with and influence producers at all stages of supply chain.

Other ventures in the group include an irrigated horticulture business at Carnarvon which produces mangoes, sweet potatoes, and agave (for production of tequila), and our Aquaculture business Leeuwin Coast.

Animal welfare:

Harvest Road remains steadfast in advancing its animal welfare standards, employing the assessment through the 'five domains model' which assesses nutrition, environment, health, behaviour and mental state. This approach evaluates the positive and negative experiences that an animal will have. Measuring animal welfare involves monitoring behaviour, hormones or chemical indicators, sensory indicators, and biomarkers.

Genetics:

Harvest Road's breeding programs centre on two main herd compositions, both focusing on herd genetics for fertility and eating quality (EQI). One herd is based on a red flat back utilising Droughtmaster and Red Brahman X cows with a composite red bull that consists of Belmont Red, Red Angus, Senepol and Bonsmara. The second herd is a stabilising Ultrablack herd.

Building sustainable systems:

Harvest Road is endeavouring to achieve sustainable productivity in our extensive and intensive business units which include breeding, backgrounding and feedlotting. On our breeding properties, practices include breeding and selecting for fertility, segregating breeders into calving groups, pregnancy testing and removing unproductive animals. Backgrounding focuses on selecting animals that suit the system and managing nutrition and supplements to optimise performance.

Monitoring landscapes is important to determine any changes occurring over time, our goal as custodians of some of Western Australia's most pristine landscapes is to ensure we manage the biodiversity and animal production for the long-term future. The Harvest Road management team appreciate that we are the custodians of environment for future generations. The push for sustainable management includes varying stocking rate to seasonal and pasture conditions, monitoring and measuring rangeland and pasture condition, and wet season spelling.

Harvest Road has committed to regeneration of damaged rangelands, implementing measures including reducing stocking rates, remedial earthworks, and building collaborative relationships with government departments. Our biodiversity monitoring program, initiated in 2023, utilises existing PPMS and

Key Messages:

- Harvest Road's desire is to work with all WA producers to ensure high quality and consistent quantity of excellent meat-eating index products through Harvey Beef.
- Harvest Road has focused on animal welfare and genetics in breeding programs by implementing practices such as comprehensive health assessments and selective breeding to enhance the health, productivity, and profitability of livestock.
- Investing in sustainable land management is important, but putting the time in to measuring and monitoring changes is the most important step.

Notes



Are your heifers deficient in Phosphorus?

We are seeking expressions of interest from producers to be involved in our Phosphorus trial.

What's involved?

- 30 head for tail bleeding by qualified personnel in your first-round muster either this year or next.
- Faecal sampling
- Bloods and faecal samples will be sent off and analysed.
- If the results come back as:
 - Deficient** in Phosphorous a one-on-one consulting session with a qualified nutritionist will be arranged.
 - Not deficient** in Phosphorous you will be notified, and no further commitment is needed.

There is no cost involved for participants

Note: This project spans two consecutive years, with 2023 sampling concluded. Future interest is focused on 2024 sampling. Due to limited positions, early registration is advised.

Register your interest

Please contact Annie Bone at 0409 921 659 or annie.bone@dpird.wa.gov.au

Looking to the season ahead – Panel discussion with Q&A



Barb Camp

Facilitator

E: jcbm@live.com.au



Anne Marie Huey

RBRC Representative

E: annemarie@dampierdowns.com



Ben Dwyer

Chief Operating Officer
Harvest Road

E: Ben.dwyer@harvestroad.com





Jardine MacDonald

Rangelands NRM

E: jardinem@rangelandswa.com.au

Bio:

Jardine grew up in the Perth Hills with extended family in the pastoral industry, which together instilled a reverence for land stewardship and agriculture. Trained as a hydrogeologist, in 2018 self study of Natural Sequence Farming while working in the mining industry reconnected Jardine’s training to his passion for agricultural stewardship, and in 2019 he began working with Rangelands NRM in Broome. Working with Kimberley and Pilbara pastoralists, by 2020 he had seen first-hand successful land regeneration with high cost mechanical intervention hinging on the overarching power of grazing and rest management. Jardine is lucky and grateful for the mentoring and teaching from many pastoralists in his role with NRM, especially through the West Kimberley LCDC.

Jardine is currently program manager for Rangelands NRM in Broome with his family of four. His focus is soil, catchment health and regenerative pastoralism, which encompasses fire management and Indigenous cultural awareness in our context. He continues training to be accredited in soil microbiology assessment, and as an EOVS Monitor with the Australian Holistic Management Cooperative.

His mission is soil regeneration to support thriving landscapes and agriculture, with the ambition that our next generation inherits a world of increasing health, joy and abundance.



David McLean

Resource Consulting Services

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Notes

My action items:

Tackling some of our regional challenges

Finding the best team – Panel Q&A



Lauren Bell

Aboriginal Pastoral Academy Manager
Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen's Association

E: workforce@kpca.net.au

Bio:

Lauren has over a decade's experience in the northern beef industry; working on stations, in live export yards and as a pastoral trainer/assessor for North Regional TAFE.



James Camp

Manager
Napier Downs

E: James.camp@acequity.com.au

Bio:

James is a fourth-generation stockman whose family has a long history of involvement in Kimberley Beef. He grew up on properties and spent most of his young adult life on his family block, Kalyeeda, on the Fitzroy before recently moving to Napier Downs. A previous chair of the Beef Research Committee, he has a great passion in furthering the local industry.



Beth Schafer

Manager
Liveringa Station

E: Liveringa@hancockagriculture.com.au

Bio:

Beth is an experienced industry professional with over eight years in the Kimberley pastoral industry and is currently the Manager of Liveringa Station. Passionate about every aspect of the cattle industry, she brings a wealth of experience and expertise to her role. As an executive member of the Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen's Association (KPCA), Beth is deeply committed to advancing the Northern Agriculture Industry, embracing its potential for growth and improvement. With her unwavering dedication and keen insight, Beth continues to be a driving force in shaping the future of the Kimberley's agricultural landscape.



Raquel Humpherries

Owner Remote Contract Cooks

Raq's Kitchen

E: ruralandremotecoops@gmail.com

Bio:

Raquel's passion for collaborating with others and her fascination with culinary arts in remote settings have driven her into a dynamic career. With a solid foundation in remote cooking, she continuously seeks avenues for enhancing her expertise and understanding in this domain. Raquel firmly holds the belief that exceptional food and a contented cook are essential elements for a thriving stock camp. She advocates for a supportive environment where teamwork fosters growth and success, affirming her conviction that everyone has the potential to excel given the right circumstances.



John Boote

Founder

Drover Ag

E: jobs@droverag.com.au

Bio:

Founder of Drover Ag, John Boote, is passionate about seeing young people placed or trained into good agricultural jobs. After many years managing mixed farming and Wagyu breeding operations in Victoria and South Australia, and pastoral operations in the NT, John and his family moved to Gympie, Queensland in 2016.

In 2019, Drover Ag was formed and has expanded across Australia, in many agricultural industries.



Session overview:

The Australian red meat industry is a significant employer, with direct employment in the sector representing approximately 1.5% of Australia’s key industry total employment in 2021-22.

However, pastoralists commonly find recruitment and retention a challenge. This is for many reasons, including:

- station roles often seen as transitional and an “experience” for young people
- shortage of skilled people in the industry
- losing skilled workers to other industries (e.g. mining, construction)
- regional and remote living, including reduced access to formal education and training, housing, amenities and services
- perception and understanding of agricultural careers by people not familiar with the industry.

The BeefUp forum will get insight from two recruitment specialists about how pastoral businesses can position themselves to be more attractive to prospective employees, and hear from two local pastoralists about their processes for finding and keeping the right people in their team.

The panel will be facilitated by Lauren Bell, from the KPCA, who will also provide a benchmark on Kimberley pastoral remuneration rates, and highlight some of the programs available to producers to support workforce attraction and retention.

Related industry programs:

- KPCA Beef Connectors
- KPCA Livestock Leaders
- Aboriginal Pastoral Academy
- ‘Lead with Certainty’ PGS program

Relevant resources:

- [Factsheet](#): Large-scale employers – attracting and retaining staff in the pastoral livestock industry, available from FutureBeef
- [Staff retention on northern cattle stations – a survey of station staff](#), presented by Stacey Holzapfel at NABRUC 2023
- [Beef industry on-station workforce salary package calculator](#), available from FutureBeef
- [Beef industry on-station quality workforce handbook](#), available from FutureBeef
- [State of the Industry report 2023](#), Meat & Livestock Australia

Related industry programs:

- KPCA Beef Connectors
 - KPCA Livestock Leaders
 - Aboriginal Pastoral Academy
 - ‘Lead with Certainty’ PGS program
-

Notes



Michael Laurence

Program manager – Animal Wellbeing
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: mlaurence@mla.com.au

Session Overview:

In this presentation, Michael will share an update on research and development for livestock health and wellbeing.

This will include projects investigating options for:

- immunocontraception
- novel wound treatment for dehorning
- transitioning to a polled herd
- novel buffalo fly and tick control.

Novel wound treatment for dehorning

Dehorning of cattle is a common practice in Australia that creates risks and impacts production. Until the transition to a polled herd, it is essential to explore options for mitigating the impact of dehorning on cattle welfare.

Current treatment options fail to adequately ameliorate the pain associated with dehorning, and do not address the haemorrhage, infection and flystrike that often occurs post-operatively. There is a demand from beef producers for options to address the problems associated with dehorning wounds while the polled herd transition occurs.

This project will deliver a multi-disciplinary and collaborative approach to developing novel dehorning wound treatment strategies to minimise haemorrhage, protect from infection and flystrike, and enhance healing. The aim is to improve welfare and reduce morbidity and mortality following dehorning of cattle using effective and practical strategies.

Transitioning to a polled herd

Breeding polled cattle (those with no horns or scurs) provides a permanent solution to many of the problems associated with horned cattle, including easier handling of stock, reduced bruising, reduced risk of injury to stock and stock handlers, reduced labour costs and reduced concerns regarding the animal welfare issues associated with dehorning.

AACo is Australia's largest integrated beef and cattle producer and known around the world for its portfolio of Wagyu and Wagyu-cross brands. Breeding for polled animals is an important goal in their breeding program.

The poll genetic test is a highly effective tool to increase the frequency of polled animals in beef herds, with 99% accuracy of predicting the true polled genotype in most cattle breeds. AACo is committed to transitioning into a 100 percent polled enterprise and has made a significant investment in genetic tools to select polled animals in its Composite Mitchell and Wagyu seedstock herds.

This project is a partnership between MLA and AACo combining a producer demonstration site (PDS) and the development of a digital model of the real-life system (digital twin technology), to trial and demonstrate pathways to polled herds whilst meeting commercial production and market requirements.

A new and targeted approach to improve control of cattle tick and buffalo fly

This project will address pressing tick and buffalo fly problems for the Australian cattle industry, whilst safeguarding dung beetle and honey bee populations. The outcomes of this research will provide a strong position to enable the establishment of collaborative agreements with industry partners to translate the research to a commercial setting. A successful outcome from this project will provide proof-of-concept for a generic approach for the development of safer and more environmentally friendly insecticides.

Next steps:

- Grab your copy of [A guide to best practice husbandry in beef cattle v2](#)
 - Stay up to date with new R&D by subscribing to MLA’s newsletter *The Weekly*
 - Visit paraboss.com.au for practical information on parasite management in cattle.
-

Notes



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CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

SAVE
THE
DATE

**KPCA Conference 2024
Karratha, WA**

Red Earth Arts Precinct

Thursday, 31 October

AGM, Ladies Lunch,
Boots off Bowls & Welcome Drinks

Friday, 1 November

Conference & Gala Dinner



**SCAN
FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION**

Carbon EDGE

Taking carbon from a concept to an action plan

Carbon EDGE is a new two-day training program for the red meat industry, providing participants with an understanding of the opportunities for emissions reduction and carbon storage activities in a livestock grazing business.



Modules and key topics covered

1. Greenhouse gases 101

1. What is a greenhouse gas?

- Why do we always talk about carbon?
- Global warming potentials
- Why are atmospheric greenhouse gas levels important?
- Global trends, the Paris Agreement and Australia's commitments

2. Where do greenhouse gases come from in a livestock production system?

- Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions
- Carbon, nitrogen and methane cycles in agriculture

3. Australian national and agricultural emissions profiles

- National inventory
- Typical emissions inventories in livestock-based systems

4. Emissions Reduction Fund and other policy drivers

- Emissions Reduction Fund
- International trade agreements

- Australian red meat industry carbon neutral by 2030

2. Greenhouse gases 101

1. What is greenhouse gas accounting?

- 2. Quantifying emissions
- Data preparation
- Calculating emissions
- Carbon Calculators

3. Interpreting your results

- Tools for quantifying sequestration by vegetation or soils

3. On-farm emissions

Practices and technologies to reduce on-farm GHG emissions

- 1. Genetics and husbandry practices
 - Improving reproductive rates and decreasing mortality
 - Reproductive efficiency in cattle
 - Reproductive efficiency in sheep
- Decreasing mortality
- Mortality in cattle

- Mortality in sheep
- Increasing growth rates

2. Grazing land management, forage types and diet

- Grazing land management
- Pasture and legumes
- Dietary composition
- Plant breeding

3. Feed additives

- Vaccination
- Early life programming

4. Fertiliser application

- Right source
- Right rate
- Right time
- Right place

5. Efficiency of fuel and energy usage

6. Renewable energy

4. On-farm sequestration

Increasing carbon sequestration

1. Trees

- How does vegetation sequester carbon?

- Opportunities for action

2. Healthy soils

- What is soil organic matter (SOM)?
- What is soil organic carbon (SOC)?
- How much carbon is in my soil?
- Limitations to building SOM and SOC
- Management practices to increase soil carbon

5. Carbon credits and carbon neutrality

1. Managing your greenhouse gas account

- Demonstrating your carbon position

2. Carbon farming projects

- Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCU) scheme
- Registering a project with the ACCU scheme
- Voluntary carbon market
- Nature based markets

Better your business



MLA offers red meat producers a range of educational resources, tools and programs to improve profitability

Training programs/workshops

MLA delivers a range of programs and workshops to equip producers with the latest best-practice knowledge:



MLA resource hubs

MLA has compiled this series of hubs containing relevant resources on a range of on-farm topics:

- **Livestock:** Genetics, beef, sheep, goats
- **Feedbase:** Healthy soils, phosphorus, leucaena, pasture dieback, dung beetles
- **Sustainability:** Carbon neutral by 2030, dung beetles
- **Climate:** Climate, disaster recovery
- **Other resources:** Seasonal resources, COVID-19 resources and market insights hub, mental health, MLA's e-newsletters



mla.com.au/hubs

The toolbox

Self-guided online tools and training packages to upskill anytime, anywhere. Topics include:

- assessing nodulation in legume pastures
- establishing a new pasture
- pain relief use in southern cattle
- pain relief use in sheep
- introduction to MateSel
- soil testing
- visual indicators of soil condition



Online training, tools and resources

elearning.mla.com.au

Keep informed

Stay ahead with MLA resources:

- **Red meat industry events:** mla.com.au/news-and-events
- **Feedback magazine:** mla.com.au/feedback
- **Feedback podcast:** mla.com.au/feedback-podcast
- **On the ground podcast:** mla.com.au/on-the-ground
- **e-newsletters:** mla.com.au/enews



Become an MLA member today

MLA membership is **free** to levy-paying producers of grass or grainfed cattle, sheep, lambs or goats. MLA members receive the following free or discounted products:



Market information



Discounted entry to MLA events



Publications and information tools

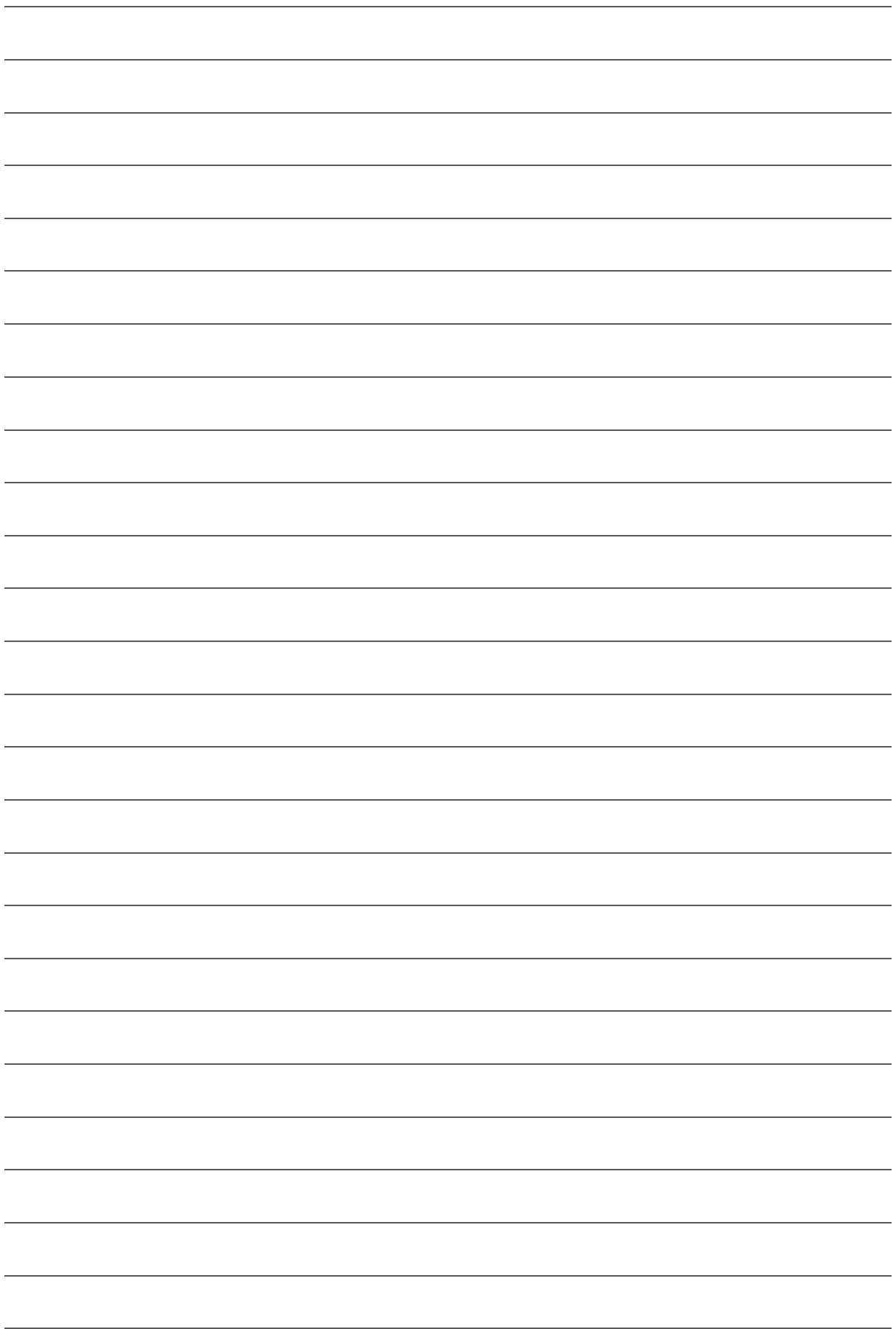


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