Elrose Brahmans
“Optimum beef production, no matter the environment”

Rodger & Lorena Jefferis together with their children Brooke & Grant run the Elrose Brahman stud based at Cloncurry in north western QLD. Whilst running 1200 stud breeding females on the home property Elrose (30,000ha), the Jefferis family also conduct a large scale commercial enterprise across three other properties totalling another 230,000ha and stretching into the gulf country. Commercial focus is thus never a problem.

Elrose commenced performance recording for BREEDPLAN evaluation in the late 1980’s and feel that their stud operation would be incomplete without it. Such is the importance of the insight into actual genetic performance that Rodger says “it is the only sure way of knowing where the herd in general is going”.

At Elrose optimum beef production no matter the environment is the aim. Thus the genetic evaluation of fertility, growth, & carcase traits is conducted to identify animals that are superior across all three main profit drivers. As far as performance recording goes, this requires weights at weaning, yearling and again at 18 – 20 months of age to best identify genetic superiority for growth. For the carcase and fertility aspect, Elrose conduct ultrasound scanning for rib fat, rump fat, and eye muscle area and keep detailed joining records respectively.

When it comes to the use of the EBVs Rodger highlights their assistance with the continual investment decisions they make in genetics. “When looking for new sires I need to know that they have genetics with a track record and genetics that will continue the progress of the herd. We also use the EBVs in the selection of our female herd to identify what is not always easy to see visually”. For example young heifers are often discriminated against because to the naked eye they can seem to lack growth. This can be regardless of knowing their dates of birth and attempting to make the necessary adjustment for age. EBVs highlight superior animals on an even playing field regardless of age or nutrition.

In regards to keeping the herd progressing, one of the many features of BREEDPLAN is the ability to graph a herd’s average performance against the rest of the breed. Figure 1
and 2 demonstrate the genetic progress been made by the Brahman breed for 600 day weight and retail beef yield. They also highlight the maintained superiority of the Elrose genetics above the breed average.

![600 Day Weight Genetic Trend](image1)

*Figure 1 Elrose genetic trend versus the breed average for 600 day weight.*

![Retail Beef Yield Genetic Trend](image2)

*Figure 2 Elrose genetic trend versus the breed average for Retail Beef Yield.*

Client’s use of their BREEDPLAN information is continually rising with an estimated 50% of their current buyers looking for EBVs according to Rodger. Elrose’s main presentation of EBVs is in the catalogue for their annual sale which is held on property at the start of December each year. The 2006 sale included 150 grey Brahman bulls & 13 Charbray bulls as well as 30 red Brahman bulls from their invited sale partner Kandoona Red Brahmans.
A goal of the Jefferis family to increase the uptake of the BREEDPLAN information provided and also to continually build better client relationships; has resulted in two field days been conducted at Elrose in the past two years. These days have been a huge success by allowing the opportunity to discuss the use of BREEDPLAN alongside the essential visual appraisal for cattle selection. More educated clients will hopefully see better selection decisions made and more satisfied customers returning for Elrose Brahmans.