

## Simmental Boost Income in Sub-Tropical Australian Herds

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*Simmental Australia (1997)*

The production advantages of Simmentals and Simbrahs were highlighted in a series of "Market Analysis Workshops" conducted by the Association in Australia's large cattle breeding areas of sub-tropical Queensland.

Simmentals are renowned for their high fertility and weight for age. Both these traits impact greatly on profitability of beef production in these areas of Australia, which traditionally run *Bos indicus* based herds for their environment adaptation advantages.

The workshops explained that by improving three key factors, income produced per cow could be increased by 75%.

1. weaning rate (number of calves weaned per cow exposed to a bull)
2. weaning weight
3. Sale price of weaners

Performance Measure	Current Performance	Possible Performance
Weaning Rate	60%	80%
Weaning Weight	200kg	250kg
Weight Calf Weaned/Cow Mated	120kg	205kg
Value of Weaner (per kg)	\$1.00	\$1.05
Value per Cow Mated	\$120	\$210

Difference in Income per Cow Mated = \$90 per cow mated = 75% higher return per cow.

The importance of selecting bulls with genetically evaluated high performance potential was graphically demonstrated in recent Queensland research.

### **Do EBVs Work ?**

A Northern Queensland trial tested Brahman bulls with High EBVs for Growth against Brahman bulls with Low growth EBVs. They were used in the same cow herd and their progeny weighed at weaning, at 18 months and at 30 months.

Significantly higher progeny weights were recorded for progeny of High EBV bulls.

Hence, one High EBV bull, producing 160 progeny over 5 years, would produce 3,520 more 30 month progeny weight than the Low EBV bull (160 x 22 kg). At \$1 per kg, he produces \$3,000 more income.

Age of Progeny	High EBV Sire	Low EBV Sire	Difference per head
At Weaning	184kg	178kg	6kg

At 18 months	279kg	263kg	16kg
At 30 months	482kg	460kg	22kg

### **Select Bulls on Fertility and EBVs**

In another Queensland trial, three bulls selected for different Serving Capacity (SC) and Breedplan Growth EBVs were tested in the same cow herd and their progeny weighed at weaning.

The High SC / High EBV bull produced 9,360 kg of progeny weaning weight in one calf drop, due to more calves and heavier calves. He produced 3,325 kg more than the Medium SC/ Medium EBV bull and 8,084 kg more than the Low SC/ Low EBV bull.

Over a five year working life in the herd, the High SC/ High EBV bull should produce 40,420 kg more weaning weight than the Low SC/ Low EBV bull.

Clearly, it is important and highly profitable to select above average bulls for Fertility and Growth EBVs.