Mashona Cattle Society January 2014

Greetings Mashona Cattle Lovers!!

Hope the rains have been plentiful and the cattle are benefitting from the new grass.

Contents

1) AGM

My Research has reveled the following points. Mrs C.L.Stubbs.

1. The present grading system for Meat carcasses in Zimbabwe discriminates against smaller breeds .
2. That 90% of all cattle are now in the smallholder sector & the average carcass weight is well below 190kg – so the grading system penalizes these carcasses.
3. Mashonas are early maturing & have early dentition. Ward HJ "eruption of 1st pair of permanent incisors occurred earlier in indigenous cattle"
4. Hammond 1932b "Small specis & breeds of animals have smaller muscle bundles & finer grained meat than larger ones & so are usually preferred for meat purposes"
5. Hirzel 1936 "There is more marbling fat in early maturing animals."
6. Gregory NG " Systems tend to undervalue smaller (Sanga type carcasses). It has to be decided at what limits the Sanga's advantage in terms of proportionate leanness is offset by its slight of lean."
7. Gregory NG "Lean Meat Yield should benefit the meat consumers wanting it."
8. Hammond 1932b "Fat development – order of the parts in which fat is deposited. 1st caul & kidney fat, 2nd subcutaneous fat 3rd marbling.
9. Ossification – skeletal ossification indicates incapable of further growth. Beef animals grow in height, length & weight to 5years of age – after this ossification is said to have taken place.
10. Last 2 pairs of incisor teeth could be from animals 3years (early maturing) to 4.66years (late maturing). Cattle of same age can have 4, 6, 8permanent incisors.
11. Therefore age of carcase should be based on dentition and also degree of ossification of the spinal processes of the thoracic vertebrae. Stuart Kent, Meat Technologist, suggests judging age by condition ,in his paper on a new simple system.
12. In practice the 8 incissors provide an adequate estimation of age, as they are set apart from the premolars by a large space (the diastema) & are easily observed by pulling down the animals lower lip.
13. 8 tooth dentition ties in with ossification & the young animal category.
14. Vorster TH "The suitability of breeds to range condition is more important than the influence of breed on carcass grade."

    Any other points(preferably with traceable research) please send to Mrs C.L.Stubbs .

I came across the idea of costs of keeping animals; cost/animal/year

1. Grazing (your area) 5 Ha for 1Livestock unit (LU at 450kgs)
2. Water 35-45l /day – pregnant or large bull +20l = 60l
3. Vaccines CA, QE, Anthrax. Others Lumpyskin, Riftvalley etc(your area)
4. Dosing 2xyear , branding/ear tags @$1.00/tag
5. Labour: Wages, Housing, Protective clothing,
6. Transport & Vehicle(scotch cart) costs & depreciation
7. Winter Maintenance (your area) say 6months @300g per day.
8. Dipping 4l dip mix / head /dipping. Cost of Knapsack sprayer if no plunge dip.
9. Handling facilities & night kraals repair & Maintenance. Wire/pliers etc
10. Summer phosphate 5g/day again know your area .
11. Marketing & Sale costs – on farm/ sales/ slaughter
12. Bulling costs – running a bull will cost approx. $200.00/year (55c/day)
13. Other veterinary costs equipment, syringes, needles , medications, burdizzo, replacements

14. Mortality 4% good – usually higher
15. Subscriptions, licences, books etc
16. Recording births, deaths, feed, sales etc
17. Veld management & improvement(eg fencing , rotational grazing, legumes etc)
18. Bush fire control – firebreaks.

I am sure you can add to this list. The idea so many new farmers have that it costs nothing & they do not put their hands in their pockets for their cattle. Some care & attention also spending & the cattle productivity will improve.