



## Informing New Zealand Beef (INZB)

### Quarterly Progress Report: July – September 2024

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#### Background

Beef + Lamb New Zealand with the support of Ministry for Primary Industries is leading the Informing New Zealand Beef (INZB) programme. The overall aim of the seven-year programme is to improve profitability and enhance sustainability across the beef industry through the development and adoption of improved genetics.

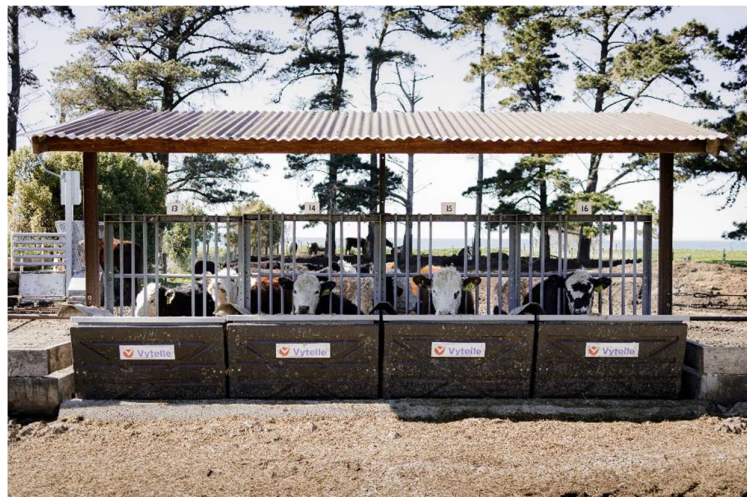
The objectives of the programme are to:

1. develop a beef genetic evaluation system that includes traits that are important to NZ beef farmers and supports a sustainable beef farming industry in NZ,
2. create easy to use tools which enable data to be efficiently collected, managed, analysed and used by farmers to make profitable decisions for their operation,
3. create a new approach to extension design with the goal of increasing farmer engagement across the beef industry.

#### Summary of progress during this quarter

##### Greenhouse Gas and Feed Intake trial carried out at Te Mania

In July, Kepler 2023 born Beef Progeny Test (BPT) heifers travelled to Te Mania where they had methane and feed intake measured (pictured). Methane was measured using Portable Accumulation Chambers (PACs) and feed intake was measured using the Vytelle Sense system. In addition to Kepler BPT heifers, 128 Hereford cattle also had methane and feed intake measured, with Te Mania animals being measured



early in 2025. In addition to the use of PACs, there is promise in other simpler methods to gauge the methane output of animals, such as analysing rumen and saliva samples. Animals had these samples taken for analysis as well. Once all data has been collected, results will be analysed to determine variation between animal methane emissions and the relationship between the different measurements (PAC, rumen and saliva).

The full story can be accessed via the following link - <https://beeflambnz.com/news/nzs-beef-sector-and-scientists-unite-eco-efficient-beef>

### **Latest results for Beef Progeny Test are available online**

Results from the Beef Progeny Test (BPT) have been published so that breeders whose bulls are used in the BPT are able to see how their bulls have performed. The report is grouped into three sections - growth traits, ultrasound muscle scanning traits, and carcass quality traits (processing data). The report covers progeny born to sires in all cohorts of the original Beef Progeny Test (i.e. 2015-born to 2020-born). It also includes the first set of measurements collected from sires in the across-breed Progeny Test at Kepler Farm. The report is available here - [bit.ly/BPT-Report-2024](https://bit.ly/BPT-Report-2024), or can be accessed via the B+LNZ Genetics Progeny Test page.

This year thirty nominations were received for the Beef Progeny Test, with eighteen selected – 7 Angus, 7 Hereford and 4 Simmental. These bulls will be used across Kepler (Angus and Hereford cows) and Lochinver (Angus cows) sites, as well as the Shorthorn site.

### **Extension spotlight on Artificial Insemination**

One of the Key Performance Indicators of the programme is to drive uptake of Artificial Insemination (AI) in the industry with the goal of accelerating genetic gain. The INZB extension design team has been looking at what drives decision making around AI uptake. As part of this work the team held a workshop on AI in Christchurch in August. The workshop was designed after interviews were undertaken with stakeholders who are involved with, or use AI. The workshop was attended by eleven B+LNZ staff and twelve farmers. It considered the implications, benefits and opportunities of using AI in commercial herds and confirmed that the effectiveness of AI is dependent on developing suitable breeding objectives and aligning to the farm businesses overall goals and objectives. Out of this workshop a basic calculator for commercial farmers will be developed to aid initial assessment of the costs and benefits of using AI on their farm.

### **Webinars held on the basics of genetics and new trait development**

Two webinars were held in September. The first was for INZB commercial herd farmers, with Sonya Shaw (Vet and INZB Commercial Herd Project Lead) and Dr Jason Archer (INZB Science Lead) presenting the basics of genetics. Some of the key points covered were around phenotype/performance of animal being the result of genetics and the environment, some of the key environmental factors that are adjusted for in a genetic evaluation (including management mob) and linkage across herds. The new trait webinar covered an update of INZB activities, the newly developed Body Condition Score evaluation, fertility trait trial and the methane and feed efficiency trial. This webinar is available to view here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvATdZjHS3Q>.

### **Key highlights and achievements**

- Kepler heifers went to Te Mania for feed intake and GHG measurements (alongside Hereford breeders/Te Mania cattle)
- Bulls selected for Beef Progeny Test matings – 18 selected
- Extension design workshop held on artificial insemination uptake
- Industry Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Group meetings held in September
- Body Condition Score evaluation developed
- Webinars held – Genetics 101 and New Trait Development

### Upcoming

- Artificial insemination at Kepler BPT site
- Annual assessment of the programme by Scarlatti
- Kepler heifers return to Kepler from Te Mania post-GHG/feed intake trial
- Adapt nProve to receive commercial herd data

### Investment

<b>Investment period</b>	<b>Co-investor contribution</b>	<b>MPI contribution</b>	<b>Total investment</b>
During this Quarter	\$744,813	\$496,542	\$1,241,356
Programme To Date	\$5.57m	\$3.71 m	\$9.28 m