UNITED BEEF BREEDERS WA SUBMISSION – ASEL REVIEW STAGE 2

We are supportive of recommendations 1, 2 and 3 in principle as they recognise different ability of different types of animals, eg bos indicus, bos Taurus to handle heat stress in tropical regions.

We believe there is a lot of science evidence that different types of cattle are genetically adapted to be able to handle heat load and stress very differently.

I have been advised by some who have been on live export cattle boats of a lot of anecdotal evidence of very significant different observed condition of cattle of different type on disembarkation after travelling across the equator.  Cattle with bos indicus content in much healthier appearance despite having been placed in the worst parts of the ship.  MSA is using hump height as indicating bos indicus content, hence I don’t see too much of an issue using that as indicator of bos indicus content.

The mortality rates quoted for shipments to China and Japan are acceptable, but we should recognise they are mostly dairy heifers, not feeder or slaughter cattle.  At least one consignment of feeder bos Taurus cattle going to east Asia did have notifiable mortality rates.

I accept that the definition of summer and degree of latitude south of the departure need more consideration, but am troubled by what I consider more risk to the whole export trade, and hence to the whole beef industry, of not recognising the need to include cattle type in the standards.  If science can indicate that so called tropically adapted bos Taurus cattle can handle trips across the equator, then I will accept the evidence, but in the mean time I express serious reservations about relaxing the standards to not include cattle type, i.e. bos indicus content as a valid means of reducing risk to the continuation of this vital export industry.

**The risk involved** of exporting heavy/fat bos Taurus cattle from southern ports from Australia’s winter across are not in the best interest of the whole industry, I believe, and therefore serious consideration should be given to cattle type, age, fat condition and weight and destination in the standards recognised.

United Beef Breeders WA Inc