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The early days of the Tuli Cattle Society

By mrs Jessie Greaves

It was at the Gwanda Agricultural Society's Show in 1960 that several of us sat under a tree on bales of hay and decided to form the Tuli Cattle Society.

This took a whole year of discussions between Government, Conex and the Tuli Breeding Station before notices were sent out and forty interested farmers met on July 15 1961 to unanimously support the proposal to form the Tuli Cattle Society.

My late husband, Broncho Greaves, was made the first chairman and Len Harvey, vice chairman. The committee comprised of Harold Barber, Ian de la Rue and Chicken Johnson. Beryl Harvey invited us all for lunch and started a tradition for future Tuli meetings and field days held at the Tuli Breeding Station.

During 1961, the year of the foundation of the society, and after only 14 years of breeding, Len Harvey competed with his pure bred Tulis in the block test at the country's three main shows and carried off the triple crown winning in Salisbury, Bulawayo and Gwelo. The established cattle world, who had been improving its beef cattle for centuries, was staggered!

In September 1961 the Society's Constitution, based on the Mashona Constitution, was adopted. At this time Tuli cattle were not available to the public, so it was agreed that members could take cattle on a lease basis in that within four years the lessee had to return to Tuli, one bull for each animal he had obtained from Tuli. This agreement lapsed in 1965 and from then on members could purchase Tuli cattle outright at the annual Tuli Breeding Station Sale.

In October 1961, Professor Sir John Hammon (who at that time held the chair of Agriculture at Cambridge University) said that the Tuli Cattle Society Constitution was the most advanced constitution of any breed he knew. He made the remarkable statement that the Tulis are the finest indigenous breed outside the British Isles. In 1962 a newsletter, Tuli Times, was issued and the first AGM was held on August 17 that year during the Bulawayo Agricultural Show. At this meeting the President expressed the society's gratitude to Government for making available the foundation stock to members of the Tuli Society which enabled us to preserve and foster this outstanding breed of indigenous cattle, thus putting into effect a recommendation made in 1909 by Professor Wallace to the British Africa Chartered Company in his survey on the future potential of the cattle industry in Southern Rhodesia, that every effort should be made to preserve the indigenous cattle. The President also paid tribute to Len Harvey for his support and ability in establishing the breed. He also congratulated a young Paul Goodwin who had presented a seminar on the Tuli Breed which received the approbation of Natal University where Paul was reading for his Bachelor of Science degree.

In April 1963 Broncho and Don Harvey did an inspection tour of the Lowveld Tulis. I was dumbstruck to see beautiful cream and golden cattle being rejected. The reason was that they had Shorthorn blood in them, which Broncho picked up by the hair in their ears. In my case a little knowledge was a dangerous thing! At one ranch we saw one of the three original bulls at Tuli, the other two being Mahuke and Guyu.

The 3rd Annual General Meeting was held in November 1964. The President reported that the Bechuanaland Administration had expressed interest in Tuli bulls and as a result of this approach the Tuli was established in Botswana.

The 1964 field day was held in Nyamandhlovu and was attended by nearly 200 people. Dr Pereira of the Agricultural Research Council delivered a most interesting address on the research work on beef cattle. The main theme of his research team's work was that of reproduction under harsh conditions and the physiological factors making for range hardness. He stated that two scientists, Messrs Carr and Condry, have studied blood samples from 2 000 beasts of known origin. The present indications from statistical analysis are that the Tuli, Mashona and Angoni breeds all give the pattern expected for the long established Sanga strains but there is a strong indication that the Tuli has a blood group different from the other collections. So Len Harvey, in choosing the Tuli, chose a breed with genetically differences as well.

At the 4th AGM on August 18 1965 the President reported that in February the society had been officially advised by the Director of Research and Specialist Services that the Tuli Exchange Scheme had ended and that members could buy Tuli cattle from the Breeding Station at Government valuation. In May a very successful sale of surplus breeding stock was held at Tuli. At this sale 117 heifers, 49 cows and 39 bulls were on offer and all were sold.

An excellent field day was held at Tuli Breeding Station on May 4 1965 where it was announced that Government had decided to retain the Tuli herd as a breeding herd of 300 cows and it was also agreed that members of the Tuli Cattle Society would be given preference in purchasing Tuli cattle. He added that it was the policy of Government to encourage local breeds as they were more adaptable. The President congratulated Government on its foresight and the news that the "Mother Herd" was being kept and that the Tuli Breeding Station was being retained, excited all members at the field day.

The December 6 1969 was a highlight in the history of the Tuli. On that day "Zimbabwe's own breed - the Tuli" was adopted by the City of Bulawayo. Len Harvey led a magnificent string of his great golden beasts from the Show grounds along Fife Street down Selborne Avenue into the large City Hall grounds where they were paraded in front of His Worship the Mayor, Councilor C M Logan. My late husband, Broncho presented to the Mayor, Khumalo, a magnificent Tuli bull, who was accepted by the Mayor on behalf of the City of Bulawayo. Having adopted Khumalo the Mayor then handed him back to Len Harvey for safe-keeping!

Apollo - 7 months (1973) at the Tuli Breeding Station

Unfortunately many of my husband's records of the Tuli Cattle Society from 1969 to 1974 have been lost but I do remember that Broncho was re-elected as President during that time. In 1974 the Tuli breed won nine of the eleven interbreed classes at the Bulawayo Show. Broncho was very thankful for the work that Len and Don Harvey

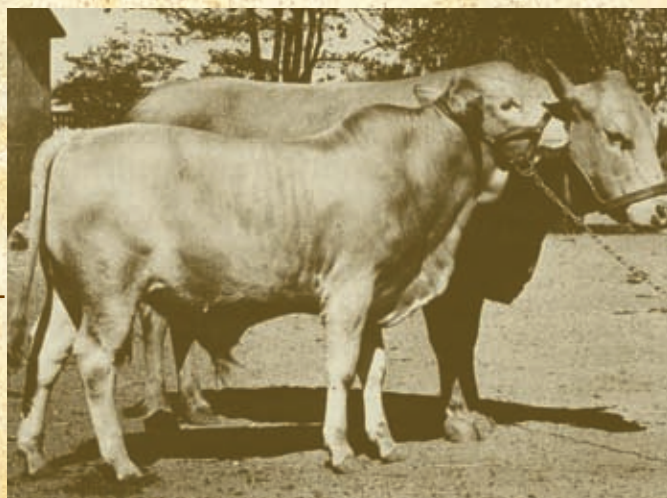
and Paul and Elspeth Goodwin put into establishing and re-organizing the Herd Book and encouraging the breed. The Society owes them a debt of gratitude for their first class organization and hard work on its behalf.



Presentation of the Freedom of the City of Bulawayo from the Mayor and Mayoress, Mr. & Mrs. Logan

In 1975 the society basked in the reflected glory of the honor paid to one of its senior members, Ian de la Rue, who was appointed International Cattleman of the Year by the Agriservices Foundation of California in the area of cow-calf production. Ian delivered six one hour lectures. Two themes ran through his lectures. Firstly that an animal must be entirely suited to its environment for maximum productivity and secondly, one must work with nature not against her. Ian showed films and photographs with his lecture of some of the 4 500 Tulis on his Ruware Ranch. He had been invited to the United States as a result of a visit to Ruware by Dr M E Ensinger who was intrigued with the cattle and the Ranch and said that in the 45 countries he had visited he had never seen anything quite like what he saw that day at Ruware.

Following Dr Ensinger's visit, Dr Clyde Stormont, Professor of Genetics and Reproduction at the University of California visited Ruware. He commented later that "I suppose the most impressive and promising (indigenous) breed that I saw was the Tuli".



THE Pioneers OF THE TULI BREED

Extracted from Zimbabwe's own breed - Tuli - 1995

The following breeders are the people mainly responsible for the development of the great Tuli cattle we farm with today. We thank them and acknowledge their work and hope that they will soon be able to stand up from desperate times to join us in future development of this beautiful breed.

Jambo Tuli Stud

Chris Johnson, Tengwe



The Jambo Stud was established in 1968 by Chris Johnson on Jambo Farm, Tengwe. Foundation stock was acquired from Kenilworth Estates, Shangani, H. Benny, Gwaai River, H. Edwards, Arcturus, H. Barber, Filabusi and Miss Glasse, Shangani.

Since the establishment of the herd additional animals have been added from the Guyu or 'Mother Herd' at Matopos and two bulls have come from Keith Kirkman's Donnington Stud, Norton.

We believe the cows have good size, milking and mothering ability. They are fertile, reasonably docile and they live long, productive lives. Our Tulis show good length and muscling. The herd has been beef recorded since the first calf crop and weighing carried out monthly.

Jambo Tulis have spread far and wide in the world today. They have participated in three embryo export programmes - two to Australia and one to Canada, with a second Canadian programme currently being implemented.

The herd has exported live animals to South Africa on numerous occasions - to seven different buyers. The Tuli has become established in the Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal and Cape Province. Botswana, Namibia and Zambia also have Tulis, and the breed is being used in the programme to restock Mozambique.

The Jambo Herd has supplied animals to many local breeders and commercial and communal cattle farmers all over the country.

Visitors are always welcome and are free to inspect the records kept of the herd. Animals are normally available for sale by private treaty on a first come first choice basis on the farm, the young sale bulls being available from June/July onwards.

Donnington Tuli Stud

Keith Kirkman, Norton

The Donnington Tuli Stud goes back to 1973 when we purchased 90 pedigree heifers from the Banks' Double Cross Ranch in Gwanda. 1972/73 was a devastating drought year for the whole country and particularly Matabeleland and many ranchers were forced to offload/sell cattle. The animals were initially purchased for use as commercial females in a crossing programme with Angus Bulls, the Tuli breed being chosen because of its inherent fertility. After the first crossbred calves were weaned, we realized the tremendous potential of these Tuli females and in 1976 started the process of having them reinstated in the Tuli Society's upgrading programme. Further purchases of heifers were made in 1982 (10) and in 1984 (5) at Matopos Research Station Sales. (An average of \$250



Donnington cow and calf

was paid for each animal!) Today we maintain a constant 250 registered females in the herd.

Initially, bulls were purchased from the Tuli Breeding Station and Matopos Research Station and over the years bulls have been bought from all the leading Tuli herds in the country. In addition, we use our own top bulls in the herd, including an independent blood line which originated from the communal areas. We are very conscious of the need to maintain as broad a genetic base as possible, and, by having a constantly changing stud bull battery of twelve bulls, this objective is achieved.

The herd has been performance tested for the past fifteen years. All young stock have to pass through selection barriers at weaning, yearling and two years of age. Bulls are measured for scrotal circumference and frame score. All the young males go through a 140 day feedlot test and are screened for laminitis. The major emphasis on heifer selection is the performance of their first calf. We aim to bull at least 15% more heifers than will be needed for replacements. A performance index is calculated for all the cows and poor performers culled annually.

We make extensive use of the Tuli in our commercial beef breeding operation which is based on a four-breed rotational crossing programme. The Tuli bring to the programme valuable maternal traits such as fertility, calving ease and excellent mothering ability. The bulls are active calf-getters, even as two year olds, have no sheath problems and are well adapted to harsh conditions. We like the Tuli and the Tuli crosses because they are no-nonsense, easy care cattle that wean lost of calves which, after all, is the most important single economical factor contributing to profitable beef production.

Boomerang Tuli

Paul and Elspeth Goodwin, Esigodini



My interest in the Tuli originated from my association with Broncho and Jessie Greaves of Fountain Ranch, Nyamandlovu. I spent many a school holiday and my pre-university year on Fountain and was influenced by the Greaves' enthusiasm for this developing indigenous breed.

The Boomerang Tuli Stud was started in 1965 with the purchase of seven cows, eighteen heifers and a bull (all bred by the Tuli Breeding Station) from Dr. Ferrani, the resident veterinarian on Kenilworth

Estates, Bubi District, Matabeleland. Broncho advised us to purchase the whole parcel, "even if it was just to get that outstanding bull D457." Len Harvey, who had bred him at the Breeding Station, had sent him to the Bull Testing Station at Makaholi, where he was the best

performer over all breeds in that particular test. Len did not use him because of his broken colour, and so he came to end up with us. Affectionately known as "Patch" he certainly did put his stamp on our herd.

Over the years, more females were purchased from the Tuli Breeding Station in 1969 and 1981, and from Harold Barber in 1971. Apart from our own bred bulls, replacements were purchased on a fairly regular basis from the foundation herd at Tuli Breeding Station in the Gwanda District of Southern Matabeleland.

The Stud is the oldest privately owned Tuli stud in Zimbabwe and has been performance recorded since inception with selection based on traits of economic value. This is an unpampered herd, run along commercial lines and as resulted in well-muscled, highly fertile animals with a docile nature.

The Tuli has a wide range of colour from dark to red to silvery white. In our breeding policy, we have tended away from the white, but have never paid much attention to colour, preferring to work on the Jersey breed's philosophy of "No good Jersey can be a bad colour". We have however, been very strict in selecting animals with good pigmentation. We also select for a well developed eye bank and prefer an oval shaped eye as being the most functional under our thorn veldt conditions. We do not actively select for the polled factor and use both horned and polled bulls.

No effort has been spared in developing this herd into an economic, efficient, trouble-free beef producing unit. Our sales policy is one of quality, and we sell bulls at two and a half years of age off our farm in the Esigodini area, 35 km from Bulawayo on the main Bulawayo - Beit Bridge Road.

Yampa Tuli Stud

Ettienne Kok, Darwendale

Sandringham Farm has been using Tuli bulls in their cross breeding programme for over twenty years. Our performance records on all our commercial cows has shown their outstanding fertility, productivity and longevity. Tuli bulls have been used on Hereford type cows and the performance of the resulting progeny, both male and female, have never failed to impress us.

With this in mind it was decided in 1990 to start our own pedigree herd of Tuli to breed our own bulls and



Tulis grazing at Sandringham Farm

sell any surplus bulls which performance wise matched up. Twenty three heifers were purchased from Chris Johnson's Jambo Stud plus a bull, Jambo 1236 in 1990.

At the present time we have a total of 30 breeding females of all ages. Our pedigree females are run under commercial conditions and their performance records are compared directly with our pedigree polled Herefords and commercial cows of the same age. This we feel gives us a true reflection of the production of our Tuli cows.

Selection is done purely on traits of economic importance. Fertility, productivity, milk, growth, muscling and structural soundness. Colour or any phenotypic trait is of no importance to us.

Being a new stud and small we were very please to have two bulls selected for the Canadian embryo programme in 1994. Jambo 1236 and a son of his, Yampa N14. Yampa N14 in particular, we feel, has enormous potential. His performance records plus outstanding conformation make him an exciting prospect. We eagerly await his first calves in June. A further bull, Jambo 1811 was purchased from Jambo Stud in 1994. a young bull with excellent performance data, tremendous growth and vigour. He settled 60 cows in 56 days during the 1994 bulling season!

Lebar Tuli Stud Len and Bryan Harvey, Lalapanzi



The herd was started in 1979 when Len Harvey retired from government service after many years of developing the Tuli breed. With the purchase of females from several breeders and a nucleus of eight bulls from the Tuli breeding station, the herd has been developing over the past sixteen years. We have the largest Tuli herd of over 400 breeding cows and our intention is to increase to 600 cows over the next years. Our aim is to have a large gene

pool to work from and also to have surplus females to sell to prospective breeders.

The farm is situated in the Midlands District of Lalapanzi on the central watershed. Generally we have high rainfall and very cold winters which result in extremely sour grazing. The cattle have adapted well and although a little smaller than Lowveld cattle, they always grow out well when moved to better grazing.

Fertility is extremely good and although little and often no maintenance feed is given, P.D.'s of over 80% are achieved every year. We do not pamper our cows and we expect them to work as any commercial herd would.

On bull selection we select only the top 30% from our annual male calf crop. We believe in quality rather than

quantity. We prefer to sell our animals from the farm, although this year we'll have a few bulls on the National bull sale in July. Semen from one of our top bulls will also be available from Animal Breeders Company this year.

Our herd has been performance tested since 1980 and in selection of bulls for the retention in herd, emphasis is on both 208 and 550 days weights. Up to date dam and sire records are always available.



Over the last few years we have also undertaken to sourcing of new genes direct from the communal areas in the south of the country. This has resulted in the development of new lines of Tuli which are unrelated to any of the present herd. Some of these animals are outstanding and we encourage anybody looking for new genes to come and visit and view these animals.

On the export side we have been involved in the marketing of embryos to Australia and Canada, and of late have had interest from South Africa.

L.Z. Tulis F.A. Stewart, Gwanda

The L.Z. Tuli herd was started in 1978 with the purchase of two bulls and five heifers from the Tuli Breeding Station.

The first year that we showed our Tuli cattle in the Bulawayo Agricultural Show we had the satisfactory of



winning the award for the overall Tuli Champion with a bull of our own breeding. Results from those of our cattle which have been entered in the slaughter classes at the Agricultural Shows have, over the years, been most pleasing.

On the ranch, the Tulis are used in a cross-breeding programme with Sussex, with excellent results. All

animals-both pedigree and commercial – are on the Beef Performance Testing Scheme. Strict selection is carried out at weaning time.

We are confident that the L.Z. Tullis will go from strength to strength in the future. Our aim is to breed good quality stock to keep up with the demand. We believe that the reason our Tuli are so popular is our policy of strict culling and selection for fertility, hardiness and adaptability, the qualities where the Tuli breeds excels.

Koce Tuli Stud

Phil Rogers

In 1974 the Koce Tuli Stud was established at Heany Junction Farm with the initial purchase of eight Tuli females from Stan Nicholle in Gwanda. Over the years the herd has been improved and upgraded by the use of bloodlines from the Guyu, Boomerang and Jumbo Herds.

By 1993 the cow herd consisted of 150 registered females with just over one half being volume three or above. Today the herd has 70 registered females with an even greater emphasis put on strict selection of fertile, functional cows with good conformation and showing good mothering abilities. A healthy calf is an absolute necessity. Animals are strictly selected to maintain and continually improve the herd so that only the most desirable type of animals are bred, so that cost effective and functional beef production is achieved.

In 1982 Tuli females were exported to South Africa where the breed is extremely popular. In 1988 embryos were selected from the Koce Stud and made their way to Australia in the establishment of the Tuli “Down Under”.

Heany Junction Farm has in recent years had many successes both at the Bulawayo and Harare Shows. However, in 1994 and 1995 new achievements were attained by the winning of the Champion Steer on Show and the following year, the Champion Carcass. These achievements can be attributed in part to the combination of breeds used at Heany Junction Farm. The commercial herd is based on a three ways rotational cross using Tuli, Hereford and Limousin. The commercial herd is a reflection of the discipline and selective process practised in the stud programme, in the search for productive, functional animals. The Tuli cross-bred female certainly plays her part in this process. Her fertility, calving ease, docility, longevity and ability to withstand harsh conditions without losing her mothering attributes, makes her an integral part of the programme.

It is widely accepted that in a well organised breeding programme, beef production can be increased through hybrid vigour and that in crossing breeds one can maximise on the desirable traits of each breed. This is where the Tuli cross female fits so well into the programme. As well as her qualities highlighted above, she is also very well adapted to her environment, can withstand intense heat and has developed resistance to many tick born diseases and various parasites. The Tuli's strong functional legs and hard compact feet enables her to walk long distances in search of feed and water. Her well pigmented skin and eyes are very resistant to harmful ultra-violet rays and in a crossing programme this pigmented skin is usually carried over.

There is no magic in the Tuli/Hereford/Limousin combination. The Tuli can be used in different rotational crosses with excellent results and therefore consideration should be seriously given to the use of a Tuli in a cross breeding programme.



Tuli Breeding Program

NAPCO was one of the original Consortium members responsible for importing Tuli cattle into Australia. The objective of this involvement was to see the breed incorporated into the development of a composite line of cattle from a Shorthorn breeder base at Kynuna Station in western Queensland.

Still in its developmental stages, the composite is arrived at by crossing Shorthorn x Tuli F1s with (Shorthorn x Brahman) x Red Angus. The Tuli was selected to lend environmental adaptation and fertility, a decision that has been supported by favourable carcass and meat quality results from US crossbreeding trials.

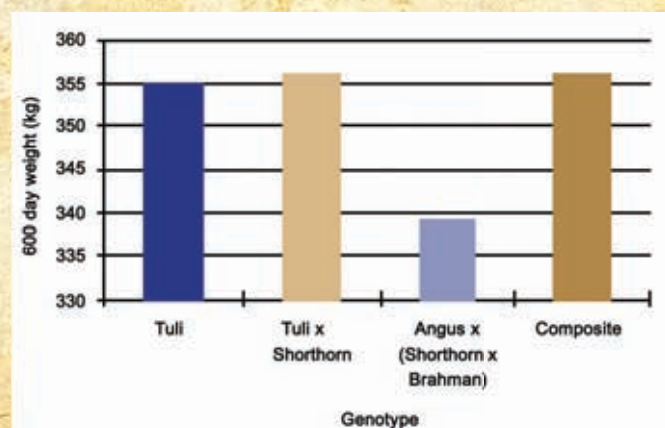
The Tuli Herd

A purebred Tuli herd is maintained at Kynuna Station and currently contains 76 breeders that contribute to the composite herd through the provision of bulls. A wide range of bloodlines have been utilized in an attempt to maintain the integrity of the herd and to broaden the genetic base of the composite. An additional 66 females derived primarily from Shorthorn x Brahman lines are involved in a grading up program, with progeny 15/16 Tuli moving into the purebred herd. Comprehensive pedigree information is documented for these herds in a database that currently contains in excess of 1800 animals with as many as four generations of performance data.

Performance and Selection

Selection across the composite and Tuli breeding programs is based on structural and reproductive soundness in addition to using data collected in an intense performance recording program. Tuli bulls compete directly against composite and other crossbred lines for traits including growth rate and scrotal size. Despite being a breed of moderate mature size, records collected over the last five year indicate that Tuli's achieve growth rates comparable to their crossbred counterparts, particularly in hot and dry conditions (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Average 600 day weight by genotype of 2002 drop bulls at Kynuna Station.



Each year the performance of potential young sires is further tested in a 120-day feedlot trial. Information collected on weight gain over the trial period is used in conjunction with other traits to drive selection that has consistently improved performance in the Tuli herd (Figure 4). At the completion of the trial, animals are scanned for fat depth and eye muscle area. Scanning results demonstrate Tuli's to be capable performers in terms of carcass quality when compared to other genotypes (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Average Daily Gain (ADG) for the interval from weaning to 600 days (Grass ADG) and over the feedlot trial period (Feedlot ADG) for Tuli bulls in the last three years.

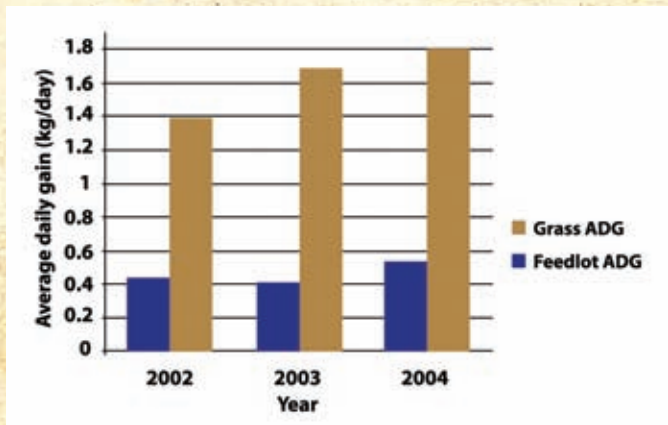
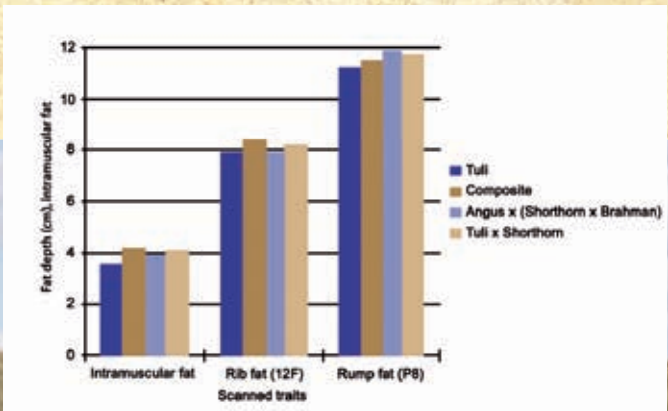


Figure 5: Average fat scanning results by genotype for the 2004 feedlot trial.



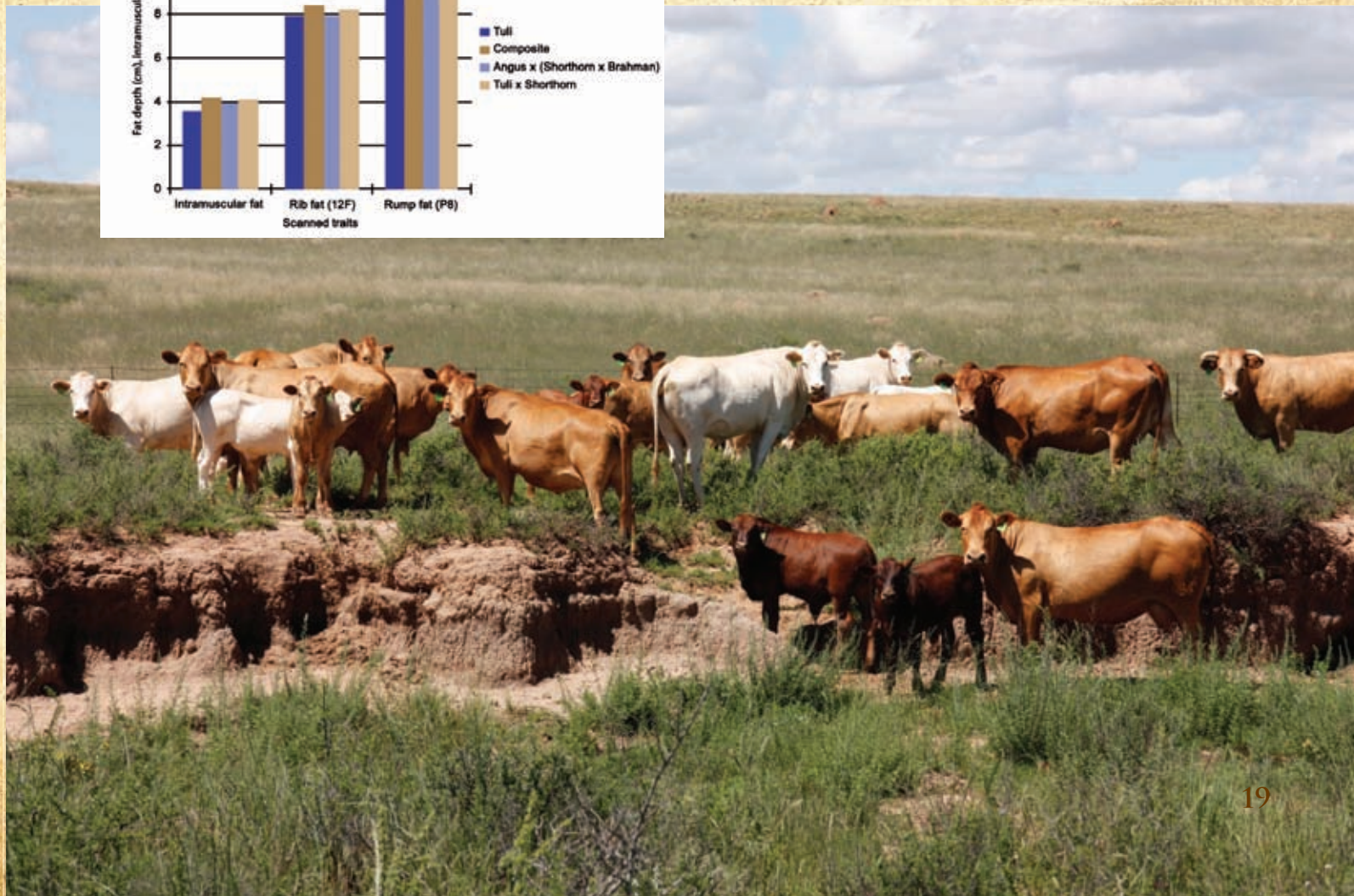
Selection in the Tuli herd has improved growth performance while maintaining an average birth weight of 31kg, thus retaining their reputation as easy calves. This, combined with a strong maternal instinct, ensures that high weaning percentages are achieved. The condition of lactating females at weaning is testament to their ability to perform in harsh environments (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Purebred Tuli females with grown calves at foot.



In Summary

A relatively new breed to Australia, we learn more about the capabilities of the Tuli as each generation arrives and enables us to collect more information. To date, the Tuli has demonstrated an ability to perform under both harsh conditions and in a grain fed environment. Having responded well to selection while maintaining the attributes for which the breed is known, the Tuli makes a valuable contribution to NAPCO's composite breeding program.



Tuli's Behaal Rekord Pryse

'n Bul vir R 110 000 & 'n Koei vir R 78 000

Tuli's behaal rekord pryse op die Algehele Uitverkoop van die Generaalsdraai Tulistoet van Dr Hercu van Niekerk op 26 Maart 2009 te Wonderfontein naby Belfast.

205 Top Tuli's het onder die hammer gekom en is verkoop binne 4 ure, aan kopers reg oor Suid-Afrika, deur die bekende afslaersgroep - Clive Gardner Afslaers wat die veiling aangebied het.

51 Koeie en kalwers is verkoop teen 'n gemiddelde prys van R 18 700.

Hoogste prys Lot 32 LB 95 0105 vir R 56 000.00 koper Alwyn & Harm Marx van Burgersdorp.



LOT 30

Hoogste prys Lot 30 H 05 0089 vir R 110 000 koper Alwyn & Harm Marx, Lesley Cook en Russell Clark.

14 Bulle is verkoop vir 'n gemiddelde prys van R 36 800.

Veiling is bemark en aangebied deur **Clive Gardner Afslaers.**



LOT 11

Hoogste prys Lot 11 H 98 0036 vir R 78 000.00 koper Mnr Cornelis Rautenbach van Reitz.

33 Koeie is verkoop vir 'n gemiddelde prys van R 13 000.



LOT 105

Hoogste prys Lot 105 H 06 0026 vir R44 000 koper Mnr VC Beukes van Warmbad.

37 Verse is verkoop vir 'n gemiddelde prys van R13 600.