

Northern Breeding Business (NB2)

Information for producers

NB2 is an initiative developed by MLA to address:

- calf loss in northern breeding herds
- low profitability of many northern beef enterprises
- low adoption of proven management practices and technologies.



The project has set the ambitious target to deliver an estimated \$20 million/year in net benefits by 2027 to 250 northern beef enterprises.

NB2 will focus on several key pillars:



Herd management

Enhancing breeding herd performance through improved systems and interventions



Feedbase

Optimising feed production and supply for the breeding herd



Environment

Exploring issues in rangeland management, the environment and the long-term sustainability of the northern beef industry



On-farm practice change

Turning R&D outcomes into practice change on-farm

Benefits to producers

NB2 will provide multiple benefits to northern producers and the wider beef industry, including:

- a 5:1 return on investment by improving weaning rates, decreasing calf mortality and increasing saleable turn-off weight in northern beef herds
- education, training, mentoring and employment opportunities for people entering or already engaged in the northern beef industry
- improved public perceptions around animal health and welfare, leading to increased consumer trust in Australian beef.

Get involved

Six regionally diverse pilot producer groups will be established across northern Australia to provide direction and insight for the NB2 project:

- one group from the Kimberley/Pilbara region of WA
- one group from the NT
- two groups from Queensland.
 - one corporate producer group
 - one indigenous pastoral group.

Producers who currently operate a beef breeding business in the northern Regional Beef Research Committee region and would like further information on how to get involved can contact Nigel Tomkins at ntomkins@mla.com.au.

FAQs

1. What will I get out of NB2?

Professional development around breeder herd efficiency

NB2 will provide producers with a process to identify issues limiting the performance of their breeder herd as well as overall productivity, profitability and sustainability. To address the issues identified, participants undertake training with qualified professionals to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to implement practice changes suited to their own business.

Learn from your peers

Over an initial two-year period, the participants will interact and share ideas with other producers in a group-learning environment to value the collection and use of data and make better management decisions.

Understand your business

Over a two to three year period, the NB2 groups will support producers with the implementation and monitoring of herd management plans. Participants will gain a better understanding of their overall business as part of this process.

2. How do I know if I have a reproductive efficiency or calf mortality problem?

Visit mla.com.au/nb2 for multiple tips and tools regarding:

- reproductive performance
- heifer management
- calf loss.

3. How much of my time will be involved?

This will be different for each producer. Factors impacting the time involved for each participant include:

- how much a producer wants to get out of the program
- participant's current capital set-up and management program
- interaction with other group members and the facilitator.

There will be several professional development days (in a group-learning environment) a year, over a two to three year period.

4. How much will it cost?

The fee to join an NB2 producer group is up to \$2,000 per business per year (plus GST).

There may also be costs in gathering the required information, depending on the individual's situation. For example, if you're not already pregnancy testing (preferably with foetal aging), this may be an additional expense. Some of the recommended changes could involve capital costs, which will be accompanied by a cost-benefit analysis.



Crush-side data collection is crucial for measuring herd performance and will be a critical part of the NB2 project.

More information

For selection criteria and information on how to apply, contact:

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Resources:

- Northern Breeding Business (NB2) research summary at mla.com.au/nb2
- MLA's *Tips & Tools* at mla.com.au/reproperformance

