GALLOWAYS AUSTRALIA INC.
PO Box 309
Hall ACT 2618

G'Day from Downunder

(or in my opinion the top of the world – the makers of world globes have it wrong.)

My name is Colin McNeil, the current President of Galloways Australia. My wife Helen and I have been breeding Galloway cattle for around 8 years. Our focus has been on the original solid colour Galloways. We have around 9 breeders along with their progeny on our small 40 acre property on the mid north coast of New South Wales (NSW). Due to our small size, in Australian terms, we concentrate on breeding seed stock original Galloway genetics; we also provide our table with excellent meat; which we enjoy sharing with family and friends.

Galloways Australia may have a new face for the President but you may be assured that our direction is unchanged as we continue to represent the three separate and distinct breeds within the Galloway family, Galloway, Belted Galloway and White Galloway, and strive to ensure the continuation of the original genetics of the Galloway breed. Our rules and roles continue to be based on indisputable genetic principles and the promotion of all Galloway breeds .

Penetrating a market dominated by "Angus" in Australia with its exceptional marketing of Angus branded beef in supermarkets and fast food outlets is difficult. In Australia there is not a consistent message about the Galloway's qualities or heritage. Our aim is to continue building on previous marketing achievements by championing and promoting the exceptional eating qualities of Galloway beef as well as their hardiness, feed efficiency, marbling ability when fed only grass and calving efficiency.

On the topic of beef quality and impressing people; some recent major carcase competition results graphically support our claims. A major carcase competition, the Upper Hunter Beef Bonanza had around 350 entries comprising all breeds and cross breeds. There was 1 Galloway entered, a full blood, ie, a 100% Galloway. While it didn't win it scored almost 90% of the possible points. It was awarded 100% points for Eye Muscle Area and Saleable Meat Yield as well as rating very highly for marbling. Results from Australia's premier carcase competition, the 2015 Royal Sydney Show Pure Bred Carcase Competition were equally impressive. Galloways Australia donated 5 steers to three Agricultural High Schools to be entered in the 2015 Royal Sydney Show, there were over 300 head entered. The 5 full blood Galloway steers won 2 Taste Test Championships and 3 Bronze Medals.

Galloways Australia actively seeks relationships with High School agriculture programs as a means of gaining greater recognition for the breed at the grass roots level. We hope to build on these relationships in coming years. Part of our efforts in this regard is to hold training days for students in High School agriculture programs covering clipping, show preparation, parading and judging.

Galloways Australia under the leadership of past president, Greg Stuart, continues to pursue research activities that demonstrate the quality of Galloway beef and other characteristics unique to the Galloway breeds. Galloway Australia's research shows that over the past 2 years Galloways have continued to be in the top 4% of eating quality of carcases slaughtered. Galloways Australia is to soon undertake its next round of nutritional testing of additional cuts of Galloway beef. The results will again be compared against Australian and international comparable standards i.e. USDA testing. Results will be posted on our website when available.

Another research project Galloways Australia is undertaking is a trial to determine if Galloways come into heat during Artificial Insemination earlier than other breeds esp. dairy breeds. Some UK members have suggested this is the case. In addition we are currently having discussions with the Gatton campus of the University of Queensland in order to obtain a genome profile of the Galloway breed. In this regard we have provided them

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with the research results achieved from the White Galloway and Belted Galloway colour pattern genetic profiles and associated molecular genetic analysis. Also provided the paper on genetic distances between British and European cattle breeds as determined by the Roslin Institute, University of Edinburgh. Such a project may be useful in culling suspected Simmental and Angus genetics within Galloways. Any information gleaned from this process will be posted on our website as it comes to hand.

As always Galloways Australia members have been active at local and Royal Shows. Supreme Galloway exhibits were achieved at the Royal Shows of Sydney, Canberra and Bathurst. Galloways Australia's co-operation with the Slow Food Movement continues with two Galloways Australia members being delegates to the Slow Meat Symposium in Denver, USA where they presented the case for natural production of Galloway beef. You will find an article on the subject in the Galloways Australia Magazine you will receive. At a recent Field Day held in the Hunter Valley Galloway beef was used by the Hunter Slow Food Convivium for a junior cooking competition. It is planned for the competition to be extended to schools next year with the finals to be held at the Field Day; again to feature Galloway beef. Galloway beef is to be featured in a nose to tail menu for the annual Hunter Slow Food dinner this year.

We are continuing with our regular promotional activities in our attendance at rural field days which is an excellent way of promoting the three separate Galloway breeds. Recent field days have resulted in increased enquiries for both Stud and commercial cattle from both small and larger farming enterprises. While this is good for the breeds' growth we do on occasion have difficulty in meeting the demand for animals. On the other side of the coin our members who direct market their beef regularly find they are unable to meet the demand for their product. I believe the increased interest by consumers in ethically produced grass fed beef will only further increase the demand for the high quality, well marbled, tasty beef that the Galloways provide.

As Galloways Australia strives to promote the uniqueness of the three different Galloway breeds and the characteristics that they present it is sometimes interesting to note what is occurring in other breeds and the directions they are moving in. To this end I have included the following extract from an article in an Australian newspaper and was headed up *White is the new Black.*

"The seed stock landscape is evolving fast, especially as gene editing labs get closer to commercialisation of new gene editing tools for livestock.

US genomics company AgGenetics, Tennessee, has partnered with one such lab and is presently seeking investment partners for its white Angus and other genetics projects.

White Angus cattle, with a greatly improved heat tolerance, are now close to being a commercial reality and those at AgGenetics believe northern Australia will be one of the fastest take-up regions.

AgGenetics founder and chief financial officer James West said as a genetic base they are starting with some champion bulls they already own.

These bulls will be "gene edited" (essentially the same process as genetic modification but between the same species) to introduce desirable traits. The resulting bulls will have semen collected for sale.

The process for white Angus will initially use cloning. The cloned embryos will be edited to contain the white hair gene from silver Galloway and the short hair gene from Senepol." (The full article is on the Galloways Australia website.)

Now I don't want to question the actual article or those scientific minds behind the process but I do wonder why just get the colour benefit of a silver Galloway when you can get the great benefits of the whole Galloway package. We know that the Galloways do well in a range of environments from snow covered fields to the much warmer areas.

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In closing I hope you have an enjoyable time at this conference and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Australia in 2018. With regard to the 2018 Australian Conference, Galloways Australia is well placed to assist planning your Australian Visit. A list of contacts and proposed post conference group tour is enclosed in your Galloways Australia information pack.

Colin McNeil

President, Galloways Australia