

SOUTH DEVONS

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2014 Eeufeesviering

Algemene Jaarvergadering



Agter vlnr.: Chris Els*, Ian Turnbull, Gerdus de Klerk*, Charl Hunlun*, Dan Kriek

Voor vlnr.: Anna-Marie Viljoen*, Tielman Nieuwoudt, John Miller, Barrie van Zyl

*SA Stamboek

From the **President**

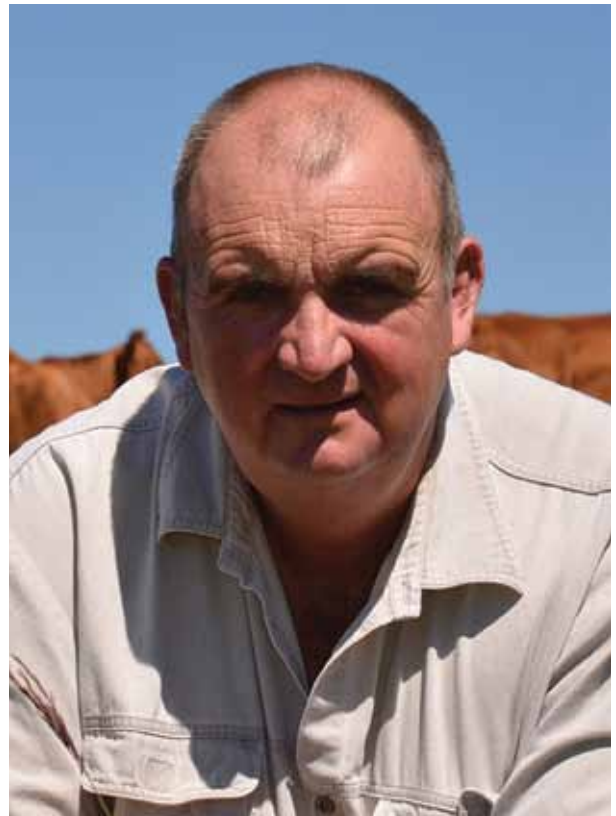
..... JOHN MILLER

The year 2014 is nearly a thing of the past. It has been a really busy South Devon year!

We hosted our Centenary function at the beginning of NAMPO in Potchefstroom where past breeders and people who have been involved with South Devon's gathered to celebrate 100 years of South Devon Cattle in South Africa. There was much reminiscing and storytelling about the good old days and a great deal of fun was had by all who attended the function. I would like to thank everyone who attended the function for taking the time to be with us, and for helping to make this a memorable occasion. Thank you again to Tielman and Christine Nieuwoudt for all they did to organise such a wonderful event, we all appreciate your hard work and attention to detail.

Our NAMPO stall looked fantastic again this year - thank you to the Nieuwoudt family for all the hard work they did in setting up the stall for NAMPO 2014. Thank you to Barrie van Zyl for preparing and showing his oxen that created much interest, thank you also to Attie du Plessis for preparing his cow and her calf for NAMPO. All the breeders did a wonderful job of stepping in to take a turn of manning the South Devon stall during the week of NAMPO. Thank you for being prepared to help by sharing the load.

A good number of polled bulls have been sold around the country this year, and this has created great interest amongst cattlemen. It was definitely a good decision to import the polled semen and it is wonderful to see the rewards.



I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Secretariat at Stud Book in Bloemfontein for all their hard work and loyalty and support during the past year.

As the year draws to an end I would like to wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas, and a prosperous New Year. May you all experience true peace and joy during this festive season.



Greetings from

New Zealand

On behalf of all members of the New Zealand South Devon Cattle Society it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on such a great achievement reaching 100 years of breeding South Devon cattle in South Africa.

Here in New Zealand we currently have 28 members breeding South Devon cattle & have a total of 1,477 registered female cattle at present, the size of herds range from 8 - 120 with two thirds of breeders living in the North Island.

We have a small number of breeders that show cattle at A&P shows throughout New Zealand with our cattle competing very well including against the other breeds.

Our AGM & tour is held annually where we travel to a different destination to view cattle & learn from others

about their breeding programme, this March we will gather in Gisborne where we will celebrate 44 years.

We have had some members attend the World Conference which is held every three years with members enjoying a wonderful experience where you meet like minded people & learn about their breeding programmes.

New Zealand has an estimated population of 4.4 million with a total area of 26.8 million hectares of which 14.7 is used for farming.

Well done to you the South Devon Breeders Society of South Africa for breeding cattle for 100 years is a great milestone to reach. Good luck and enjoy your celebrations.

Kind Regards
Brian Thomson



Day 1 of the tour loading the bus in
Fort Worth Texas

World South Devon

Tour & Conference

JOHN MILLER

Our tour started in real cowboy country in Fort Worth Texas with a welcome luncheon at the Long Horn Room at the Fort Worth Historic Stockyards Hotel. Here we met up with Aussies, Kiwis, Americans and a group from the UK who were all part of our tour group. Most of the people on the tour had travelled together before on other South Devon Tours so it was like joining a family.

Our tour was to take us through the Mid-West States and we eventually landed up in Denver Colorado. We travelled a total of 10 000km in a tour bus through 14 States. The tour group was very friendly and we met some great people. One of the big plusses was networking with South Devon Breeders from all over the world and furthering the interests of the South Devon Breed.

The country we travelled through was generally flat and we saw lots of soya and maize which they called corn, from Missouri right through to Minnesota. We soon realized that this is a rich country in every sense of the word - soil, economy, everything really! – They have a great work ethic. We also saw oil wells on various farms.

On our trip we saw about 20 South Devon operations of various sizes, which varied from people running 12 cows to 1000 cows. Most of the farming operations we saw



All of us loaded on a long trailer ready to be taken to look at cattle in the pasture

graze their animals on pastures for 6 months and then feed them for 6 months because of the snow in the winter. The heifers are bred at 13 – 14 months and the bulls are sold as yearlings. These young bulls are generally put into a feedlot after weaning where they are performance tested. They are very big on testing for marbling, tenderness and feed efficiency.

I am happy to report that the South Devon Breed is amongst the best in the USA for these traits. Most of the South Devon's we saw were black and the majority of the cattle in the USA are black. The cattle from the range country (grassveld) were more our type. Weaning weights and mature weights were on a par with ours. These farmers don't feed their stock as much as the farmers in the Corn Belt. The Americans are very big on showing animals. They encourage the children to show animals from a very young age, as young as 5 -6 years old. They have a junior South Devon Association which is very active with a President and Youth Ambassadors.

We were also taken to see other family units; these operations didn't necessarily run South Devons.

- 1) Express Ranch is the No. 2 Seed Stock producer in the USA. They sell in excess of 4800 head of Stud animals a year. They also have Clydesdale Horses which travel through the USA every year and they are famous throughout the country. They are a form of advertising for the Ranch and these animals were magnificent and amazing to see.
- 2) Wulf Cattle Company is one of the top 25 Seed Stock operations in the USA, they also feedlot calves and milk 51000 cows on various farms in the country. All the milk they produce goes into cheese production.

- 3) Midland Bull Test Station. They test over 1000 bulls a year. The man who runs this operation is profoundly deaf, he is highly intelligent and a real figures man, but also an excellent cattle man who picks up sick animals in the feedlot long before anyone else has even noticed that there is a problem. His wife is very involved in the business, she also interprets for him using sign language. The work they do at this Bull Test Station is highly respected throughout the USA.
- 4) Schiefelbein Farms is a family operation. The operation is run by 9 brothers and 2 nephews. (Very interesting family dynamic – but it seems to work). They have a 700 stud cow herd, and run a huge under roof feedlot. They have 4200 acres of pastures and crops.
- 5) The JOPLIN STOCKYARD was a great high light. This is a privately owned cattle selling facility with more than 10 acres under roof. Cattle sales are offered for 50 weeks of the year, and over 450 000 head of cattle are marketed through the Stock Yards each year, making it the largest cow/calf auction in the nation. This facility caters for all farmers, from those who own 10 cows to those that own a 1000 head.

We also visited Kansas City University. This was very interesting and we were impressed by the strong influence on Agriculture with a huge Agricultural Facility which encourages students to follow many careers in Agriculture from Journalism to Agricultural Science Degrees.

We visited the US Animal Research Centre which was very interesting because they ran big herds of cattle, and sheep and pigs, and they produced all their own feed. This Research Centre is located in the centre of Nebraska in the middle of the USA. This site was used as an ammunition

storage facility during the 2nd World War, it is miles from the sea so they thought it would be a safe place to store ammunition.

FINK Genetics was another interesting operation which was run by a middle aged couple and their young daughter. This is a 99.9% artificially inseminated herd. It is one of the largest embryo transplant programs in the USA. They market about 700 bulls a year.

We also got to attend a Rodeo one night and visited a Cowboy Museum and The Cowboy Hall of Fame. When we were in Minneapolis we were taken to a Base Ball Game where we supported The Twin City Team who happened to win that night. We also attended The Dolly Parton Show called THE DIXIE STAMPEDED & DINNER SHOW, which was full of action and great fun to watch.

In North Dakota we were taken to The Theodore Roosevelt National Park, which is called "The Bad Lands". The topography of this area was very rugged and in complete contrast to what we had seen before. We then went on to Yellow Stone National Park in Montana.

We also visited the National Big Horn Sheep Centre, which was very interesting. These Big Horn Sheep are in danger of becoming extinct. We were able to visit one commercial sheep feedlot operation and we met a sheep farmer who ran 6000 ewes in Wyoming, we were unfortunately not able to get to his farm because of the wet weather.

We spent the last 3 days at Estes Park at the historic Stanley Hotel. The World South Devon Congress was held at this venue over 2 days. Each country that was represented on the Tour and at the Congress, had chosen a delegate to give a report on South Devons in their Country. During the Conference we were addressed by a number of Industry Leading Speakers.

The Tour ended with a Dinner and Auction on the night of Saturday the 4th of October.

We left having been blessed with the opportunity to have met a wonderful group of people from all over the world with a common interest in farming and most importantly South Devon Cattle.



This is all the members of the tour at one of the farms we visited

Genetic progress

in SA's South Devon herd

South Devons have been farmed in South Africa for more than 100 years. These medium-framed British beef cattle are known for their high quality beef and exceptional maternal ability. Nan Smith looks at how genetic selection ensures the breed's competitiveness in tough environments, making them good candidates for local beef operations.

Longevity, calm temperament, efficient feed conversion, good maternal ability and fertility, and excellent carcass traits are hallmarks of the South Devon breed.

Originally a dual-purpose breed, South Devon produces milk with high solids and good butterfat percentages, which helps it wean a heavier calf.

GENETIC DIRECTION

BLUP technology makes it possible to separate environmental and genetic influences on a breed and evaluate genetic direction. Every breed should be reassessed periodically so that farmers are well-positioned to respond to changes in market demand. As consumers become more discriminating about the source areas of beef, veld-raised and hormone-free beef has become more popular at the higher end of the market. However, the rise in global population means that feedlot beef production will always be vital to world supply.

The South Devon has the flexibility and quality to meet the demands of both markets as it does well on veld under the extensive farming conditions favoured by most SA beef farmers. The breed is also profitable in more intensive operations and feedlots where operators benefit from its feed conversion efficiency that allows weight gain on lower feed intakes. This ability to produce in different conditions, is a primary advantage of the breed and adds to its economic value.

CALM TEMPERAMENT

Another advantage for producers is South Devons' calm temperament, which makes for easier management, with the knock-on effect of better production due to less stress and fewer labour requirements.

REDUCED BIRTH WEIGHT

Like any other breeder, South Devon breeders put a great deal of energy into breeding productive cows that can calve at 24 months, re-conceive easily, calve every year after that, and raise weaners comfortably to target weights.

A cow's breeding value provides an index for the combined traits of fertility, calving ease, calf growth, milk production and cow weight.

During a 22-year period from 1990 to 2012, the South Devon herd showed a 1,67kg reduction in birth weight (direct), a trend with a high score for calving ease. The average phenotypic value of calves born in 2013 was 35,5kg, about 4,7kg lower than it was in 1990. This was achieved with very little change in the cow's ability to restrict her calf's in utero (maternal) birth weight.

There is always a tipping point in selecting for birth weight, which correlates to weight at later ages. Selection should therefore keep the balance between weight gain and reproductive problems. Selecting for growth can lead to higher birth weights, the major cause of calving difficulties, which has a negative impact on profit and production.



South Devon breeders have succeeded in selecting for increased weaning weight while selecting against higher birth weight. The growth of the calf is determined by its own genes (birth weight direct) and to a certain extent by the cow's ability to restrict growth in utero (birth weight maternal). The direct breeding value gives the calf its genetic potential for growth and the cow gives her calf the opportunity to realise that potential through her milk and mothering instinct (maternal breeding value). These values are all strong in South Africa's South Devons.

Average post-weaning weight (12-month and 18-month weights added together) during the 22-year period showed a gain of 8,9kg, making the most of genetic potential through selection. From the beginning of 2011 to the end of 2013, there were average weight gains from an average birth weight of 36,6kg to 225kg at 205 days, and to 249kg at 365 days. Mature weight strongly correlated to birth weight came down, but has evened out at an average weight for a medium-framed cow of 480kg to 500kg.

Increasing and decreasing mature weight through selection will have a bearing on calving ease, feed requirements, cow efficiency and carcass weight.

THE KEY TO PRODUCTIVITY

Beef cattle farming relies on selling calves (weaned or grown out) to generate funds; fertility is therefore a key driver of productivity. According to the ARC, fertility has a heritability of 10% or less and involves age at first calving, the inter-calving period (ICP), calving ease, and longevity. South Devon cows fit these productivity models, with age at first calving down by 3,7 months, proven fertility, and high re-conception rates.

During the same 22-year period, South Devons' ICP improved by 4,5 days to a figure of well below of 400 days. Cattleman Dan Kriek says the breed's average ICP during

the last three calving seasons was 381 days, 395 days and 386 days respectively. Genetic gains in fertility, shown by the improved ICP, boost margins, especially when there are cows in the system that are still productive at 14 years or 15 years.

South Devon cows' age at first calving has decreased 3,7%, which shows genetic improvement in early-maturing animals. As a rule, heifers should be 65% of mature weight when first bred, and 85% of mature weight when they calve down.

Successful beef farmers are business-orientated and profit-driven. They will look for economically important traits that can generate high returns and give their herds some balance. South Devons offer solid strength across the genetic range and several unique trait combinations that can improve herd profitability.

Source: Leslie Bergh of Bull's Eye Consulting, 'Genetic trends in the South Devon Breed in South Africa.'

How to use breeding values

HELENA THERON
SA Stud Book, Pretoria Office

to select beef cattle

Introduction

If you have only started to breed beef cattle, you might have found breeding values overwhelming. Some breeds receive up to 18 breeding values. What do they mean, and are some more important than others? Selecting animals on breeding values are in fact quite easy, once you know how. The key is to do your homework before you select animals.

Some things you need to know about genetics:

There is a saying: 'Good feeding can hide bad breeding', which is very true. You cannot visually inspect an animal and decide what his genetics are. If he has been fed well, he will look good, but he can be genetically inferior. This implies that he – and his progeny – will need a lot of food and care to look good. It therefore makes more sense to buy an animal that is genetically superior, as it will be more profitable. Its superiority will also be transmitted to its progeny. The general idea is to rather breed animals that are suitable for your environment, not to continually change the environment to suit the animal, as this can be a very costly exercise. Using adapted animals is also the right thing to do from an animal welfare point of view.

The reason why we need to look at breeding values to know how the bull will breed is because the effect of the environment, and feed, is so important. The only way to 'get the environment out' is the scientific way, which entails performance measurements under controlled circumstances and complete pedigree recording. If you don't do performance measuring properly, your animals will not get usable breeding values. So if you buy stud animals, it should be from a breeder that does performance measurement on his animals, and knows and understands breeding values.

Another important factor is that genetic change is a long term venture: The effect of the bulls that you buy today will still be felt in the herd for years to come. If he is a good choice, his daughters will become your herd cows,

and part of your profit of the future. So don't buy a lucky packet bull: one you don't know anything about, but you are hoping for the best. Even if the bull you buy is not perfect, if you know about his shortcomings, you can manage it by using him on suitable cows.

Breeding Values

Breeding values are also expressed as indexes, which is very easy to interpret and use. The average breeding value index of live animals in the breed is set to 100. Above 100 means the animal is better than breed average. A value of for example 120 for weaning weight means a calf that has the genetic potential to be 20% heavier than the average calf. Breeding value indexes indicate genetic potential, and how heavy it will actually be, is determined by the amount of feed it gets. However, if you have two calves, one with an index of 120 and another with an index of 80 together on the same farm, the 120 one will definitely be the heaviest. A lower birth weight is generally more desirable, as birth weight is the most important cause of difficult births. So an index for birth weight of above 100 indicates a lighter calf.

Note that although above 100 indicates the more desirable direction, it does not imply that all breeding value indexes should be at a maximum. For some traits, e.g. birth weight and mature weight, average is in fact the more desirable.

Another fact that should be kept in mind is that traits are connected to one another, meaning you should not select on one trait only. Selecting only for maximum weaning weight for example, will increase both birth weight, which will cause difficult births, and mature weight, causing large framed cows that can be inefficient under certain circumstances.

How to use breeding values

If for example you want to buy a breeding bull on breeding values, you need to follow a few simple steps. The first and most important is to know what you want. What you

want is mainly determined by three factors: What do you want to do with the bull's calves, how much feed do you have and what is the genetics of your cows.

What do you want to do with the calves? For example, you can sell some of the calves as weaners to a feedlot, or you can breed replacement cows for your older cows that are leaving the herd. If you intend to sell stud bulls, you should realize that it is a very specialized area, and you need to study performance measurement and breeding values in depth. Only the best bulls should become stud bulls.

How much feed do you have? The amount of feed determines the frame size that will do best. If you have good quality feed available at a reasonable price, larger framed animals will probably be more profitable. If the animals are going to be extensively kept on the veld, medium framed animals will probably be better. If conditions are very harsh, smaller framed ones might be even better, but then rather choose a smaller framed breed, so that selected animals are well adapted and strong and small framed, not small framed because they are poor.

What is the genetics of your cows? Are they perhaps the wrong frame size, or do not have enough milk (you can see that in their breeding values), or perhaps you are looking for a bull to use on your heifers. Are they pedigree animals or crossbred cows? If they are pedigree animals, they will have breeding values, and you will know with much more surety how they will breed.

Set up a breeding goal

Use the above to decide what type of bull will be best on your farm. Let us say for example we need the following 3 bulls:

Bull 1: A bull with good growth to use on a group of crossbred cows that will be grazing the camp at the river with the good grass, as well as some crop rests. The calves will all be sold to a feedlot. A large framed bull with good

growth will therefore be best. Important breeding value indexes are Weaning Weight and Average Daily Gain (ADG), which should be as high as possible. Post wean weight, Mature weight and Height and Length also giving indications of the general frame size that the bull will breed.

Bull 2: A bull to use on pedigree cows that do not have any particular problems. They will be on the veld all year. The heifer calves will be used as replacement cows in the herd, or sold as such, while the bull calves out of the superior cows will be sold as stud bulls. A bull with average or slightly above average growth will be ideal. Once again the growth breeding values are important, but should not be as high as possible, but closer to 100. It is now important to also look at Birth Weight and Milk as well as the reproduction breeding value indexes AFC (Age at first calving) and ICP (intercalving period). The Cow Value, which combines all the important breeding values into one value, will give a quick indication of how suitable the animal is to breed cows.

Bull 3: A bull to use on heifers that are to be mated to calve at 2 years. The bull should therefore not have a high breeding value for birth weight, so as to ensure easy calving. The calves should however still be profitable, i.e. be able to grow sufficiently to be either sold to the feedlot or to be used as replacement heifers. A bull with Breeding Value Indexes for both Birth Weight and Weaning Weight above 100 would be ideal.

In conclusion

As can be seen from the above, different types of bulls are suitable for different types of cows and circumstances. It is also possible to find a custom bull to your cows, with the aim to improve the calves. As inbreeding should also be kept at a minimum, it is usually easier to use a mating program to fit bulls to cows based on breeding values.



Johstep South Devons

..... Charles Krös

Ek boer op die plaas "Langverwacht" in die Kimberley distrik. Die eiendom is vyf-en-dertig kilometer vanaf Kimberley in die rigting van Schmidtsdrift geleë. Die weiding bestaan uit gebroke veld, - gras, bossieveld en verskeie vreetbare bosse, soos bv. vaalbos wat van onskatbare waarde gedurende tye van droogte is.

Ek is al vir dertig jaar in die boerderybedryf. My boedery is ingestel op vleisproduksie. Diere met 'n mooi temperament, goeie melk- en vleiseienskappe, 'n klein kalf by geboorte wat vinnig groei en 'n goeie speengewig lewer is van kardinale belang in my kruisteelprogram. Daarom het ek in 2011 'n geregistreerde South Devon bul by Johstep gekoop. Dié bul het baie goed by my natuurlike veldtoestande (sonder dat hy gevoer is) aangepas, het nie 'n lui haar op sy kop nie, is baie vrugbaar en lewer mooi speenkalwers by my Brahmarkruiskoeie. Tot op hede het ek geen kalwingsprobleme ondervind nie en sal beslis weer 'n South Devon bul koop.

Ondervinding het my geleer om nie 'n jong bul te misbruik nie. Hy moet geleentheid gebied word om tot volle wasdom te ontwikkel - dit verleng die bruiksdur van jou bul en lewer positiewe resultate.



Johstep South Devons

.....*Kruiskalwers*



Winston Stud

.....*Production Sale*

A very successful production sale of the WINSTON SOUTH DEVON STUD was held on Thursday 14th August 2014 at Winston Farm Cathcart. The sale was conducted by Sheard Auctioneers.

All 25 bulls were sold at an average price of R29 640. The highest price was R45 000, which was paid for 2 bulls. One was bought by Mr. Peter Brown of Ellington Farm Cathcart and the other was bought by Carel & Neels Fourie from the Aliwal North / Rouxville district. The second highest price was R43 000 and was bought by Marizelle van Niekerk of Magpela South Devon Stud near Harrismith.

There were also 20 commercial heifers belonging to Mr. Peter Brown and Mr. Chris Sheard which were sold for an average of R8200 each.



R45 000 - Neels Fourie, John Miller, Ian Sheard & Carel Fourie



R45 000 - Peter Brown, John Miller & Ian Sheard



R43 000 - bought by Marizelle van Niekerk of Magpela South Devons. Standing behind the bull is John Miller & Ian Sheard



Farmer's Weekly

Cow/Koei

Bellary South Devons van Dan Kriek het vanjaar die Farmer's Weekly Elite koei opgelewer. BL03-72 is 11 jaar oud en het 8 kalwers teen 'n gemiddelde TKP van 364 dae geproduseer. Sy het op die 9de Oktober 2014 haar 9de kalf gehad en boonop haar gemiddelde TKP met 1 dag verbeter tot 363 dae. Die gemiddelde geboortegewig van haar kalwers was 38kg, terwyl die gemiddelde gekorrigeerde speenmassa 233kg was. Voorwaar uitstekende vrugbaarheid- en produksiesyfers.



BL03-72

Landbou Weekblad

Elite Platinum Cow



JM 040065

The winning of the Elite Platinum Cow Award this year is the fifth elite cow award that the Winston South Devon stud has won.

- 3 Elite Farmer's Weekly cow awards (2010, 2011, 2013)
- 2 Landbou Weekblad Elite platinum cows (2013, 2014)

This stud has been consistently ranked in the top 3 studs of the breed with the lowest ICP's for the last 10 years. Fertility and reproduction is one of the corner stones of this stud.

JM 040065 is a Aduvon Johny calf and her date of birth is 07/10/2004.



South Devon

CENTENARY CELEBRATION

South Devon Cattle Breeders' Society of South Africa

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For more information on South Devons visit: www.southdevon.co.za

SOUTH DEVONS OFFER YOU:

Supreme Fertility - The best average Inter-calving period of all breeds, 380 days, SA Studbook Beef Report 2012. In fact, South Devons achieved the best Inter-calving period of all breeds in each and every year since 2007

High Milk production & weaning weights - Cows consistently wean calves above 45 % of their own weight. The genetic trend for wean weight direct has consistently increased since 2002

Polled trait - Polled genes have been introduced through use of the best Australian semen. Polled bulls are now available on our sales

Temperament - They have a gentle temperament which is a great advantage when handling animals, especially under extensive conditions

Growth and Feed Conversion rate - South Devons consistently achieve exceptional, highly efficient growth rates

Cross breeding - South Devons are an asset to any cross breeding program, they cross exceptionally well with all breeds. Female cross-bred animals are highly sought after by commercial breeders

Ease of calving - The average birth weight is down to 35.7kg while the genetic trend for wean weight shows an increase

Versatility - Modern medium-framed South Devons thrive in various regions of our country, from the hot Northern Cape summers to the icy cold Eastern Cape & Free State winters

THE BREED THAT IS TRULY STANDING THE TEST OF TIME

Aduvon Stud	Attie du Plessis, Coligny, North West	082 891 0202
Andiro Stud	Ian Turnbull, Barkly East, Eastern Cape	082 705 3056
Bellary Stud	Dan Kriek, Tweeling, Free State	082 944 0566
Johstep Stud	Gielie & Barrie van Zyl, Kimberley, Northern Cape	082 441 1297
Magpela Stud	Marizelle van Niekerk, Harrismith, Free State	082 829 2687
Nieubaden Stud	Tielman Nieuwoudt, Schweizer-Reneke, North West	082 524 8544
Winston Stud	John Miller, Cathcart, Eastern Cape	083 659 8269