

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019

## **It's time to vote for the Virbac Multimin Performance Ready Challenge winner**

Animal health company Virbac Australia has announced its top three finalists in the Multimin Performance Ready Challenge – and with just 30 days to go before one lucky livestock producer is crowned the Multimin Challenger King or Queen, now's the time to cast your vote.

Over the past 12 months, seven livestock producers have been competing in the 12-month program, designed to test the benefits of Multimin, an injection used to top up trace minerals in sheep and cattle prior to high demand periods. Led by Virbac Australia, the program has seen improvements in everything from pregnancy-test rates to conception rates and immune function, all delivering a vital boost to producer productivity.

Virbac's top three challengers, Don McConnel (QLD), Renee Murfett (VIC) and Ryan Willing (WA) are all in the running to win an overseas study tour tailored to their farming system, and free Multimin for a year, a total prize value of more than \$20,000.

Don operates "Mt Brisbane", a 4,500 hectare breeding and fattening operation in the Brisbane Valley, where he runs purebred Droughtmaster cattle and a Droughtmaster stud operation. Facing trace mineral issues particularly with copper and selenium, Don has sought to use Multimin to increase fertility, conception and productivity. Results showed that animals treated with Multimin at the same time as their 7 in 1 vaccination had higher leptospirosis antibody titres and also looked in noticeably better condition.

Renee runs two dairy farms in Framlingham, Victoria with her husband Alister, comprising a 145 hectare home farm, "Springlea", which has 220 Frisian x Red Dairy milking cows, and a second 183 hectare farm, "Merton Park", with 250 Frisian x Red Dairy cows. Renee's goal has been to increase the immunity, health and productivity of their livestock, and she describes how she saw significant differences as early as the first 12 weeks. "The treated calves didn't seem to suffer from the usual gastric signs that the untreated herd had at the time of weaning. Multimin helped with the adjustment to weaner rations, and they went straight on to the new diet without any issues."

Ryan Willing and his wife Elisha run "Carnigup", a 1,050-hectare property that's home to a 300 breeder self-replacing herd east of Esperance, WA. Facing issues with copper and selenium that were impacting the fertility, weight gain and overall health of their herd, their goal has been to increase fertility, conception rates and productivity. When pregnancy-tested last October, Ryan saw above 90% conception in both groups, with the Multimin-

treated animals slightly ahead. "Multimin has proven its worth in this instance and reinforced the importance of investing for the future," says Ryan.

WA challenge mentor Dr Enoch Bergman explained that "it's been great to be involved in the Multimin Performance Ready Challenge and share our knowledge of the role trace minerals can play, to see how it performs with their livestock. We've seen some really great results."

Voting lines for each of the finalists have been open since 8am on 1st April, and the public can vote for their favourite challenger until midnight on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Virbac Australia's Livestock Nutrition Product Manager Jerry Liu gave his reaction to the news, saying that "we're excited to let the public decide on who should win, in what is an entirely unconventional, interactive way. We'd love to know who your favourite Multimin challenger has been, so please make your vote count."

So who will become the Multimin Challenger King or Queen on 6 May 2019? That's for you to decide. Check out the top three challengers and their results at [www.multiminchallenge.com](http://www.multiminchallenge.com) and cast your vote to award one worthy winner the Multimin Ultimate Challenger title and the trip of a lifetime.

## **Ends**

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## **Photo captions:**

1. Top 3 Multimin Performance Ready Challenger finalists (Don, Renee, Ryan)
2. WA Multimin Challenger Elisha & Ryan Willing with mentor Dr Enoch Bergman