



MEDIA RELEASE

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King Island cattle producer reveals first observations from new trace mineral trial.

King Island cattle producer Richard Sutton has just shared his latest findings from the *Multimin Performance Ready Challenge*, a 12-month trial currently being run by animal health company Virbac Australia.

As part of the challenge, seven farmers are testing the livestock benefits of Multimin Trace Mineral Injection, supported by expert advice from a team of veterinary mentors. With the results shared on social media and digital channels, the trial is designed to show Australian beef, sheep and dairy producers how they can use the trace mineral injection to improve livestock performance.

Richard operates 'Taroona Pastoral', a 1,000-hectare property located at Egg Lagoon on the north of King Island, Tasmania. He runs 525 spring-calving cows, predominately Angus and Black Baldies, which produce 450-600 kg MSA yearlings at 16-20 months.

With three different soil types that include some heavier country, along with semi-coastal lighter country and sand dunes, Richard faces significant challenges when it comes to trace minerals.

Richard's mentor for the trial is Dr Craig Dwyer, former president of Australian Cattle Vets and veterinarian at Smithton Veterinary Service. He explains the importance of the role of trace minerals in supporting cattle health. "Trace minerals are essential for healthy cattle, and we know that during high-demand periods such as joining, weaning and calving, animals have higher requirements for certain trace minerals.

"Copper, selenium, zinc and manganese offer vital support for normal body and reproductive development, proper functioning of the immune system, greater disease resilience and future fertility prospects," he continues. "Essentially, the trace minerals

in Multimin work to decrease the impact of free-radicals, while also delivering key nutrients.”

Richard’s goal is to use Multimin to increase his calf survival rate in older cows by 1-2%. While this may only be a small lift, every pregnancy helps to increase overall production, and while his farm currently suffers only minor pregnancy rate issues, Richard reports that last year’s rate was down on previous years, which may have been a result of his mineral program prior to calving.

As part of the challenge, Richard has embarked on a calf survival and fertility trial with some of his older cows. Splitting his herd into two groups, he’ll be assessing improvements in conception rates and timings, as well as marking rates – all important markers of fertility and herd profitability. The trial began 30 days before calving when he treated Group 1 (175 cows) with 7 in 1 and Pestivirus vaccine, and Group 2 (175 cows) with 7 in 1, Pestivirus vaccine, Multimin and B12.

Group 2 (Multimin treated animals) will then receive a second dose of Multimin 30 days before joining, in October. By February next year, Richard should be able to determine the benefits of Multimin by comparing pregnancy test results in treated versus non-treated animals. Conception rates, including the oestrus cycle in which each cow conceived will also be recorded.

Being a spring calver, Richard’s calf survival and cow fertility trial has only just begun – but while it’s early days, he’s already noticed some significant changes. “My early observation is that the Multimin-treated cows are dropping calves with an amazing coat colour, unlike the untreated cows, who have more of a dull, rough coat,” he reports.

At the end of the 12-month challenge period, mentors will shortlist the top-performing challengers and voting will open to the public to select an overall winner. Richard is looking forward to what the trial will reveal at this time, and is intrigued to analyse the data with mentor Dr Dwyer. “This is a great opportunity for me to learn more about mineral treatment for our cattle”, he concludes. “I’m keen to use the findings to help me perfect our mineral program and fully optimise our cattle’s performance.”



Richard will be at the Virbac Stand at the King Island Elder's In-store Day on Friday 14th September to answer any questions and speak about his observations so far.

To find out more about how Multimin can improve your livestock performance, contact your local Virbac representative on 1800 242 100.

Interested farmers can sign up for continuing updates on the Multimin Performance Ready Challenge at www.multiminchallenge.com/signup/

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Photo captions:

1. Tasmanian Multimin Performance Ready Challenger Richard Sutton
2. Multimin Performance Ready Challenge Mentor Dr Craig Dwyer