

MEDIA RELEASE

Charles Darwin University is the latest to take part in national trace mineral challenge.

Monday 3rd December, 2018

Charles Darwin University (CDU) is expected to announce livestock pregnancy improvements from participation in the *Multimin Performance Ready Challenge*, a 12-month program run by animal health company Virbac Australia.

The *Multimin Performance Ready Challenge* gives seven participants the chance to experience first-hand the benefits of Multimin's trace mineral injection, with assistance from expert mentors. Challengers receive 12 months of free Multimin product and a tailored nutrition program developed by leading industry mentors – and they'll also be in the running to win the experience of a lifetime, specifically tailored to their farming system.

With each challenger sharing their program results and experiences, Charles Darwin University's Katherine Rural Campus trial site is the latest to take part. Based 16 km north of Katherine, the site is managed by Jessica Di Pasquale, Alison Haines and Noah Taylor, who together operate a Brahman stud and Brahman/cross breed commercial herd from an on-site farm and stud at the University's training facility.

Their goals are to increase fertility, conception and productivity and improve immunity and health, under the expert guidance of Multimin mentor Dr Amanda Dunn from Katherine Veterinary Care Centre. As part of the trial, 92 non-pregnant adult cows have been assigned one of two treatment groups at random, and have been given either Multimin or no Multimin (control herd) four weeks before bulls were introduced in November. In March 2019, all trial animals will be pregnancy-tested, and the resulting data will measure each cow's pregnancy status, foetus age and animal weight to determine the effect of Multimin trace minerals.

As Jessica explains, "Multimin injection has been scientifically proven to top up trace minerals, and we're looking forward to seeing the results. We'll be sharing our observations over the coming months – and as previous field trials have proven that breeders treated with Multimin have significantly higher conception rates earlier in the calving season, we're expecting to see improved conception at first cycle from these latest trials."

Dr Jerry Liu, Livestock Nutrition Product Manager at Virbac Australia described the Multimin Challenge as an "extraordinary opportunity for farmers to learn more about animal nutrition.

Trace minerals are essential elements for healthy sheep and cattle, and we know that during high demand periods such as joining, weaning and birthing, animals have higher requirements for certain trace minerals. This is sure to be a fascinating study into the effects of a new strategic approach for optimal performance management.”

The *Multimin Performance Ready Challenge* is also part of Virbac’s ongoing commitment to animal health education, with the company supporting students who have a desire to work in agriculture and rural operations in a number of different ways. Through working with CDU on the *Multimin Performance Ready Challenge*, the company encourages school leavers to get involved in agriculture and rural operations through Agricultural Training Colleges to become an ag specialist or prepare for jobs in rural and regional sectors. In addition, WA mentor Enoch Bergman recently gave five young vets from Murdoch University hands-on experience with preg-testing and the chance to learn more about the Multimin Challenge – and Virbac also takes in 2-3 students per year, providing invaluable work experience to help nurture Australia’s next generation of agricultural specialists.

To find out more about how Multimin can improve livestock performance, contact your local Virbac representative on 1800 242 100. Interested farmers can also sign up for continuing updates on the Multimin Performance Ready Challenge at www.multiminchallenge.com/signup/.

About Multimin

Virbac's trace mineral injection Multimin 4 in 1 for cattle delivers a balanced ratio of four trace minerals, including selenium, copper, manganese and zinc – while Multimin 3 in 1 injection for sheep and cattle contains selenium, manganese and zinc, bypassing the rumen for direct uptake through the blood in eight hours.

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Media Enquiries:

Kate Munsie - C7EVEN COMMUNICATIONS

(02) 6766 4513

kate.munsie@c7even.com.au

Photo captions:

1. Dr Amanda Dunn and Jessica Beckhouse
2. Charles Darwin University Brahman Cattle