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MEDIA RELEASE

Virbac Australia releases end-of-year findings from its national trace mineral challenge.

As the year draws to a close, animal health company Virbac Australia has collected all available data on the *Multimin Performance Ready Challenge*, a 12-month program which invites seven Multimin challengers to share their learnings as they reveal the benefits of Multimin, a trace mineral injection for livestock.

From beef producers in Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania, to a dairy producer in Victoria and a Poll Merino breeder in the Southern Tablelands of NSW, Virbac's challengers have been trialing Multimin's effects. The trial has explored improvements in areas like conception rates and immunity, body conformation, carcass weight and characteristics, incidence of diseases, growth rates and conception times.

With the assistance of expert mentors, challengers have received 12 months worth of free Multimin product and a tailored nutrition program developed by leading industry mentors. Each program is aligned to each challenger's goals and ultimately their bottom line, and challengers have been sharing their program results and experiences online at www.multiminchallenge.com.

State by state, some of the key highlights include:

QLD:

Multimin treated heifers have shown an improved immune response to leptospirosis – and results also showed that animals treated with Multimin and 7 in 1 had higher levels of protection. QLD challenger Don McConnel reports that “animals given Multimin had higher mean antibodies to leptospirosis. On visual appraisal, the animals that have been treated in heifer groups also look in noticeably better condition.”

Mentor Matt Ball says that “it's been great working with Don at Mt Brisbane. We are studying conception rates, immunity, and growth and development responses to trace minerals, and we've seen very positive results suggesting that animals treated with Multimin and 7 in 1 had higher levels of protection, with on average higher antibodies to leptospirosis. Heifers also seem to be growing better, with a healthier appearance in the treatment group.”

WA:

When pregnancy-tested in October, challenger Ryan Willing saw above 90% conception in both groups, with the Multimin-treated animals slightly ahead. Challenge mentor Enoch Bergman reports seeing “fantastic results with Ryan's cattle. Multimin has proven its worth in this instance and reinforced the importance of investing for the future.”

VIC:

Multimin played a greater role in supporting calves during their first 12 weeks, says challenger mentor Dr Susan Swaney, who reports that “the Multimin Challenge has given people who have never tried it the chance to see how it performs on their property, and we've seen some really great results. We certainly saw differences within 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.”

NSW:

Challenger mentor Dr Elizabeth Bramley describes Multimin’s impact on sheep weight and carcass characteristics: “The focus of trace mineral supplementation has developed beyond merely correcting deficiency symptoms to strategic mineral supplementation, which is aimed at the optimisation of reproductive performance, immune function and growth. This strategic approach can better support improvements in productivity and subsequently profitability.”

Next year will bring further results for the Multimin challenge. Data due early in 2019 will include weight measurements and MSA grading in steers, pregnancy-testing cows, calving distribution, liver testing, worm egg counts and conception rates. All these factors will influence the performance of livestock and ultimately enhance producer profitability.

Challengers are excited to see the longer-term results as they begin to calculate the cost benefit analysis for producers. Dr Jerry Liu, Livestock Nutrition Product Manager at Virbac Australia summarises the impact of those results: “Previous trials have shown that Multimin is able to improve the performance of livestock in these areas. If this is replicated for our challengers, it will have a significant impact on their bottom line.”

Judged by both challenge mentors and the public, the winner will be announced in May 2019 and awarded an ‘experience of lifetime’ prize, specifically tailored to their farming system.

Exciting results of the *Multimin Performance Ready Challenge* will be announced in March 2019. To find out more about how Multimin can improve your 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

About Multimin

Virbac's Multimin Injection is a rapidly absorbed source of trace minerals, which can bypass the rumen for direct uptake into the blood in eight hours. The active ingredients are needed for the body to produce two important antioxidants involved in protecting the reproductive and immune systems. For cattle, it is available as a four in one formulation containing copper, selenium, manganese, and zinc. For sheep producers, it is available with or without copper.

Ends

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Photo captions:

1. QLD Multimin Challenger, Don McConnel’s Heifers
2. Enoch Bergman and Tony Murdoch Preg-testing at Ryan Willing’s, WA