

BULLS FROM ECONOTECH SIMMENTALER

We manage to increase the expected genetic performance of our 2019 set of bulls. This applies especially to their growth potential (400days EBV's) without increasing their mature cow weight (MCW).

One of our bulls, PJD1950 P, Amri, has gained the distinction of reaching the short list of 16 bulls in Southern Africa, one of which to be selected as the Society's new AI bull.

The outcome regarding our 2019 set of bulls are most rewarding:

- **Fertility:** One major breeding attribute for fertility is Scrotal Size (SS) (a sign of breeding early puberty under heifers). One of the bulls, Amri, has an EBV for SS of 0.8 and a Days to Calving (DC) of -2.0 (in the top 10% and 15% respectively of the SA 2019 crop). On average these bulls have EBV's for DC in the top 10%.
- **Calving Ease:** Throughout our seedstock operation high calving ease is considered as essential for our no-nonsense-extensive-farming-system. On average their calving ease direct (CED) is in the top 10%. Kolbe's EBV for CED is in the top 5% of the SA 2019 crop.
- **Growth:** One needs to consider the pros and cons of concentrating on growth regardless of other

attributes. We try to take a balanced approach with more emphasis on fertility and calving ease, but without neglecting growth. However, we try to stick to a medium frame animal. On the one hand we have Potter with a 27 vs 31 and Kolbe with a 32 vs 31 EBV's for 400days against their respective MCW's. Amri, again, notched a 39 EBV for its 400days growth (in the top 5%) and a 43 for its MCW (in the top 20%).

- For us body condition plays a major part in fertility. Two of the bulls, Thor and Kolbe, have excellent rib fat EBV's which have been inherited from both Kalant, their sire and their respective dams. Amri has also strong rib fat EBV's as well as intra muscular fat coming from its sire, Tiark.
- Feed efficiency comes out strongly in this set of bulls with four of them sired by Econotech Klein Kalant P (awarded a silver merit at Glen with a Net Feed Intake (NFI) of -0.401 – this was based on Kalant consuming 2.5 kg feed less than a similar size bull, but with both notching 2.3 kg mass gain per day over the Glen test period). This translates to an EBV for feed efficiency (NFI-P) of -0.11(in the top 5%). These four bulls should, therefore, have the same tendency for being feed efficient as their sire, Kalant.
- Economic Indexes: The Simmentaler Breeders Index (SBI (R)) takes the economic contribution of all the relevant breeding attributes into account. According to the SBI the bulls come out tops with indexes of 780 for Kolbe (in top 1%), three with indexes in the top 5% and two in the 10% of the SA 2019 crop. The

bulls' SPI (an index measuring their contribution to crossbreeding) varies from 669 for Kolbe (in the top 1%) and the rest of the bulls' SBI in the top 5%.

- Polled factor: The polled factor is most important to us. Not only does it cut down on labour, but polled cattle are also more docile and therefore more efficient feeders. Four out of the six bulls are polled. The bulls, Amri, Kitshoff and Kolbe, may even be homozygous polled as both their parents are polled.
- These bulls are registered with the Simmentaler Association of Southern Africa and their sires validated through DNA analysis.