

From the editor

This quarter has been an exciting time for the company. During May we attended the biggest Beef Exposition in the world at Rockhampton - Beef 2006. This amazing seven day event was attended by a very large number of cattlemen and their families - some 55,000 in all. We were overwhelmed at the Practical Systems stand. It seemed that every cattleman there wanted to talk to us.

Also, this quarter we reached a major milestone in the company. We have finalized an agreement with one of Australia's leading agricultural consulting companies to supply them, and their clients, with accounting software for on-farm financial management and benchmark software for the company consultants to use in their management services to clients.

The company, **PrincipleFocus** (formerly **RCS Southern Australia**), has long been Australia's rural training and consulting front-runner. The new technology we will be introducing to their consulting and professional development personnel will enable them to provide their high level services with increased efficiency. Also, the enhanced features being designed into the software will give the company a competitive edge in the market place.

This agreement will result in some fundamental changes to **Cashbook Plus!** Although the changes will not effect the majority of users there will be a major new budgeting capability in the top level of the program (the Financial Manager Edition) which will be available to all users wishing to operate at that level. There will be many other enhanced features as well. More on these later.

Lindon SAMM (South African Meat Merino) – Field Day (Uralla NSW)

Thanks and congratulations to John and Lyndie Beynon, who recently conducted a SAMM Symposium Field day at their Uralla property "Lindon"

Practical Systems was invited along for the day – to present the benefits of Stockbook and StockHand for the sheep industry.

Our **StockHand** software program created a lot of interest, with many producers coming up after the presentations to have a closer look and experiment with this new Palm-based in-paddock software.

Over 200 producers visited the SAMM Symposium – a testament to a well organized and run event.



SAMMS on display



Attendees at the Symposium

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The Ruggedized Palm (the Meazura)

We are importing this ruggedized Palm from a company in NZ who originally made them specifically for the Australian mining industry.

We convinced them that the unit would have an application in the livestock industry. Another company in NZ then designed an inbuilt RFID Reader for the unit which sits neatly on top of the Meazura. (just replaces the small top section with a new bit the same size; you can see the join in the picture to the right)

So now we have available for you:

- A Meazura with in-built Blue Tooth communications that will run StockHand for \$950 (+GST); or
- A Meazura with in-built Blue Tooth communications **and** a built-in **RFID Reader** that will run StockHand for \$1754.50 (+GST)



Both these units use their Blue Tooth wireless systems to talk to other Blue Tooth equipped units like wand or panel RFID Readers and electronic scales.

Both run the StockHand software for in-yards or in-paddock recording. Of special interest is the capacity of StockHand to record paddock information about new calves, mother-up details and paddock movements into this "throw-in-the-glove-box" tough Palm unit.

Also, it really fits very neatly into the **stud sheep industry** where it becomes a one hand tag reader, animal history display and data recording unit for working down the side of the race.

"Cattle Country"

Cattle Country is a magazine dedicated to news, issues and events around the Australian cattle industry. Though new to market, if the first few issues are anything to go by, the magazine is sure to have a bright future. The articles appearing within the magazine are a great read, presented beautifully with big bright glossy photos to complete the package.

There have already been a number of Stockbook clients who have appeared within the magazine – in the Autumn edition is an article titled "Bridging the Technology Gap" featuring Stockbook client Kate Tickle (right) of Douglasdale Charolais. (Tickle Cattle Studs)

Here is an extract from the article (reproduced with kind permission from "Cattle Country"):



The Tickle families and Mr. Douglas are committed to the cattle industry and are always looking at new ways to better the operation. With this in mind, they jointly purchased the Stockbook software from Practical Systems in late 2005 and as Miss Tickle says, they are already reaping the benefits.

"All of the studs are using Stockbook. We see it as a valuable herd management resource and helpful not only to record stock information, but to make more informed decisions."

Miss Tickle says Stockbook will help them with breeding decisions as well as evaluating the productivity within and across the herds through easy data input of weights, treatments and EBV traits.

"Stockbook makes stud registrations easy as information can be moved around electronically. Also EBV data, NLIS reports and stock transfers can be emailed from the program for fast and accurate information submission."

'Recording data is even easier with the use of the supplementary program, StockHand. This program goes onto a Palm computer and can be synchronized with the Stockbook program on the computer to transfer data updates either way.

This means that weights, treatments and activities can be recorded on the StockHand in the yards or the paddock, whilst it is happening. This increases accuracy and saves time."

Keep an eye out for the Cattle Country magazine at your local newsagent or Elders store – or visit www.cattlecountry.com.au for more information.

Product Review

Stockbook & StockHand Version 8.1 & 2.0

Stockbook is now recognised by the cattle industry as the leading software program for individual animal recording and herd management. The addition of StockHand is some real icing on the cake for this highly capable program. These new versions continue our policy of always keeping you up-to-date with industry technology.

Here are a few of the latest release changes to Stockbook & StockHand for you to review.

[Next Issue: We will be reviewing the new release of *Farmbook Mapping and FarmMap.*]

eDEC (Electronic Declarations)

It is now possible to use Stockbook to create, print and send an electronic vendor declaration for moving animals off your property. Facilities are also available to interrogate an eDEC sent to your computer, and even load animal identifications directly into Stockbook from a received eDEC.

Searching for animals

It is now possible to do a search on Society ID. via new **Utility** option 'Society ID List'. This list also displays Farm ID., Alternate ID, Electronic ID, NLIS ID, DNA and society. The list can be sorted in any of these options, and animals searched by any ID.

Pregnancy Testing Event

Preg test event now allows for default number of weeks, number of embryos and embryo sex. You can also specify a sire to a preg. test batch, or allow Stockbook to calculate from the AI or backup matings.

StockHand

New features now available in StockHand include:

- Additional data entry screens for Treatments, Trait recording, Mob Movements and an End of Joining event.
- Extra functionality on the Animal Details screen and the Review screens

Selling animals via the Laptop screen

The live weight sale event will now see if a weight type of 'SW' already exists for each animal being processed. If it does, a \$/head price will be calculated. This now integrates easily with the ability to sell an animal via the laptop screen, where the weight must be entered before the animal can be sold. The "sell" button on the laptop screen displays a special sell event screen.

More on the Laptop screen

The F5 (save) and F8 (pass) function keys can now be linked to an EID or barcode for ease of completing transactions. The whole operation can now be controlled from a workboard if required.

Brahman Society export

New animals added into the Brahman society will have sex auto-added to Society ID. if Society IDs. are not the same as FarmIDs.

Reports

Shared Paddocks, enables you to quickly verify which animals shared the same paddocks as specific animals, during a given time period. This could be of assistance, for example, in trying to track down possible causes of diseases, possible flow-on effect etc. changing opening balances from last year, if corrections had to be made to that data

Trading Report, enables you to print a projected trading report, based on information entered for a group of current animals that enables Stockbook to calculate a sale weight and price. This report can help you decide when best to sell animals.

Trading report now also allows you to save the group averages to a file. Subsequent groups can also be saved to the same file. This then allows for group comparisons.

Pedigree print now has an option to print a pedigree for all selected current animals.

Last Handled History, enables large pastoral companies to keep track of the sighting of animals over a number of years.

Training

Although we try our best to make our software packages 'user-friendly' and intuitive to use, there are always areas that may not be immediately obvious to a user. Often it is these areas that make the use of the programs much more productive and informative.

This is why we regularly conduct 'Advanced Training' sessions for experienced clients, who want to fully realise their investment in time and money. Usually clients find the extra money spent on training is well spent, enabling them to get more from the programs, to help them run their businesses better and more profitably. If you would like to invest in training, or take a refresher course, please call Paul on 02 6772 6672 or email to paul@psystems.com.au

Australia's Biggest Gainer found at Beef 2006

During Beef 2006, Practical Systems conducted the "Australia's Biggest Gainer" promotion, modeled on the popular Channel 10 TV Program "Australia's Biggest Loser". Instead of finding who was good at losing weight, the promotion was an attempt to identify which cattle producer was trending towards GAINING the most weight during Beef 2006.

Each promotion entrant was provided an NLIS AllFlex EID device and weighed on electronic cattle scales. This EID was scanned with a RF reader and details and weight was recorded into the **Stockbook** software program. Entrants were asked to come back, with their NLIS EID tag, to be weighed a second time prior to the end of Beef 2006.

The entrant with the greatest weight gain, as a % of original body mass, was declared the winner. Stockbook was also used to calculate Projected Weight Gain for each entrant, with the software predicting how much an entrant would weigh on August 1st 2006.

Well over 100 entrants details and their respective weights were entered in the competition. By using the Stockbook program, it was very quick and easy to determine the ultimate winner, as well as produce some interesting statistics.

Mr Ian Peck from Kalbar, Qld (pictured with Sales manager Derek Tink), – was found to be the winner – putting on an impressive 5.2kgs in four days. It was determined, that based on current weight gain performance, Mr Peck would weigh an approximate 355kgs by August 1st 2006 – if he continued on his current Beef 2006 induced growth trend!



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