
N.T. Buffalo Industry Council Inc.

Strategic Business Plan

2003 - 2006



N.T. BUFFALO INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN 2003 - 2006

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With support from the NT Government, the NT BIC has spent the past three years building the live export trade to a level that has given buffalo producers renewed confidence in the future of their industry.

NT BIC initiatives have seen the live export of slaughter buffalo rise from 690 head in 1998 to over 3500 in 2002, and this has also caused a flow-on increase in the number of animals processed at local abattoirs

The industry now comprises four main market segments

- ❖ Live export around 90% of which is shipped to Brunei
- ❖ Domestic abattoirs for smallgoods and domestic consumption
- ❖ TenderBuff - restaurant quality meat
- ❖ Riverine (milking buffalo) genetics for meat, milk or breeding

The strategies outlined are what the industry hopes to achieve in the next five years and include:

- ❖ Improve the herd structure and husbandry standards on producers' properties so that buffalo will be seen as a quality product that can be efficiently produced.
- ❖ Expand and diversify the live export markets for Buffalo
- ❖ Vigorously promote the TenderBuff product to the food service and restaurant trade.
- ❖ Assist with the development of the buffalo resource on Aboriginal Land
- ❖ Source funding for and participate in Research & Development projects
- ❖ Increase the number of small to medium sized landholders farming buffalo

Although buffalo have contributed to the NT economy for many years, a lack of consistent markets and long term planning means that it is a relatively new industry in development terms.

For the industry to develop to its full potential, it is essential that sufficient medium term funding is available to support the operation of the NT BIC as it strives to build the foundations for an industry that will provide income, employment and diversity to the Northern Territory economy.


2. MISSION STATEMENT


NT Buffalo Industry Council's Mission



To facilitate the continued growth and sustainable development of the Northern Territory Buffalo Industry by providing:


- ❖ buffalo producers with technical and practical assistance in buffalo management practices, and a forum for knowledge sharing, coordinated turnoff and lobbying**
- ❖ continue to develop and diversify export and domestic markets**
- ❖ encouragement for the adoption of industry best practice standards in the production and marketing of buffalo and buffalo products**


3. GOALS, STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES AND INDICATORS

Goals	Strategies	Indicators
<p>1. Expand and diversify the live export market</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Find second and third countries with minimum demand of 100 head per month at current Brunei prices. To achieve this, NT BIC may have to work with an importer to establish a supermarket trade as per the process in establishing the market in Brunei ❖ Continued consultation with network of overseas contacts in an attempt to achieve above ❖ Explore possibility of the export of riverine buffalo genetics ❖ Work with other developing industries to assist in identifying new market opportunities e.g. Camel Industry and NT Food Group 	<p>Number and range of countries exported to</p> <p>Contacts / meetings</p> <p>Coordinate marketing efforts / information</p>
<p>2. Increase number and diversity of buffalo producers throughout the Territory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Promote buffalo farming especially with small landholders ❖ Provide expertise to producers regarding stocking rates, herd structure, pasture utilization, animal husbandry, and genetics to maximize production and minimize production costs ❖ Promote to indigenous organisations the benefits of value adding to buffalo through farming rather than the traditional harvesting of free range buffalo ❖ Promote the use of riverine and crossbred bulls to improve growth rates and carcass quality ❖ Provide information on buffalo farming to rural real estate agents 	<p>Number involved</p> <p>Overall size and quality of the herd</p> <p>Number involved and size of herd on Indigenous land</p> <p>Number of crossbred bulls used</p> <p>Develop booklet</p>

Goals	Strategies	Indicators
<p>3. Encourage and support best practice by producers</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Continued hands-on assistance to producers by demonstrating new or improved livestock husbandry methods ❖ Assist with and advise on quality control for marketable animals ❖ Contribute articles to the ABIC quarterly magazine ❖ Promote discussion of Best Practice techniques at membership meetings ❖ Industry Development Officer to be available to members for advice, assistance and farm visits at producer's request ❖ Work closely with the Primary Industry Division of the Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development (DBIRD) to keep producers up to date with current developments ❖ Maintain a library of reference materials including international publications for members use ❖ Coordinate training programs initiated by Government Departments 	<p>Number of producers assisted</p> <p>Number of articles</p> <p>Attendance at meetings</p> <p>Number of visits / requests</p> <p>Publications purchased</p> <p>Number of training sessions and attendance</p>
<p>4. Ensure continuity of supply by coordinating animal turnoff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Export <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - utilize IDO/EO's knowledge of export requirements and exporter shipping schedules to create marketable packages and ensure regular and reliable supply ❖ Abattoirs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consult with operators of local abattoirs and advise producers of supply schedules and prices - assist BHF staff to coordinate supply of TenderBuff animals to suit butchers' requirements 	<p>Number /quality / \$ for export Buffalo</p> <p>Number / quality / \$ for local trade</p>

Goals	Strategies	Indicators
<p>5. Act as the Peak industry body</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Liaise with Primary Industry Division of DBIRD on matter such as disease status and other issues ❖ Regularly consult with AQIS on export treatments and requirements ❖ Lobby politicians on any current issues relevant to the buffalo industry ❖ Consult with indigenous organisations regarding the better utilisation of their buffalo resources ❖ Continually advise livestock exporters of animals available for export ❖ Maintain regular contact with Federal, State and Territory Government Departments on the National Livestock Identification Scheme (NLIS), National Residue Survey (NRS) and any other relevant legislation ❖ Liaise with the NT Department of Transport & Infrastructure on the need to maintain road infrastructure to a level that allows year round sale of buffalo ❖ Maintain membership of the Australian Buffalo Industry Council (ABIC) and ensure exchanges of information continue 	<p>Producer awareness of Government policy Liaison Meetings Number of meetings / increase in herds Animal data base Liaison</p> <p>Year round access to markets</p> <p>Membership</p>
<p>6. Develop the domestic market through promotion of TenderBuff consumption</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Continue the NT BIC promotion of sale of half or whole animal sets of cryovac primal cuts at an average \$8.00 per kilogram price to restaurants and hotels ❖ Continue production and promotion of recipe books and meat cut books and charts to encourage greater acceptance of TenderBuff in the restaurant and tourist industry ❖ Continue to participate in promotional activities such as food stalls at functions such as the Darwin Show and other suitable venues. This also provides opportunities for Buffalo Council members to participate in fund-raising activities ❖ NT BIC will continue its active participation as a member of the NT Food Group and will positively promote TenderBuff at every opportunity ❖ Continue to communicate and consult with abattoir operators and wholesale and retail meat outlets 	<p>\$ value of sales</p> <p>Number of sales and expansion of customers</p> <p>Number of functions / volunteer hours</p> <p>Membership / participation Strong relationship</p>

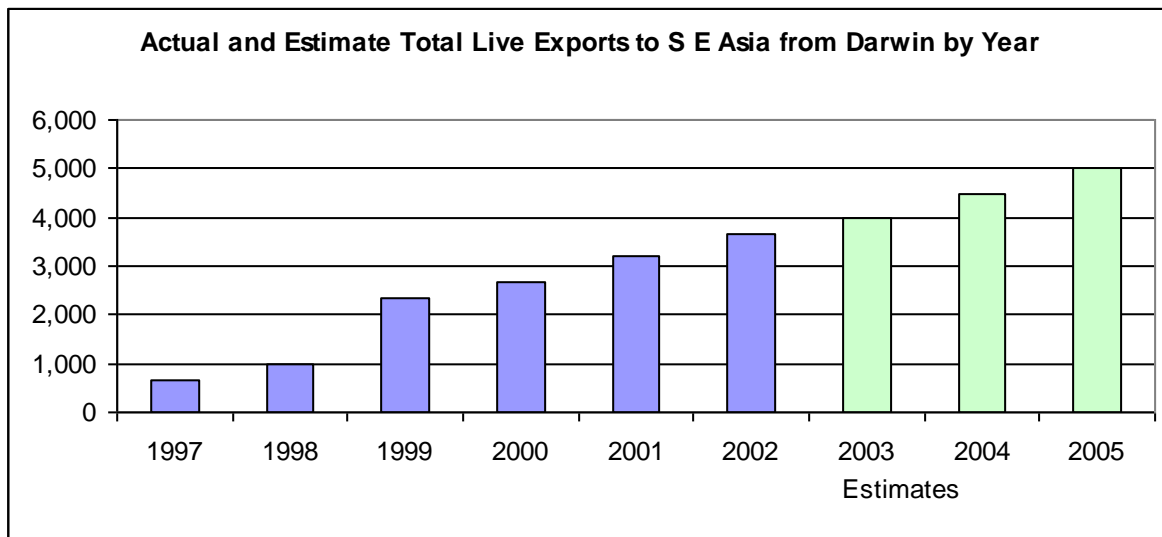
Goals	Strategies	Indicators
<p>7. Increase awareness of Buffalo products through promotional activities</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Darwin Show <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue to operate buffalo food product stall with members labour - apply for funding to construct a static display that provides information on buffalo farming and TenderBuff production ❖ NT Food Group - maintain membership and active participation in meetings and promotions ❖ Wholesalers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work with wholesalers to increase sale to larger consumers eg Hospitals, Schools, Defence Force etc - promote the NT BIC initiative of selling whole or half sets of cryovac primal cuts at a set price per kilo ❖ Restaurants - provide chefs with meat cut books and charts, recipe books and information on the TenderBuff quality assurance program ❖ Tourist related food outlets - provide samples of buffalo burgers and sausages and information on corned and roast meat cuts available so as to benefit from the novelty value of NT buffalo meat to tourists ❖ Meat cut books & charts and recipe books - promote the sale of recipe books in tourist related outlets, provide meat cut books to libraries, educational and research groups 	<p>Number of visitors Display material</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>\$ value of sales</p> <p>Kg sales and \$ value</p> <p>Number provided</p> <p>Level of interest and sales \$ / Kg</p> <p>Level of sales/number of books</p>
<p>8. Develop Buffalo resource on Aboriginal Land</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Promote to indigenous organisations the benefits of value adding to buffalo through farming rather than relying totally on the harvesting of free range buffalo ❖ Continue to work closely with staff of the Indigenous Land Council (ILC), Northern Land Council (NLC), and Tiwi Land Council (TLC) regarding the benefits of buffalo farming ❖ Encourage continued membership of NT BIC by the NLC, Jawoyn Association and Gunbalunya Meat Supply and encourage other Aboriginal Associations such as ILC, Gagudju, Gulin Gulin, TLC and ADO to join 	<p>Number adopting farming practices</p> <p>Increase in herd / size and value</p> <p>Level of membership by Aboriginal Associations</p>

Goals	Strategies	Indicators
<p data-bbox="170 232 453 427">9. Participate in a range of Research and Development Projects</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="478 232 1524 427">❖ Explore and promote opportunities for private funding for R&D projects at Beatrice Hill Farm Research Station and on selected producer's properties with the aim of making the Northern Territory the leading centre in Australia for R&D and ultimately leading to international recognition <li data-bbox="478 435 1524 873">❖ Initial projects planned are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="548 475 1524 548">- develop a commercially viable A.I. technique in buffalo to facilitate the introduction of Italian genetics <li data-bbox="548 557 1524 589">- following the success of the above, explore embryo transplants <li data-bbox="548 597 1524 711">- meat quality analysis: Conduct tests on various crossbred animals to identify the crossbreed that will produce the best TenderBuff meat while retaining the known low cholesterol benefit of swamp buffalo <li data-bbox="548 719 1524 873">- chromosome counts: Conduct chromosome counts on the various riverine and riverine cross animals at BHF to determine if there are any fertility problems associated with the various cross bred combinations <li data-bbox="478 881 1524 995">❖ Continue to liaise with the Queensland Dairy Buffalo Company, NT BIC, DBIRD and BHF staff members to create a database of milk quality and production figures of various crossbreeds of riverine buffalo <li data-bbox="478 1003 1524 1076">❖ Develop and distribute a herd management program for small landholders to assist them to establish and maintain profitable buffalo enterprise <li data-bbox="478 1084 1524 1198">❖ Liaise with Government and private research groups to ensure all NT BIC members are informed of latest information on pastures and animal husbandry developments 	<p data-bbox="1560 232 1885 305">Researchers contacted and \$ attracted</p> <p data-bbox="1560 475 1822 508">Number successful</p> <p data-bbox="1560 557 1791 630">Number Tests completed</p> <p data-bbox="1560 719 1843 751">Research completed</p> <p data-bbox="1560 881 1875 914">Data base established</p> <p data-bbox="1560 1003 1864 1036">Program development</p> <p data-bbox="1560 1084 1875 1157">Number news letters / articles</p>

4. PRODUCTION STATISTICS

4.1 Export

The majority of buffalo are exported to Brunei; there is some demand for buffalo in Indonesia and Malaysia. The Malaysian market cannot pay any more than about \$1.10 at the wharf in Darwin compared to the \$1.35 Brunei pays for free range animals. There is a good possibility of setting up a market similar to the "supermarket" trade in Indonesia and the NT BIC is working on this with an exporter and his agent in Jakarta at present.



4.2 TenderBuff Restaurant Trade

The demand for TenderBuff has varied greatly over the past 3 or 4 years, the main reason for this has been the lack of promotion of the product to chefs and butchers who have traditionally only focused on using 1 or 2 meat cuts from an animal and more recently the uncertainty of the carrying capacity of the Beatrice Hill Farm Research Facility. Supply of suitable animals has been erratic in some years.

The printing of an AUS-MEAT standard Meat Cut book and chart and the revision of a buffalo recipe book have allowed the NT BIC to produce a "chefs kit" that makes the promotion of TenderBuff much easier. Chefs are now offered TenderBuff in half or whole sets of cryovaced primal cuts at \$8.00 per kilo and encouraged to be creative and present a wide range of dishes to their clientele. The expansion of this market can only proceed as production of high quality animals increases and plans are in place to increase sales from the current 80 to 100 per year to around 300 head in 2005.

4.3 Abattoir

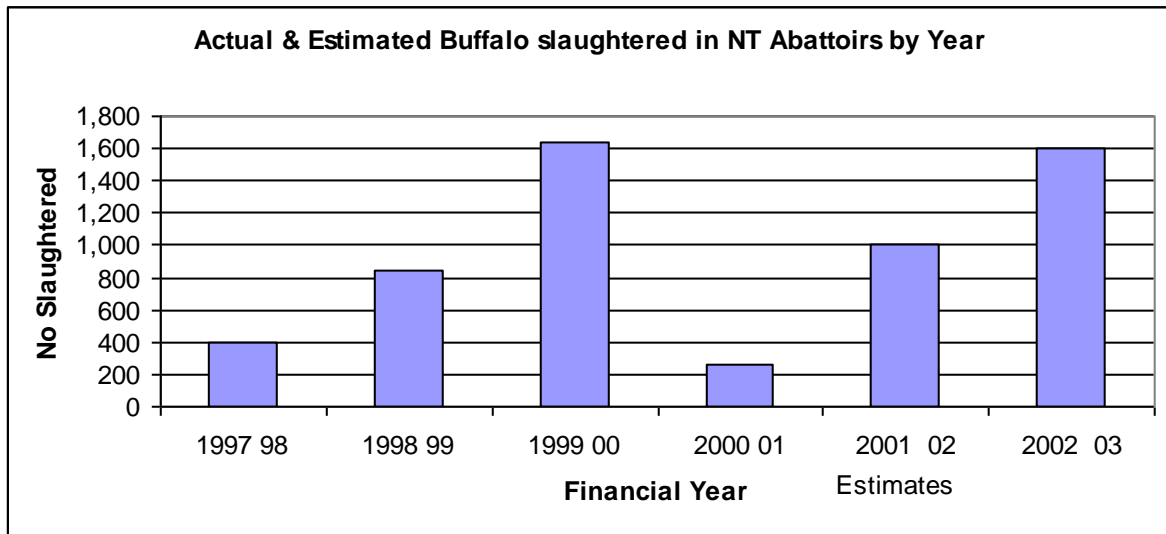
There are currently three abattoirs that NT buffalo producers can access:

Tenarra at Batchelor,
Litchfield at Palmerston and
Ord River at Kununurra in WA.

None of these abattoirs have an export licence although Tenarra has had a "country to country" agreement with Indonesia that allows meat processed to Australian domestic standards to be exported to Indonesia. Litchfield processes all of the TenderBuff animals and only a small number of other buffalo usually for local smallgoods.

The number of animals processed at abattoirs varies greatly from year to year depending on the return to the producer or whether a destock for disease or management reasons is being undertaken.

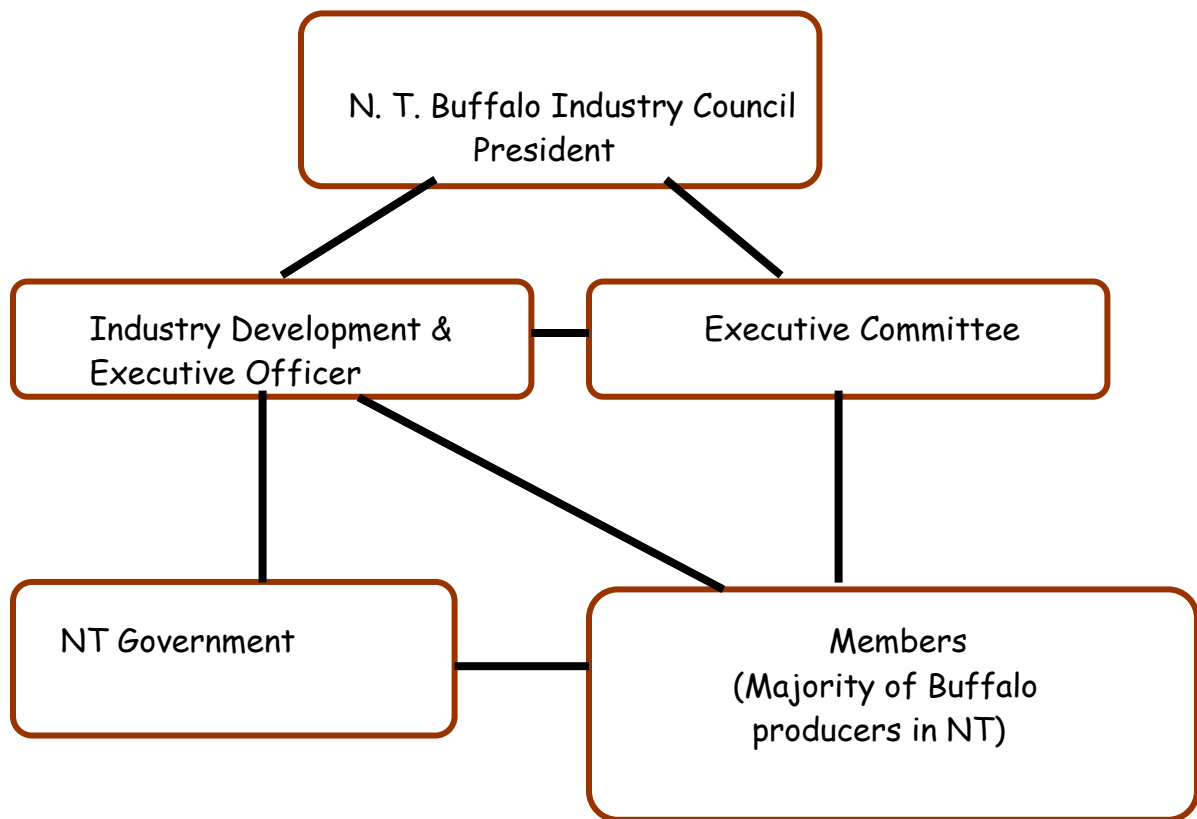
In recent years abattoirs have only paid about 40% of what the live export trade pays and the only way this could increase dramatically would involve upgrading facilities and selling into the EU. Although the returns are not great it is essential to have an abattoir available to allow better quality control on export stock and as an outlet for aged females.



5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The NT Buffalo Industry Council Inc. (NT BIC) is an Incorporated Association that represents the majority of buffalo producers in the Northern Territory.

5.1 Organisation Chart



5.2 General Objectives

- ❖ Coordinate, develop and promote a sustainable Buffalo Industry in the Northern Territory.
- ❖ Endeavor to increase profit, efficiency and decrease the workload for buffalo producers.
- ❖ Act as peak industry body for the Northern Territory Buffalo Industry and participate in the national representation of the Australian Buffalo Industry.

6. BUSINESS PROFILE

NAME: The Northern Territory Buffalo Industry Council Inc.

STATUS: Incorporated under...Section 8
Registration No. 00800C

ABN No: 34 355 734 719

OFFICE ADDRESS: Unit 4, 170 Coonawarra Road, Winnellie, NT
0820, Australia

POSTAL ADDRESS: PO Box 36828, Winnellie, NT 0821, Australia

CONTACT NOS: Telephone: 08 89471833;
Mobile: 0408 471475;
Fax: 08 89471822
e-mail ntbic@accessnt.com.au

ACCOUNTANTS: R.V. LOWRY AND ASSOCIATES

AUDITORS: R.V. Lowry and Associates

FINANCIAL YEAR: 1st July to 30th June
AGM: Within 3 months of 30th June

INSURANCE: Company. AON Risk Services Australia Limited (broker)
Cover - General Property, Burglary, Public Liability, Vehicle

BANK: ANZ, Darwin Branch

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS: 25 Full Members; 2 Associate Members as at 20/1/03

AFFILIATIONS: Australian Buffalo Industry Council (ABIC), NT Food Group,
Northern Pastoral Advisory Committee, And Rural ITAB

7. OFFICE BEARERS

OFFICE BEARERS:

ELECTED AT AGM ON 23/5/03

Position	Name	Company / Property	Phone No
President:	Michael Swart	Wildman River Stock Contractors	89 471661
Vice-President	Graham Michell	Maud Ck Station	89 717318
Treasurer:			
Secretary:			
IDO/EO:	Neil Ross	NT BIC	89 471833
Executive Members:	Alan Fisher	Swim Creek Station	89 788916
	Ernie Schluep	Milkwood Farm	89 886092
	Dallis Wilschefski		89882775

The NT BIC conducts all meetings at its office. A minimum of four general meetings and an Annual General Meeting are held each year, meetings of the Executive are held when required.

8. INDUSTRY SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths		Weaknesses	
1.	Good coordination and cooperation between members	1.	Only one high return export market
2.	High percentage of producers are members	2.	Majority of animals held on Aboriginal land are currently inaccessible or remote.
3.	Voluntary levies for Association operations	3.	Lack of large-scale producers
4.	Full-time Industry Development & Executive Officer	4.	Lack of interest in the restaurant trade by larger producers of buffalo
5.	Coordination of marketing of producers turn off	5.	Lack of interest by mainstream exporters in handling buffalo
6.	Beatrice Hill Farm Research facility	6.	Reluctance by some producers to embrace new technology and husbandry practices
7.	TenderBuff quality assurance system	7.	Lack of export accredited 'halal' Abattoirs in the Top end of NT
8.	With NT BIC coordination export market can take small numbers of animals from individual producers		
9.	Clean healthy status of buffalo meat		
10.	Close proximity to export markets		
11.	Buffalo are environmentally suited to the top end of the Northern Territory		
12.	Single point contact for Government agencies to contact for disease control and export protocols		
Opportunities		Threats	
1.	Majority of animals held on Aboriginal land are in a free range state	1.	Reduction or Lack of long-term funding (i.e. NT Government)
2.	Small landholders are potential producers	2.	Fragmentation of producers; i.e. breakdown of coordinated marketing
3.	Untapped tourism-based restaurant trade	3.	Reduction in size of Beatrice Hill Farm
4.	Sales of milking buffalo genetics	4.	Disease outbreak
5.	Develop another high value export market	5.	Political unrest in overseas market places
6.	Rejuvenate the buffalo image as a Territory icon	6.	Currency fluctuations and cattle/beef price movements

9. Brief notes on NT BIC History and Future

9.1 History

The NT Buffalo Industry Council Inc. (NT BIC) is the peak industry group representing the majority of buffalo producers in the Northern Territory.

The NT BIC was incorporated in February 1982 and replaced the activities previously undertaken by the Buffalo Owners and Breeders Association. During the BTEC program the Executive Officer's position was part time with \$30,000 p.a. supplied for three years by an NT Government Buffalo Development Scheme from 1993 to 1995. At this time the live export market was based on mature age, heavy weight bulls and the booming abattoir trade slowed dramatically as the BTEC destocking wound down.

A market based on mature age bulls meant quite a lot of problems for producers as the excessive number of breeding age bulls created considerable handling problems within the herds and damage to fences as they fought for herd dominance.

In 1997 only 539 buffalo were exported for slaughter and 99 for breeding. During 1998 exports totalled 690 head for slaughter and 287 for breeding. All the slaughter animals had gone to Brunei and the breeders to Sabah and Sarawak.

In early 1999 producers began to lose confidence in the industry and 553 head were sold to Malaysia at discount prices and one producer sent 400 breeders to the abattoir. By July there had been 394 head sent to the main market in Brunei with only 50 head of these coming from producers and the rest coming from the exporters property as they destocked their property to focus on cattle.

In July 1999 several producers approached Neil Ross who had considerable experience in buffalo and knew the Brunei market very well and asked him visit Brunei and see what could be done to revitalise the market.

During the initial visit to Brunei, Neil found that not only was there still a need for buffalo in the traditional wet markets but that the majority of people purchased their meat from supermarkets that did not sell buffalo meat.

With technical assistance from Mr Glen Storer, the Production Manager for Hussyn Rahman Enterprise Company, a local livestock importer with abattoir facilities, a wet market stall and several butcher shops, a system was developed that would put good quality meat from younger buffalo onto the supermarket shelves.

The advantage to the importer in Brunei was that the animal was sold in five pieces; two hindquarters, two forequarters and an offal pack. The big advantage to the Australian buffalo producer was that the protocol developed by Neil and Glen allowed for up to 50% females in each shipment and a live weight range of 300 to 400 kilo for paddock bred buffalo less than 3 years old (2 permanent teeth).

This new marketing concept meant that producers could see a future in farming buffalo and the age and type of animal required for the market meant that lower cost production systems similar to cattle breeding could be utilized, by encouraging earlier turnoff.

It soon became obvious that without someone to coordinate the supply of animals from the producers, the "Supermarket" trade would never reach its full potential and funding assistance was sought from the NT Government. On the 1st July 2000, Neil Ross was employed as the full-time Industry Development & Executive Officer to the NT BIC.

9.2 The Future

More than 3500 buffalo were exported in 2002 and this number will continue to increase. While this statistic looks very good, the buffalo industry cannot afford to rely on just live export and, more importantly, just one major market place.

Now that producers have regained their confidence in the industry, other markets need to be developed and expanded.

The NT BIC is now focusing on the high return market of producing TenderBuff that is ideal for the restaurant trade. To facilitate this, the NT BIC assisted in the production of a revised Buffalo recipe booklet, an AUS-MEAT standard Meat Cut booklet and chart and is working closely with the main retailer and wholesaler of TenderBuff products to promote the sale of half or full sets of primal cuts from an animal at a set price of \$8.00 per kilo for all cuts.

This promotion needs to be undertaken in conjunction with a program that explains to small and medium size landholders the advantages of producing TenderBuff quality animals. This will strengthen the support base of the industry and enable sustainable production of buffalo on areas of land that have become fire hazards because they were too small to produce marketable numbers of cattle or from other currently under utilised land.

There is an urgent need for an export accredited, halal abattoir so that there can be better utilisation of older free-range animals for the manufacturing and small goods trade. The sale of meat on the export market should allow abattoir operators to pay better money for animals than they are currently paying.

The market for Riverine and cross-bred buffalo is still largely untapped. The higher returns gained from these genetics will be a great benefit to both small and larger land holders wishing to supply meat to restaurants, breeder bulls and females to boutique dairy farms in southern and eastern states.

Well developed smaller properties close to Darwin and Katherine are ideally situated to develop these genetics, using improved pastures.

To promote the expansion of the farming operations carried out by the current producers and to convince new operators to enter the buffalo industry, the NT BIC needs to constantly advise and inform industry stakeholders of any new technical

innovations or practical ideas that may be used to reduce the workload and enhance the profit margins in buffalo farming.

There is a largely untapped buffalo resource on aboriginal land and the flow-on benefits that can apply to the families of traditional owners needs to be recognised by the various organisations that control the access to this resource. Short-term value adding of young animals would provide a lot of indigenous employment opportunities, with very few skills or livestock experience being required.

It would be great to see some interest being shown in small, low cost operations that return most of the benefits to individual workers, instead of bureaucratic organisations or individual consultants.

Short term grazing of buffalo over the wet season to reduce the fuel load in the coming dry season is another avenue that needs to be promoted. When managed correctly, the many small block owners close to Darwin would benefit from not having to slash their blocks. Having a buy back or on selling agreement with the people who supplied the buffalo would eliminate any possibility of damage through overgrazing. Buying stock every December and selling them in May would eliminate the need to buy feed during the dry season.

The NT BIC has encouraged this system in the past and two of its members regularly sell animals to small landowners.

The image of the big strong buffalo bull is great for the tourism industry but the mainstream industry needs people to see buffalo as normal livestock and as a source of income. The NT BIC will continually strive to promote this side of the industry so that buffalo meat in the family refrigerator becomes a normal part of their diet and not just a feed for the family pets.

The advances that can be made in the near future in product quality, production cost savings and new markets will only be limited by the level of enthusiasm of the buffalo farmers and amount of medium term financial support by the NT Government.

10. FINANCE

10.1 Benefit to the NT economy

The most obvious benefit from the NT Government funding of the NT BIC since July 2000 is the initial dramatic and sustained increase in live exports, NT Govt. statistics show that the value of live exports has risen from \$701,000 in the 98/99 financial year to \$1,976,000 in the 00/01 financial year, this figure will increase in the 01/02 year with further increases in sales and an NT BIC brokered increase in sale price to producers. Abattoir returns have also increased over this period.

Some other flow-on benefits are:

- ❖ . at least two extra livestock ships a year leaving Darwin for Brunei
- ❖ . more buffalo processed at abattoirs
- ❖ . greatly expanded use of livestock road transport and helicopter hire
- ❖ . benefits to local hay producers
- ❖ . increased spending on buffalo property infrastructure - yards, fences and pastures
- ❖ . increased sales of buffalo from aboriginal land
- ❖ . increased employment opportunities for indigenous people
- ❖ . Jawoyn Association commenced mustering operations in 2001
- ❖ . Beswick Community commenced a buffalo farming operation in 2002
- ❖ . Marrakai Station expanding buffalo breeding operation
- ❖ . foundation work commenced for expanding TenderBuff industry
- ❖ . sales of Riverine genetics to NT, SA, WA, NSW, QLD and Victoria
- ❖ . NT Government involvement in research based in new QLD buffalo dairy
- ❖ . new farmers being attracted to the industry
- ❖ . NT BIC involvement with Taminmin High School agricultural program

10.2 Funding of NT BIC operations

The NT BIC received funding and a vehicle in July 2000 to allow the full time employment of an Industry Development & Executive Officer. In the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 financial years budget shortfall funding was applied for and granted.

The NT BIC raised just over 40% of it's operating budget for this current financial year and is endeavoring to increase that percentage in future years.

Revenue is raised from within the NT BIC Membership from the following sources:

- ❖ . \$10 per head live export levy
- ❖ . \$10 per head TenderBuff levy
- ❖ . \$5 per head abattoir levy
- ❖ . Full Membership fee of \$110 (incl GST)
- ❖ . Associate Membership fee of \$55 (incl GST)

Other revenue is raised from

- ❖ . Foodstall sales at the Darwin Show
- ❖ . Recipe book sales
- ❖ . Pre export inspection and treatment of livestock on behalf of exporters
- ❖ . Hire of Riverine bulls to small herd owners

The NT BIC owns a herd of pure Riverine Buffalo and has recently purchased 21 female swamp buffalo to provide an income source in future years. The amount of income received from livestock sales will depend on the number of buffalo that can be run at Beatrice Hill Farm and if any cost is involved. Currently the NT BIC receives agistment at no cost in return for the use of their pure Riverine bulls in the BHF breeding program.

It is expected that revenue from livestock sales will commence when the calves born in early 2003 are sold in late 2004, by late 2006 revenue is expected to be around \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year from the swamp cow progeny. Sales of purebred animals will not commence until there is an excess of either males or females in the combined NT BIC and BHF herds.

11. EMPLOYMENT

Employment in the buffalo industry has increased in proportion to the recent surge in numbers exported and slaughtered locally. Research by ABARE suggests that for every 100 jobs in the buffalo or similar industries there are a further 70 positions created in supporting industries.

There is a huge potential for indigenous employment if a number of small short term buffalo domestication projects are allowed to develop.

Much more benefit will be derived from these projects if they are seen as employment (work for the dole) and training opportunities that will break even in dollar terms for the first year or two, rather than overdeveloped projects that have historically failed because excessive pressure is placed on the employees or that the unnecessary machinery included in the initial design could not be economically maintained.

It is much better to start with a small simple project and expand it as worker enthusiasm and market demand allows.

The NT BIC has worked on planning for several projects on Aboriginal Land with the Indigenous Land Council and was at one stage asked to be a consultant to the ILC on buffalo projects, unfortunately this offer could not be taken up because of time constraints.