

## Senepol Beef Tenderness Validation

In what is thought to be the first objective research into tenderness of the Senepol breed in Australia, 79 Senepol and Senepol cross steers from Mt Eugene had their meat assessed for tenderness using the Warner Bratzler Shear Force test.

The mob of steers had a range of Senepol crosses including Senepol x Belmont Red, Senepol x Bonsmara, Senepol x Charolais, Senepol x Charbray and some straight Senepols.

Mt Eugene principals Geoff and Alison Maynard were delighted to find that the Senepol-sired steers had produced meat of very acceptable tenderness according to international standards for Warner Bratzler Shear Force based on feedlot-finished cattle in USA where the cuts-offs are as follows:

Tender Beef	< 3.9 kg
Intermediate Beef	3.9 – 4.6
Tough Beef	> 4.6 kg

Overall the 79 Senepol or Senepol-sired steers averaged a shear force of 3.95 kgs. Twenty eight (28) Senepol x Belmont Red steers averaged 3.93 kgs, while 33  $\frac{3}{4}$  Senepol  $\frac{1}{4}$  Belmont Red steers averaged 3.82 kgs and nine (9) straightbred Senepol steers averaged 3.91 kgs.

“The result is even more pleasing because all the steers had been treated with Revalor in the feedlot phase, which can have an adverse effect on beef tenderness”.

Other factors that could have mitigated against tender meat was the fact that the animals had been part of a trial where they were given no treatment for external parasites during their life, under a moderate tick burden and failed summer rains (20mm in Feb./March) meant weight gains suffered a real set-back. That they had been entire until final selection at 18 months of age was the final factor that could have impacted negatively.

The steers were run together since weaning and after the very dry summer were finished in the Smithfield feedlot for 102 days before being slaughtered at Kilcoy. Samples of the loin were collected at slaughter before transporting to the Meat Science Laboratory at UNE, Armidale for the Warner Bratzler Shear Force tests.

By Don Nicol.