

# Deadline looms for Gate 2 Plate Challenge



□ The Harvey Beef Gate 2 Plate Challenge not only provides valuable feedback to entrants which they can use to improve their cattle herd but it also provides great networking opportunities through a number of associated events. One of these events is the challenge's annual field day where there is an opportunity not only to view the cattle in the competition but also hear from a number of guest speakers. The 2022 field day will be held at Willyung Farms, Albany, on Tuesday, March 22.

## By JODIE RINTOUL

If you want to benchmark your cattle operation against others in the State, then you need to get your entry in for the 2022 Harvey Beef Gate 2 Plate Challenge (HBG2P).

Nominations are still open for the 2022 challenge which is Western Australia's only beef supply chain challenge and the deadline for producers, commercial and stud breeders to nominate teams of young cattle for the objectively measured challenge is fast approaching.

Not only does the challenge allow producers to benchmark their herd against others, it also provides valuable feedback on the areas where the herd can be improved.

The challenge is a unique cattle competition because it is 100 per cent commercially focused and assesses cattle only on objective traits important for profitability and efficiency through the supply chain, allowing producers to benchmark and improve their bottom line.

In the past the challenge has received entries from producers from Esperance to Geraldton and the committee is looking for a similar spread this year.

HBG2P event co-ordinator Narelle Lyon said given the feedback from entries received in the past, the challenge had been extremely

popular with producers looking to further their knowledge of their cattle breeding objectives and get feedback on their herd's performance.

"Please don't assume your cattle are not good enough or your herd is not big enough to enter as we have had some entrants only having as little as 30 or less breeders enter," Ms Lyon said.

"From the inception of the challenge British, European and crossbreeds have all taken out the win with multiple breeds and crosses having had great success across all classes.

"It's pleasing to see that challengers have made sire selection decisions through the results, resulting in increasing their ranking in the challenge and strengthening their herd for the market place."

One of the past participants to value the competition feedback is the Metcalfe family, Koojan Hills Angus stud, runners up in the 2021 challenge.

Koojan Hills Angus's Chris Metcalfe said last year was only the second time they had entered the competition and they were looking forward to being part of it for many more years to come.

"It is a great competition to be a part of with so many benefits," Mr Metcalfe said.

"The number one benefit

we see of being involved in the challenge is the networking opportunities it provides.

"You get to meet people from all the different sectors of the industry and learn from them."

Like other producers involved in the challenge the Metcalfes also view the feedback you get from it as invaluable.

"The competition provides us with real world feedback on how our cattle perform," Mr Metcalfe said.

"It is nice to know and make sure that the cattle we are breeding are relevant to the different sectors of the WA cattle industry and this competition allows us to do that.

"It is a great benchmarking tool for your herd and certainly allows us to compare our herd against other genetics."

Regular entrants and the inaugural challenge winner from 2015, the Galati family, John Galati Family Trust, Brunswick, also know the worth of the challenge to the WA cattle industry.

Rodney Galati said they originally entered the challenge in the first year after he picked up a flyer at the Mt Barker saleyards and thought it would be something they should have a go at.

"Initially it was to challenge myself and to see where our

cattle ranked against others, we were never expecting to win," Mr Galati said.

"The challenge was initially set up so producers could see if the calves they were producing would perform in a feedlot situation and were what lotfeeders required for the supermarket grid.

"I think in the first few years people were more focused on winning and the results than the feedback they were getting from the competition, but I think that has changed more recently.

"Speaking to producers and bull breeders producers are certainly now taking notice of the trends and feedback out of the competition and using it to help their enterprises.

"The feedback you get from the challenge, you can't get anywhere else and it is invaluable to the cow/calf producer in terms of helping them produce a calf the market wants.

"I encourage more producers to get behind it because the committee does a great job and puts in a lot of work while Harvey Beef, which has been involved since the first day, are also big contributors."

Entries for the 2022 challenge close next Monday, November 8.

□ **More information: Call Narelle on 0455 597 333 or go to [gate2platechallenge.com.au](http://gate2platechallenge.com.au)**