

Timor Dairy NEWS



Summer 2005

Herd Number Two Arrives In Timor Leste

Amid much excitement our second herd has arrived in Timor Leste. The second herd consists of 32 Friesian heifers and two jersey bulls. Their journey took them from where they were raised at Tongala (Victoria) to the port of Darwin via Longreach, Mount Isa and Tennant Creek. Cattle handler David Wood, (who accompanied our first herd to Timor Leste in April 2002) joined our valuable consignment in Darwin and accompanied them on the sea leg to Com and quickly across land to Fuiloro. The cost of transportation has been met by the Kiwanis International Foundation and from donations by various Kiwanis Clubs throughout Australia, New Zealand and the USA.

Logistically, sending the second herd proved much more challenging than the first. Since 2002 cattle movement in Australia has declined, leaving fewer trucking options and adding to the overall journey time. Recent quarantine changes in Timor Leste also meant that the cattle had to be held longer during transit while they were TB tested. Transport co-ordinator Peter Cecil's report on page 4 gives an insight in to the trials and tribulations of moving the herd.

The new herd initially experienced some difficulty settling in - possibly due to the



Precious cargo arrives at Com

extended travel time and subsequent arrival in Timor Leste at a hotter time of the year than when the first herd was shipped. As a result, there were some stock losses but these are now behind us. Reports from Fuiloro indicate that the herd has settled down and is regaining condition. A number of new calves were born during December.

The arrival of the herd in Timor brings cattle numbers at Fuiloro up to nearly 90. Herd Number Two will add to the gene pool and will also, of course, significantly increase milk production.



Faces of the future

Also In This Edition

- Past Year Pasture Preparations.
- Financial Fundamentals.
- A Message From Our Patron.
- Bóthar CEO Learns About Project.
- Shipping Herd - Not All Plain Sailing.

Bóthar CEO Meets With Dairy Committee

Mr Peter Ireton, CEO of the Irish based international aid agency Bóthar has met with the Timor Dairy Committee in Melbourne.

Bóthar was established in 1991 with the aim of doing something practical and sustainable to give families in developing countries an opportunity to lift themselves out of poverty.

The Bóthar project involves giving families an individual animal to work with. They must pass on the gift of the first female born to their animal to another family and may keep subsequent off spring themselves. Bóthar flies dairy cows, dairy goats, breeding pigs, laying hens and other types of livestock from Ireland and is now operational in 17 third world countries.

As part of the Bóthar model, families receive training in preparation for the arrival of the animal, instructions on how to house the animal and supervisory support on a declining basis for up to three years.

Milk, honey, meat and eggs not only improve a family's diet but the surplus can be sold, giving the family their first opportunity to earn an income. The gift of an animal can mean the difference between destitution and security.

Bóthar has sent more than 2000 pregnant Irish heifers, 4000 Irish dairy goats, parent stock, breeding pigs and over 200,000 artificial insemination straws to the developing world.

Bóthar is not currently active in Timor Leste. The meeting between Mr Ireton and the Timor Dairy Committee proved to be an extremely useful exchange of information and ideas for two groups with a similar philosophy of helping improve the well being of people in developing nations.



Project Co-ordinator Kevin Wood with Peter Irton of Bóthar and Project Chairman Peter Kimberley

AVI Volunteer Works On Pasture

Work has continued over the last few months on improving the pasture at Fuiloro. With the arrival of herd Number 2 it has become increasingly important to ensure that there is a reliable source of feed for the cattle.



New horizon for pasture expert

AVI (Australian Volunteers International) have provided a pasture expert to look at ways of improving short term and long term feed for the herd. The volunteer, a retired pasture expert with over 50 years experience, has spent over six months at Fuiloro gradually transforming approximately 25 hectares of land into usable pasture. It has been a task full of challenges, but a programme is now in place to control the weeds and some of the first crops have started to mature.

The transformation of the land needs more than just one person and farm workers Celestino, Anacleto and Accacio have been making a valuable contribution "They are a great crew to work with. Hard working and eager to learn. It's not what I've achieved but what we've achieved," says the AVI volunteer.

One of the problems around Fuiloro is that the soil has been leached by heavy rainfalls in the area, (between 2.5 - 4.5 metres a year), and has become relatively infertile. To assist, some organic fertilisation is planned, using waste from the piggery but setting up the plant etc will take time. Also there is a need for irrigation during the dry season (May to October).

In recent months crops, such as corn, caloona peas, sorghum and rye grass have been planted to provide short term feed. Developing the pasture for strip grazing will take longer, but there will soon be signs of signal and elephant grasses growing as well as some legumes such as dwarf leucaena and pinto peanut to add nitrogen to the soil.

Pasture management is one of many challenges the team face at Fuiloro, but thanks to the presence of the AVI volunteer there is now a greater understanding of what needs to be done.

ALL EFFORT HELPS: LARGE AND SMALL

By Project Patron Tim Fischer



Tim Fischer

There is no doubt East Timor has reached a critical juncture with its further development since the pivotal 1999 Independence Ballot and all that followed.

It's a bit like the second meeting syndrome of an organisation when everyone turns up for the inaugural meeting of a new organisation, but almost nobody turns up for the critical second meeting. It's a bit like when Namibia gained its independence from South Africa in 1989/1990, at the same time the Berlin Wall came down and key donor nations like Germany became distracted.

Now, more than ever before, countries large and small, companies large and small, along with individuals, must step up in the interests of helping East Timor jump forward.

To this end, the Dairy Project in the eastern part of East Timor, on a clear night within sight of the lights of Darwin, makes a lot of sense. This project is all about self-help, it is about training the locals and expanding the local herd; it is not about Swiss bank accounts and big bureaucracy.

Fantastic strides have been made but, clearly, there is a long way to go. The bonus Dairy Project is a big improvement in the diet and nourishment of many East Timorese children. Dare I add the extra bonus is its beautiful locality where, on a very hot day, if you find the right spot you can walk 50 metres off the main road into a glistening set of mountain spring fed swimming pools.

Projects need to take many forms in boosting East Timor for the future. One area in need of further expansion is environmental tourism. Some new hotels are under construction and are much needed, but these should not all be in Dili as there is no doubt the coastline and even a place like Gleno Plateau would make an excellent location.

Every effort must be made to ensure local security for the local populace but also for visitors various, including tourists.

I look forward one day to leading a group to East Timor, preferably the trip will include Good Friday and a pilgrimage up to the 'big statue' near Dili. Last time I was there, both New Zealand and Tasmania were missing from the globe at the foot of the statue, giving it a certain notoriety which in turn adds to its previous notoriety anyway.

Not only Australia but Indonesia, Singapore, New Zealand and others must all step forward to help in a purposeful way the onward development, along sensible lines, of the dynamic nation that is East Timor.

If Bhutan, with its Gross National Happiness Index, Mauritius with its sugar cane and beaches, and Namibia with its railways and game parks, can succeed then so can East Timor.

New Names Added To Herd

Recent sponsors for Herd Number 2 include the Kiwanis Club of Casuarina who have sponsored two cows, Bonita and Esperanza which means hope in Timorese. The Kiwanis Clubs of Napier, Rotowhenua. Taupo and Tokoroa have combined to sponsor Babs, named in honour of Barbara Kelly a Past Governor of NZSP District. We have also received a donation from the Kiwanis Club of Sparta in New Jersey, USA and at the time of going to press are waiting to hear what name they have come up with for their cow. We say a very big "thank you" to all of our sponsors



New arrivals

and are delighted to see that the latest three come from three different countries.



Tongala to Timor - Not Plain Sailing

Our shipping co-ordinator, Peter Cecil, tells all about shipping Herd Number Two to Timor Leste.

When Peter Kimberley 'invited' me to join the East Timor Dairy Steering Committee, I jumped at the chance, "as long as you have something constructive for me to do."

Peter invited me to arrange the shipment of the second dairy herd to Timor Leste.

Sounded easy, all I needed to do was follow the trail from the shipping of the first herd.

Oh dear, the trail was cold! The shipping company had changed hands and their vessel now does a totally different run. It took much negotiation and a big fist full of dollars to convince the current manager of Perkins Shipping that he really could supply a vessel to carry our cattle to Timor Leste, and land them at the Port of Com, rather than at his preferred Port, Dili.

So much for the sea leg. Fortunately we have onside a very good, knowledgeable and helpful veterinarian in Darwin (Dr. Ross Ainsworth) who looks after the quarantine, vaccination and other requirements, so I concentrated on the 'Road Train' from Tongala.

Again I reasoned, follow the trail, so my first call was to our Truckie /agent in Alice Springs. "No way," was his blunt response. No live-stock was being moved to or from Darwin, so unless we were willing to pay for a whole road train, both ways, he could not help us. He suggested we try sending the cattle via Queensland, and gave me some contacts.

After a definite 'no' from the third of these, I was beginning to wonder whether 'cattle class' by air may be the only alternative!

Firmly imprinted in my mind was the fact the cows were 'a bit pregnant', and Australian Quarantine regulations ban the live export of cattle more than six months pregnant. They were getting 'more pregnant' by the day!

Time and options were running out. At a fund raiser for East Timor, Project Coordinator Kevin Wood met a man who knew a man who he was sure would be able to help. He was able, and eventually got them to Phillip Creek Station, near Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory. He couldn't complete the journey, but hoped something would come up. So did I!!

It really focuses your mind when at around 8 am you receive a call from the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Northern Territory, who announces that if the cattle are not moved 'today', he will fine you \$50,000; we had breached regulations by introducing cows from Victoria onto a NT beef cattle property without all the appropriate permits! My plea that they were 'just passing through' failed to satisfy him. My next phone call was from Dr. Ross Ainsworth who had received a similar call. We had to move the cows 'today'!

Dr Ross said leave it to him and I was most willing to do so. After much calling in of favours from friends and colleagues, Ross managed to 'convince' a truck driver to drive down to Tennant Creek, fetch our cattle, and deposit them safely at Santavan Export Depot. A very long drive! More money required, but certainly less than \$50,000.

After some 'to-ing and fro-ing' between the East Timorese Authorities, the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, Perkins Shipping, Dr. Ross Ainsworth and Governor Kevin, the cattle were finally loaded into four cattle containers, and began their voyage to Timor Leste.

Fortunately, the trail to our first herd's cattle handler was still intact, so David Wood accompanied the cows to the Port of Com, where, with the help of some makeshift 'cattle pens' (Many local people standing hand to hand in a circle around the cows), they were successfully walked off the barge, and trucked to the Fuiloro Agriculture College.

Arranging the shipping was a challenge which I would not have successfully completed without the help of many real experts and I am now officially retired as an 'expert' in cattle 'export.'

Editor's note. We are very grateful for Peter's magnificent effort in getting our second herd to Fuiloro.



"Wagons roll"



KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA DISTRICT

East Timor Dairy Project 2001-2005
Marketing Co-ordinator: **JOHN FIFE**

Ph/Fax: 03 9898 6397

Email: filetape@netspace.net.au

Postal: 12 Beaver Street, Box Hill South, VIC 3128