Media Release

Willem Westra van Holthe, Member for Katherine
Deputy Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries

**Cross-bred cattle beefing up export market**

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Market options for Northern Territory cattle producers could be set to expand, after a research project into cross-breeding cattle returned extremely positive results.

Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries Willem Westra van Holthe said the study compared growth rates of F1 Senepol x Brahman, against Brahman steers.

“The long term research project found the cross-bred cattle had higher growth rates, produced more tender meat and did better in feedlot conditions,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

“In this trial at the Douglas Daly Research Station, the F1 Senepol steers were around 30 kg heavier than the purebred Brahmans at 18 months of age, when they were sold to live export.

“This is fantastic news for Northern Territory cattle producers, with the higher weight at sale yielding up to $100 more per F1 Senepol steer.

“The study also found that once the cross-breed cattle were in an Indonesia feedlot, they also performed better than Brahman, putting on 22kg more weight over the feeding period. The reaction of the feedlot operator was very positive, saying he would welcome more of this type of cattle and even offer a premium,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

The Senepol was chosen as an example of a tropical *Bos taurus* breed that is genetically quite different from the Brahman. It was developed in the British Virgin Islands from an African Ndama crossed with a Red Poll.

“This wasn’t just about proving Senepol, it would have worked with other tropically adapted breeds,” Katherine Pastoral Industry Advisory Committee Chair Keith Holtzwart said.

“A lot of things we thought we knew; now we have the data to back it up.”

Minister Westra van Holthe said the Country Liberals Government is committed to the promotion and development of the Northern Territory live cattle industry.
“Indonesia is traditionally our biggest export market and the Northern Territory Government is doing everything in its power to continue to strengthen the market,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

“While we recently saw a major reduction in quota for this quarter, it’s important the Northern Territory continues to be regarded as a live cattle supplier of choice.

“Projects like the cross-breeding study go a long way to maintaining our relations.”

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