

# A NOTE FROM



*Alice*

**APRIL 2023**  
EDITION

## DEAR MEMBERS

I'm hoping Spring is round the corner, the March weather has been miserable but I'm looking forward to the days where we feel the sun on our faces and the grass starts to grow!

I'm also really looking forward to the Spring Sales. We've had solid entries which is pleasing and sure to deliver some great results for members.

To mark the coronation of Charles III and Camilla, as King and Queen Consort of the United Kingdom, the Carlisle May sale will be a Commemorative one. A celebratory get-together after the Show of bulls on the 4<sup>th</sup> will take place in the Show Hall. More to follow but I hope many of you can make it and we get the chance to say hello.



**LIMOUSIN**





Improve

## MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

I remain committed to improving communication and following a recent trip to Weatherbys, the level of precision and number of steps to processing the DNA was fascinating to see first-hand but it also made clear to me there is more to do, to bring this process to life to benefit members. I'm convinced there is so much value to gain for the breed from the DNA insights if we bring it back to grass roots levels.

The analysis and recording of genetic characteristics to inform breeding decisions is impressive and serves to reinforce the authenticity of the breed. We can use this insight to raise the profile of the genetic suitability of the breed that makes Limousin the popular choice is today. We also use the data to improve the robustness and variety of breeding values, sharing data and knowledge with evaluation systems from further afield.

I was impressed by the level of engagement from the Weatherbys team and the state-of-the-art facilities. Like any business, they have had their challenges which they were open about. Practically speaking, the lab is located between a Covid lab and two Pfizer labs which affected staffing during 2021 and the early part of 2022, and consequently, the turnaround time of samples. Turnaround times drifted to 38 days but are now consistently back in line at 19 days for SNP (imputed takes longer ~25 days).

The quality of hair sample is critical to the turnaround time and success rate. The DNA is in the roots/ follicles so ensure there are plenty visible. The hair must be dry and clean and in a bar-coded bag which is sent once an order is placed. To save time and cost, if you are unsure of the sire, please advise other possible sires, up to three. This will help hugely.



Protect

## LIMOUSIN HERD BOOK

I was delighted members have shown their support for this area of the agenda. It's reassuring we are aligned on the importance of a robust Herd book to protect the integrity of the breed and ensure a level playing field for all. I also know that some Bye-laws can still be difficult to remember at the right time, so, given the time of year

I thought it was worth reminding everyone to birth notify or register your calves within the first 28 days of their life. There is no fee to birth notify and notification/registration is significant if you chose to sell that animal at a later Premier Collective Sale. This level of transparency is key when it comes to growing trust in our breed by retailers, processors and butchers.



Promote

## LIMOUSIN BRAND

There's a bumper number of events coming up over the next few months and I invite you all to join me in applauding the work of the Clubs in arranging and managing these. I am grateful for the time and energy the Chairmen, Secretaries and Treasurers commit to the cause. Their enthusiasm and passion for the breed is infectious and I'd like to share my personal thanks for their time and energy to promote the Limousin breed. I will be attending these dates wherever I can.

I'd also like to recognise the work of John Grisedale, and Sophie Harvey for the work they are doing to rejuvenate the activities for the Limousin Young Breeders Club. It's vital we ensure the next generation is ready, willing and able to continue the success of the breed and I'm delighted they have confirmed the National Stock Judging will take place at the Great Yorkshire Show.

Finally, I'm pleased to let you know that this month will see the final touches on the Annual Journal and it will be posted out to all members. The Journal is a reminder of just how much Society activity takes place each year and the vast range of successes across the Limousin breed. I hope you all feel as proud as I do when you receive it.

I remain focussed on building a team that care passionately about Limousin and our members. I'm delighted to be welcoming back Sue Stenner this month who joins us on the 11<sup>th</sup> April, bringing a wealth of Society knowledge and experience to the team.

I wish you all a happy Easter and look forward to meeting with many of you soon.

Alice Swift

CEO, BRITISH LIMOUSIN CATTLE SOCIETY