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EVALUATION OF NEW BEEF BREED

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Background. Beef cattle producers in East Texas are well aware of the advantages and disadvantages of Brahman and Brahman crossbred cattle. Recent trends in the beef industry have caused order buyers to discriminate against feeder cattle with 50% or greater Brahman breeding.

Research Findings. A cooperative experiment with the authors and scientists located at Uvalde and McGregor within the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and scientists at Tifton, Georgia, El Reno, Oklahoma, Brooksville, Florida and Clay Center, Nebraska has been designed to evaluate new beef breeds with tropical adaptation with regard to reproduction, growth and carcass merit. Breeds of cattle which are being used in the existing research cow herds are Brahman, Angus, Hereford and crosses between these breeds. The cow herd being used at the Overton Center is purebred Brahman. These Brahman cows were artificially inseminated to either Brahman, Angus or Tuli bulls. The Brahman and Angus x Brahman F₁ cattle will be used as comparison groups to the Tuli x Brahman F₁ cattle in various pasture-nutrition regimens.

The Tuli breed originated in Africa and is classified as a sanga breed. It originated in southwest Zimbabwe and eastern Botswana. The breed was first named Tswana and the improved Tswana is the Tuli, sometimes called "Harvey's cattle" after the land development officer who selected and bred from the best of the breed in the early 1940's. Commercial ranchers in Zimbabwe recognized the potential of the breed and formed the Tuli Breed Society in 1961.

The Tuli is an early maturing, medium sized breed. It is claimed to have excellent beef conformation with particularly well developed hind quarters. They are well adapted to semi-arid conditions and are resistant to heat and ticks. They are claimed to have excellent teat and udder confirmation and to be easy calvers. A high proportion of them are polled and the color ranges from silver through golden brown to a rich red.

The sanga breeds of Africa were taken on their southern migration by the Bantu tribesmen and are thought to be primarily *Bos taurus* in origin. In all practicality some African Zebu (*Bos indicus*) genetics probably have been incorporated into these types of cattle during the last 5000 years. The semen for this project was collected from bulls which were imported into Australia as embryos. A consortium of breeders and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization of Australia selected and produced the Tuli bulls used as sires for this research.

Application. This may be a breed which can be used to produce crossbred cattle which are adapted to our environment with high reproductive rates and acceptable carcass traits. This

project will take at least 3 years to develop before we know if the Tuli breed has a place in East Texas.