

Frequently Asked Questions



Why Should I Use MateSel?

Through optimising mating allocations, MateSel enables you to:

- Maximise the rate of genetic gain in your herd whilst managing inbreeding at the same time
- Save significant time previously spent compiling mating lists
- Make informed decisions about semen purchases, which bulls to use, animal selection or culling, formation of mating groups and mate allocations
- Include objectivity and proven science in your mating decisions.
- Add significant value to your business by way of additional genetic gain and management of inbreeding to offset the cost of pedigree and performance recording

How Do I Access MateSel?

There are several steps involved in accessing MateSel.

Firstly, you need to collate the information that is required by the MateSel analysis. In particular:

1. The MateSel parameters. These parameters are utilised within the MateSel analysis and describe the specifics of your breeding program and breeding objective. For example, the parameters include the “target” selection index, maximum number of matings for each sire, minimum cow mob size for natural matings, and breeding strategy to be used, ranging from “High Gain” to “Balanced” to “Diversity”.
2. The list of candidate sires and dams. This outlines all the sires and dams that are available for use within the breeding program. To be included in the MateSel analysis, all candidate sires and dams must be recorded with your Breed Society and have EBVs and selection indexes available. Candidate animals with a depth of pedigree will also be more useful to the MateSel analysis than those with limited pedigree.

Once the above information has been collated, you need to submit this information to a MateSel operator in the BREEDPLAN office using a specific Microsoft Excel submission template. This template is available from the “Microsoft Excel Templates” page that is available from within the Technical area on the BREEDPLAN website or by contacting staff at the BREEDPLAN office. Comprehensive instructions are included on how to complete the template.

Once you have completed the Microsoft Excel submission template, you need to submit it to BREEDPLAN. The easiest way to do this is via email using the following email address matesel@breedplan.une.edu.au .

The MateSel operator will then undertake a MateSel analysis for your herd based on the information supplied and make the MateSel results available via the secure member login facility (as accessed from your Breed Society and/or the BREEDPLAN website). Once available, you will be notified by email that the results are ready to view.

What is Included in the MateSel Results?

The MateSel results that are provided are made up of several components.

A MateSel report (in pdf form) is provided which consists of several sections including:

1. Suggested mating list sorted by sires
2. Suggested mating list sorted by dams
3. Summary outcome statistics comparing dams, sires and progeny
4. Graphs showing the effect of the MateSel strategy on BREEDPLAN EBVs and selection indexes
5. Graphs showing effect on inbreeding and age structure

An example MateSel report is available for viewing from the BREEDPLAN website.

In addition to the MateSel report, a file of the suggested mating allocations is provided in csv format. This file is compatible with spreadsheet programs (e.g. Microsoft Excel). It is a useful file as it allows you to sort on any column (e.g. sire or dam) and format the suggested mating list as you require. An example MateSel csv file is also available for viewing on the BREEDPLAN website.

How Should MateSel Be Used?

To obtain the most from MateSel, it is recommended that you undertake two separate MateSel analyses for each joining situation or season. The two being:

1. **Sire Scoping Analysis** - The first MateSel analysis should be undertaken well before the mating is due to occur (e.g. 2 to 4 months). At this stage, the candidate dam list should be fairly fixed, however as many candidate sires as possible should be included (e.g. AI sires, yearling bulls, rising 2 year olds, current sires). MateSel will then assist you in choosing which sires you should attempt to access (e.g. purchase semen, select from your available yearling or rising 2 year old bulls, purchase from auction sales).
2. **Mating Allocation Analysis** – Once the specific sires that are available to the mating program are known (e.g. natural and/or AI), a second MateSel analysis should be undertaken. A similar dam candidate list will probably be used to the sire scoping analysis. This analysis can be undertaken closer to the date of mating and will provide a guide to the allocation of matings for the available sires and dams that will be used in the upcoming mating situation.

If required, a MateSel analysis can be undertaken as many times as needed for each mating situation. This could be just the once, simply being the mating allocation analysis described above or multiple times to help identify such things as which sires to access, which females to use in an AI program or which females should be joined to each backup bull.

Can MateSel be Utilised by All Seedstock Herds?

As MateSel optimises the rate of genetic progress based on a nominated selection index, MateSel can only be utilised by herds that are:

- A current member of BREEDPLAN.
- A member of a Breed Society that has at least one selection index published.

Additionally, MateSel is also currently only available to Australian Beef Breed Societies that have an ILR2 pedigree and performance database system.

What is the Cost of MateSel?

A flat fee of \$165 (inc GST) applies to access a MateSel analysis. This will be invoiced to you direct from either your Breed Society or BREEDPLAN once the results from each MateSel analysis have been supplied (depending on your Breed Society's commercial arrangement with BREEDPLAN).

Additionally, where very complex breeding programs need to be configured, or many interactions are required between the MateSel operator and yourself in order to achieve the desired outcome, time additional to the norm will be invoiced at \$82.50 (inc GST) per hour. The MateSel operator will notify you of any costs before the additional work is undertaken.

Note: It is envisaged that the majority of MateSel analyses will be finalised under the flat \$165 fee without the need for the additional time charge.

Who Do I Contact Regarding MateSel?

Your first point of contact regarding MateSel is the MateSel operator. They can be contacted via email or phone:

- Email: matesel@breedplan.unc.edu.au
- Phone: (02) 6773 3555

For general MateSel queries, you can also contact staff at BREEDPLAN or the relevant SBTS or TBTS Technical Officer for your breed.

