

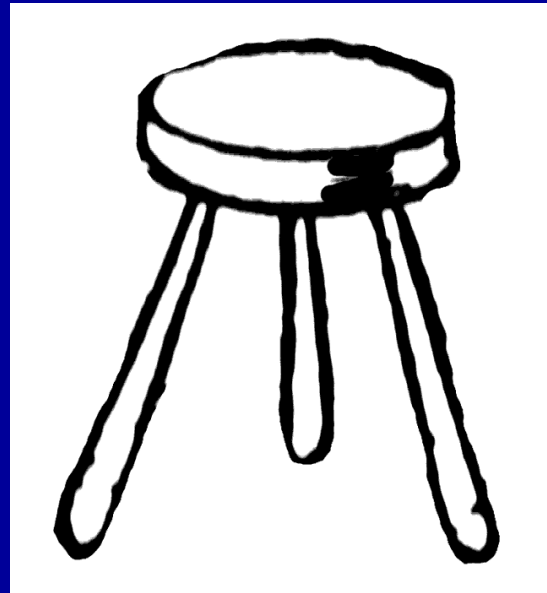
**How to produce adapted  
cattle; fertile, precocious  
and low cost**



**ALC**  
**BRAHMAN'S**

# Talk Outline;

- **Timing of Calving**
- **Calving Blocks**
- **Production Period**
- **Timing of Marketing**
- **Cow Body Condition**
- **Weaning Weights**
- **Weaning Rates**
- **Conception Rates - % Pregnant**



## ➤ Management

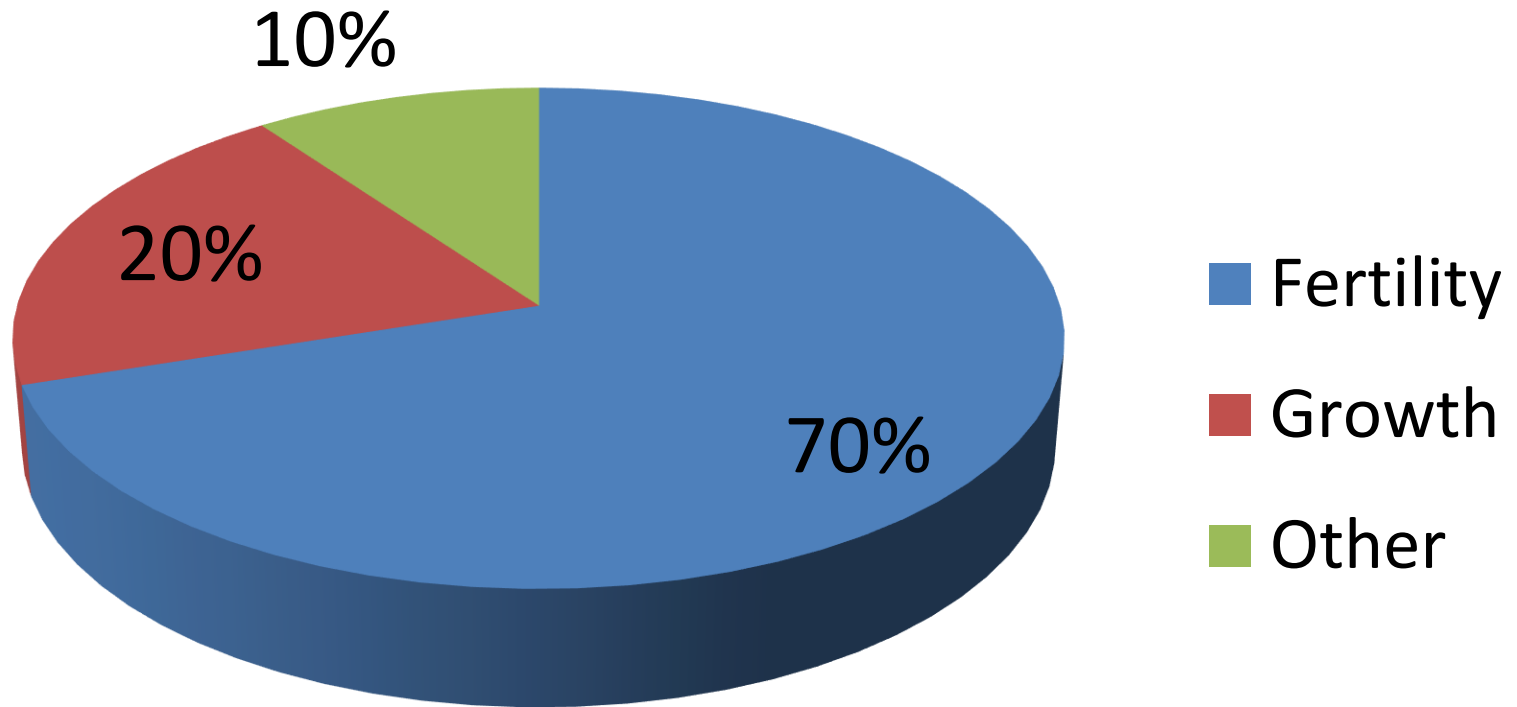
(property, herd, people, finance etc.)

## ➤ Nutrition

(pasture, grazing, supplementation etc.)

## ➤ Genetics

# Key traits that drive profit in a beef herd



# Profit Controllers

## •Breeder Management

- Body condition
- Nutrition
- Predators
- Timing... Utilize production period

## •Marketing

- Cleaning out non- productive animals

## •Genetics

## •Cost Control

# What do we need to Achieve?

- Weaned calf every year
- Pregnancy every year
- E non-pregnants FAT every year
- Pregnants FAT every year

Before the decline in nutrition.... NO  
EXCUSES!

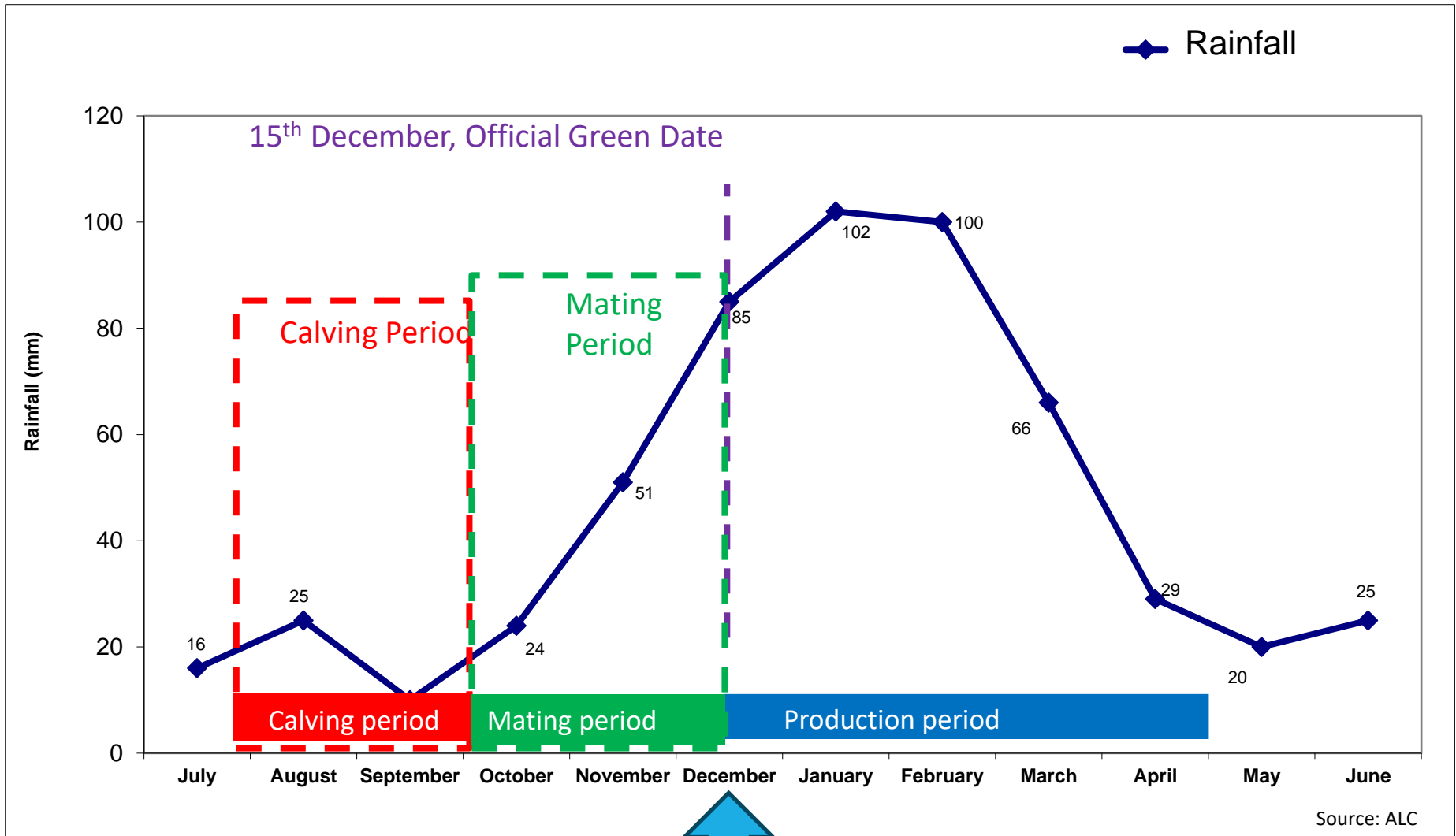
# Calving Season

- Firstly, it is necessary to choose a set calving period.
- Year round calving is out of control!

**When is the most profitable time to calve?**

- When calves are ruminating with onset of rain
- When costs are lowest
- When risks are minimal
- When returns are optimal

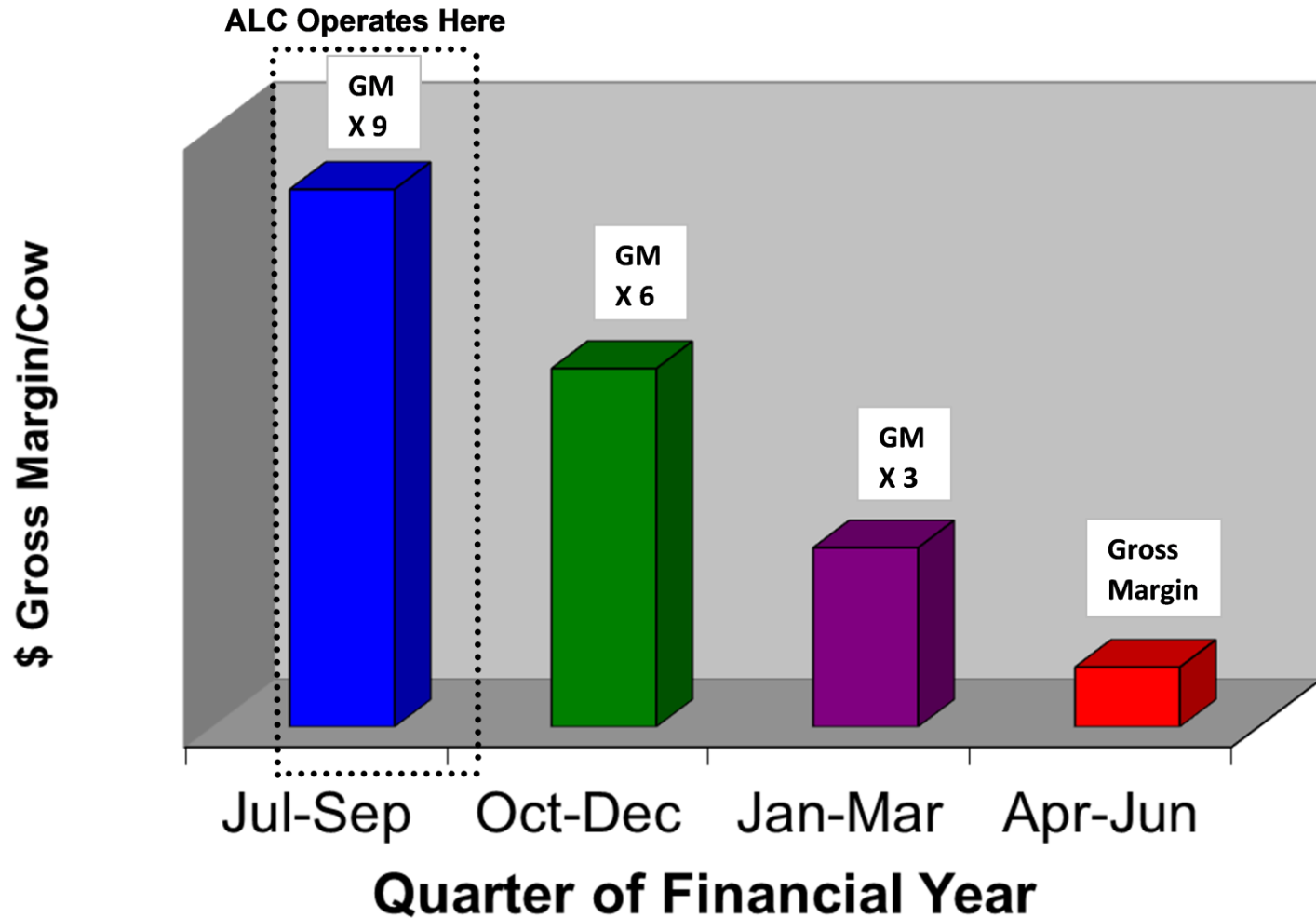
# ALC BRAHMANS BREEDING PROGRAM



Ruminating calves

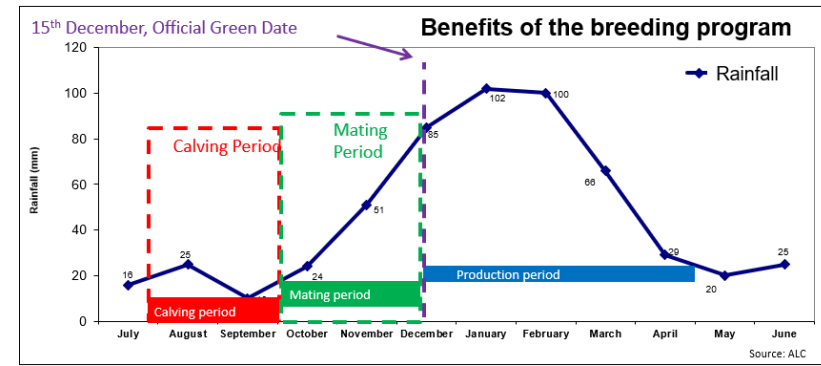
# CALVING BLOCKS

## CONTROL vs OUT OF CONTROL



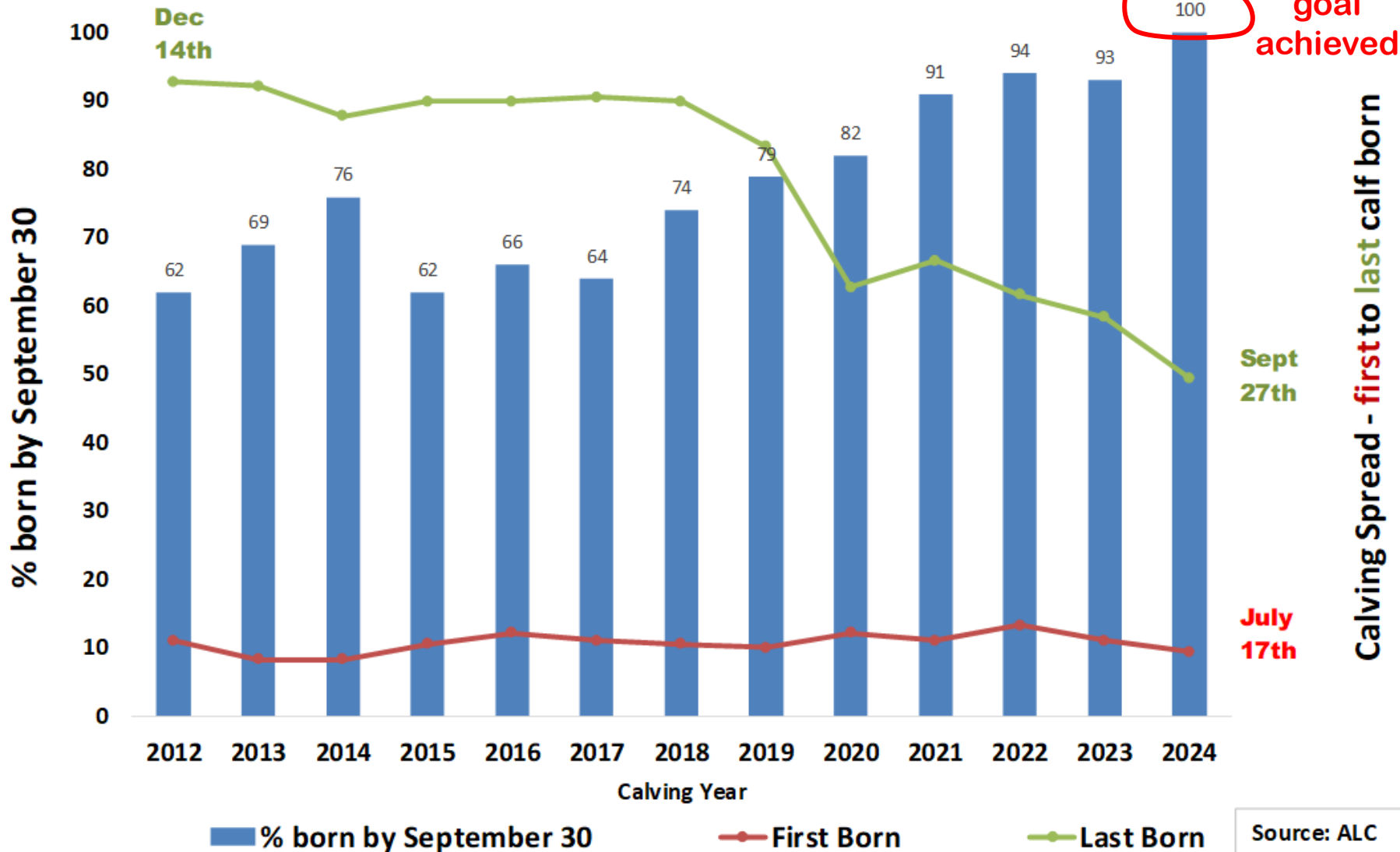
# Downstream Effects

- Heifer Progeny all advanced in puberty, weight and age for first mating (C1, C2).



- Maximum opportunity for the first rebreed.
- More grazing space for productive animals
- Low operating costs on the whole herd due to excellent body condition.
- Fat is our best friend, it is our haystack built into the cow.
- Early Market opportunities for steers.
- Marketing onto the “Green Fever” period.

# Calving Success At ALC 2012 to 2024



Rainfall (mm)												
S'12	S'13	S'14	S'15	S'16	S'17	S'18	S'19	S'20	S'21	S'22	S'23	S'24
573	685	346	483	446	805	511	620	528	290	716	806	607

# CONCEPTION RATE

**52% Heritable on first re-breed!**



# CONCEPTION RATES

**Target: > 75% pregnancy rate every year...  
...In Season**

**Factors that dictate pregnancy rates:**

- **Rainfall**
- **Herd Management**
- **Available nutrition**
- **Stocking Rates**
- **Body Condition at calving**
- **Time of calving**
- **Genetics**

**Target: > 75% pregnancy rate every year**

**Why 75%?**



**1000 X 75% = 750 Pregnant Cows  
250 Empty Cows**

**Less 10% loss (pregnancy test to weaning) = 675 Calves  
= 338 Females  
= 337 Males**

**338 Less 1% loss = 335 Heifers to Join**

**335 X 75% = 251 (80% to 90%)**

**251 heifers + 750 Cows = 1001 Pregnancies**

# Why 75%

- **Maximise Cash Flow**  
(cull females 50% of our annual income)
- **Increased selection intensity on genetics**  
(only keeping productive animals)
- **Only productive animals left grazing entering the dry season.**

# WEANING RATES

- More than 70% of total joined

- All breeders must conceive, wean a live calf then re-conceive every year.
- Budget on 90% of total pregnancies.



# WEANING WEIGHTS

- ALC Weaning Weight: Range from 170-290kg  
and average 230kg

**Live healthy weaner every year**

**Influenced by.....**

- **Season/available nutrition**
- **Cow body condition: Our aim is  
3+ Body Score by calving**



# JULY



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**Start of financial year / end of production period ...GOAL IS**

**Only have PRODUCTIVE animals still grazing**

**Female herd**

- **Pregnant females BC3+**
- **Yearlings (Pregnant?)**
- **Weaners**

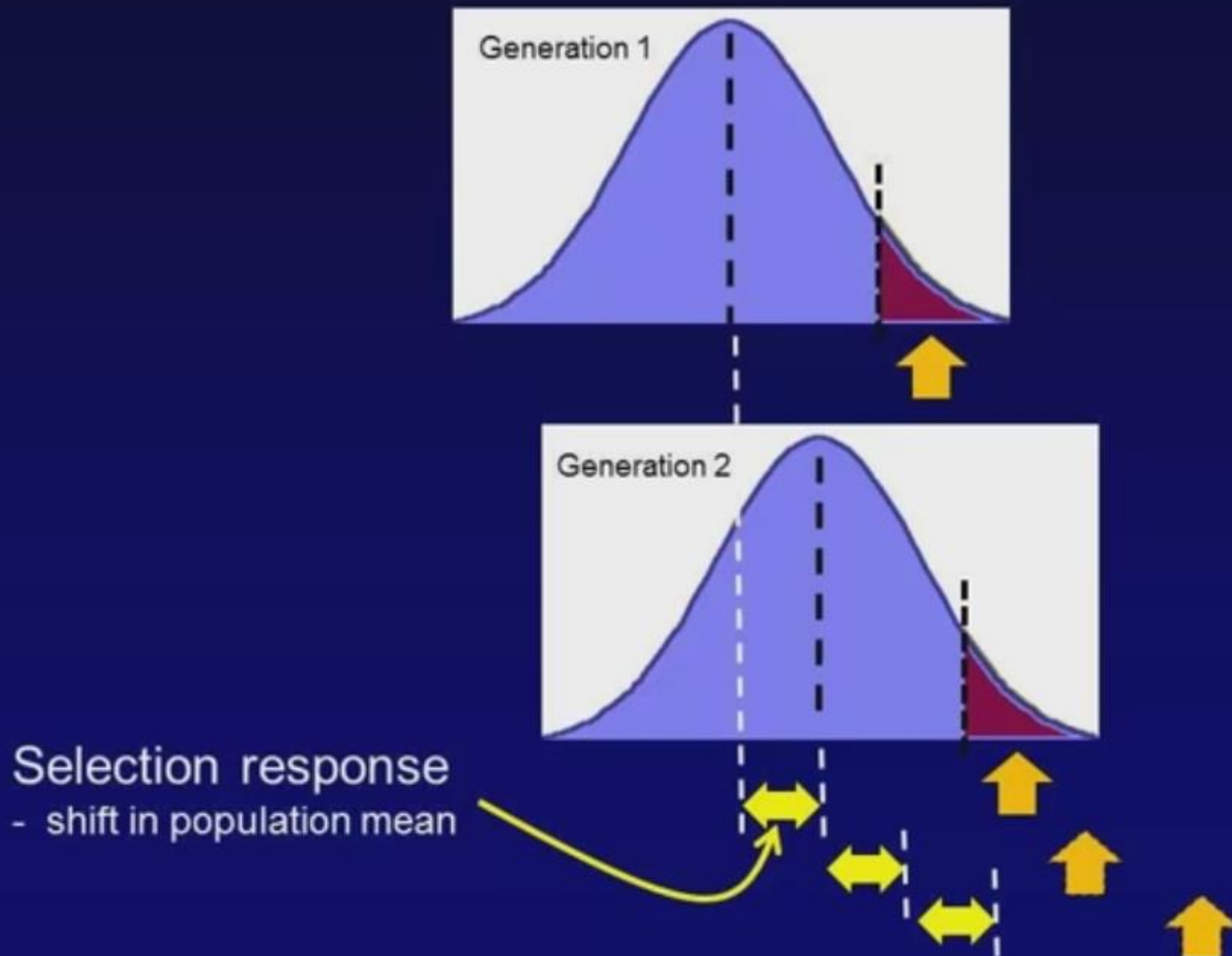
**Male Herd**

- **Weaner steers #4**
- **Yearling steers #3**

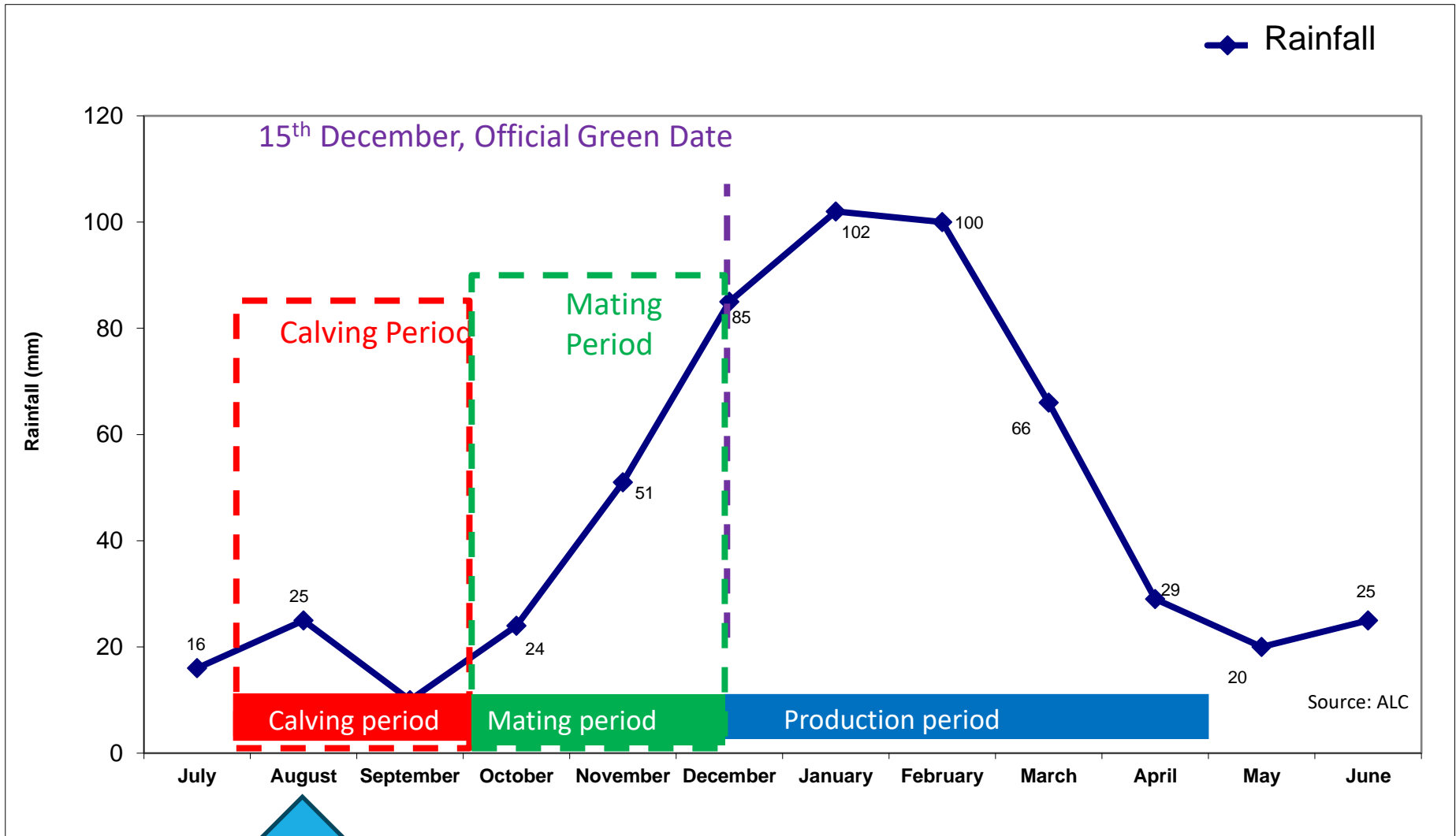
- Monitoring pasture quality
- Supplementation?
- Calving
- Sort Sires for mating
  - vaccinate for Vibrio / Botulism
  - Fitness
  - Fertility
  - Health
  - Age
  - Genetics – will they deliver genetic gain for ...fertility, growth, precocity & temperament



# Selection generates change



# BREEDING PROGRAM



# SEPTEMBER

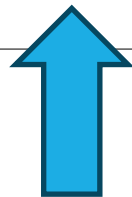
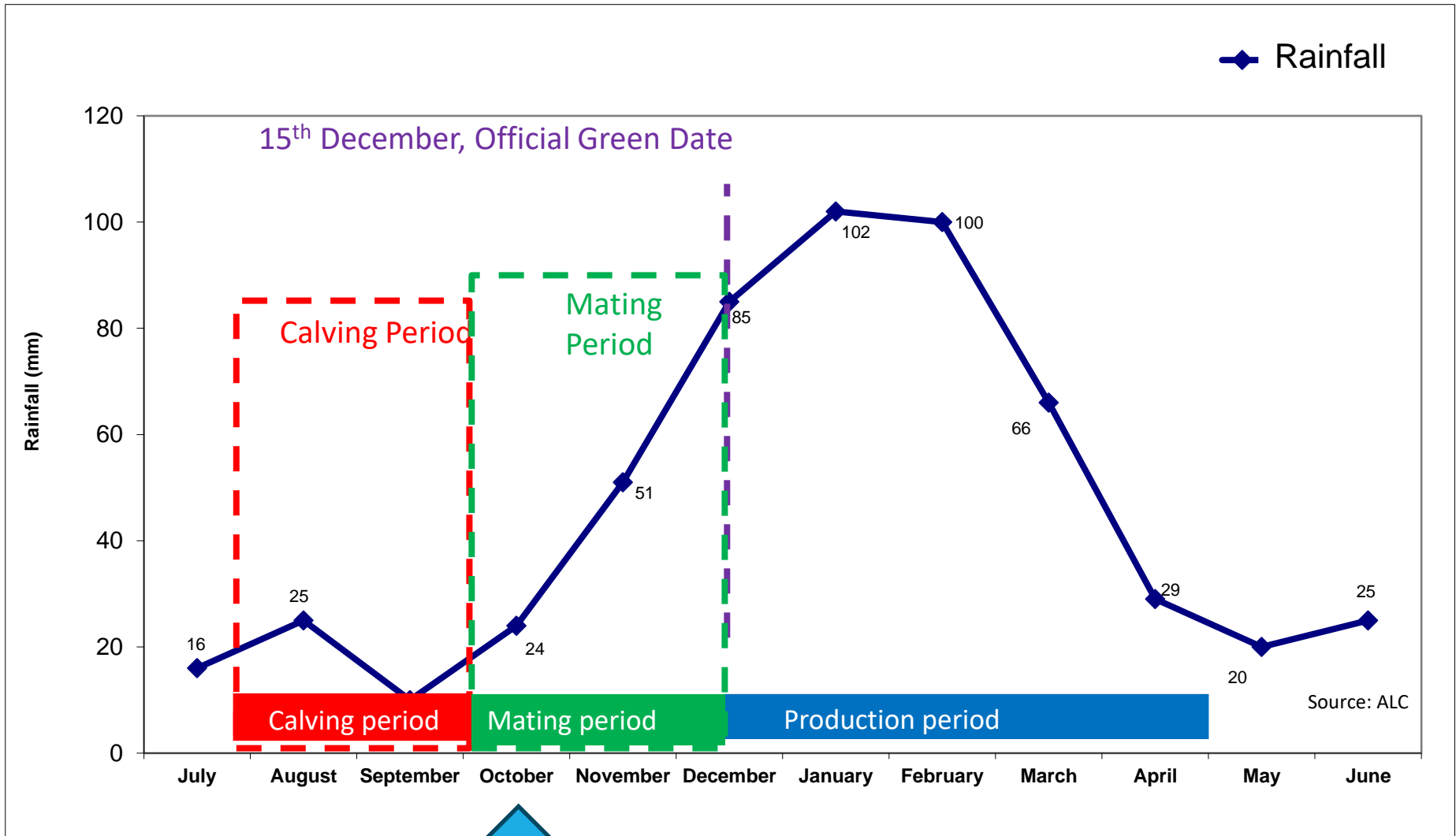
- Monitoring breeder BODY CONDITION
- Monitoring pasture quality
- Supplementation?
- Light draft on heifers for joining
  - Will need nearly all the heifers if applying pressure for reproduction
- End of calving period – September 30<sup>th</sup>
- Plan joining
- Source additional Sires for joining – will they deliver genetic gain for ... fertility, growth, precocity & temperament

# OCTOBER

- Monitoring pasture quality
- Monitoring breeder **BODY CONDITION**
- Supplementation?
- October 1<sup>st</sup>, commence joining**
- Branding ( Botulinum, 5in1 or 7in1)**
- Draft off all dry cows (lost pregnancies or calf)**
- Market non-performing stock:**
  - **Cull sires**
  - **Dry cows**
  - **Cull heifers**



# BREEDING PROGRAM





# NOVEMBER

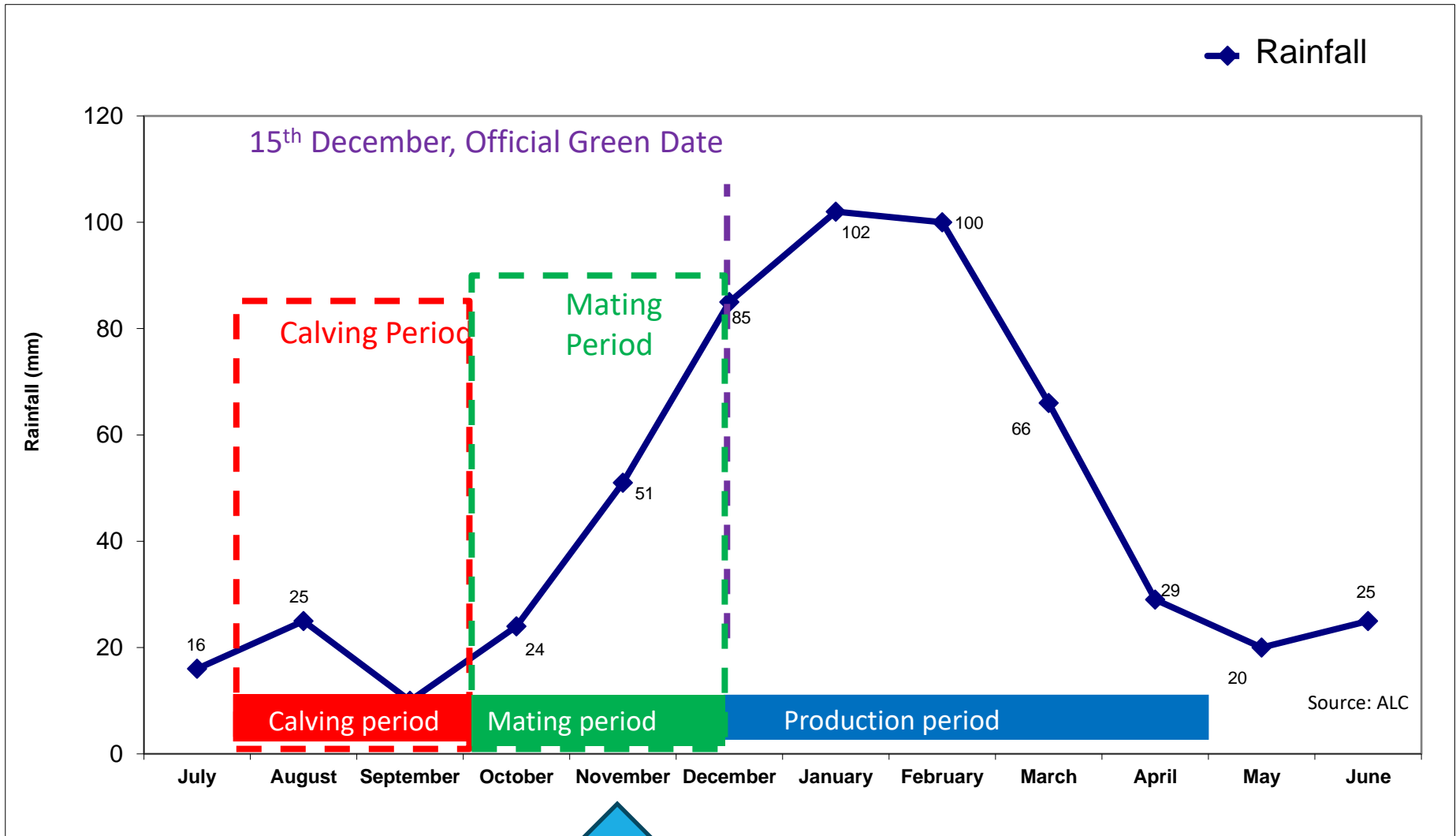


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- Monitoring pasture quality
- Monitoring breeder BODY CONDITION
- Supplementation?
- November 15<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> –  
pull bulls from maiden heifers  
(2 year olds)  
42-60 day joining**



# BREEDING PROGRAM



(If in drought, early wean)

December 15<sup>th</sup> is 'green date'  
(75% chance 50mm of rain)

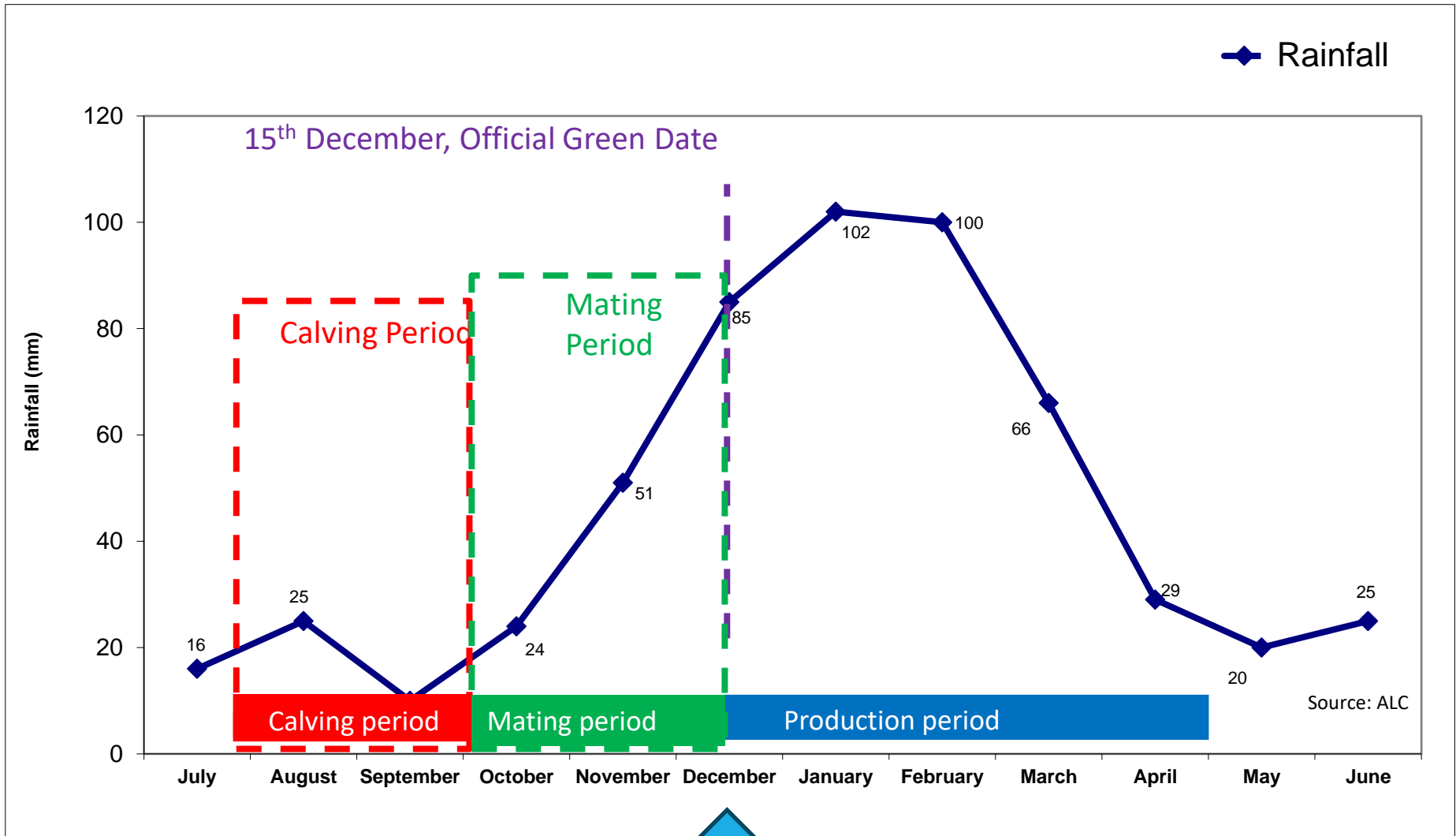


December 15<sup>th</sup> – pull bulls from  
cows and yearling heifers  
(or no later than January 30<sup>th</sup>)

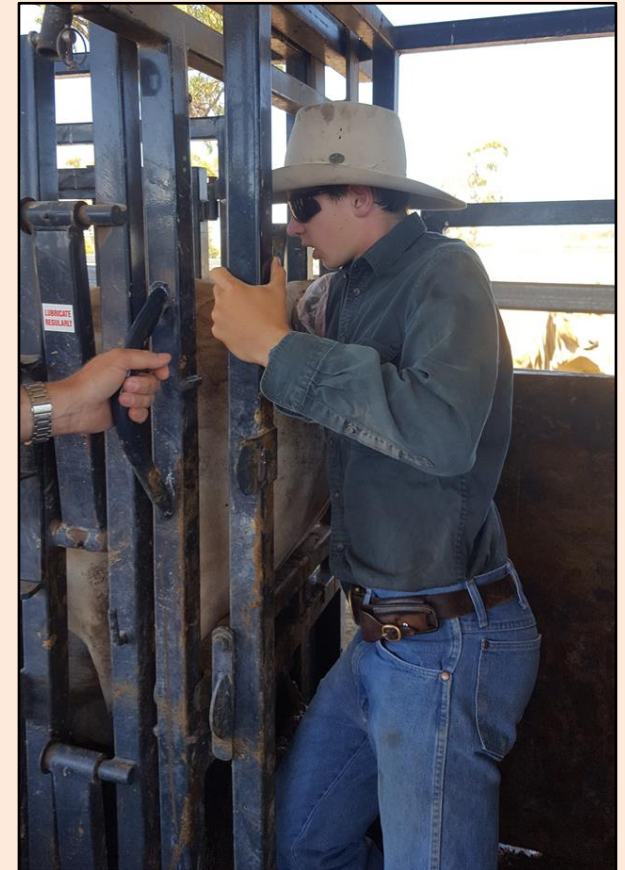
If poor season, commence selling of steers

- Fats 520kg+
- Feeder / Live Ex 350-500kg

# BREEDING PROGRAM



- Monitoring pasture quality
- Monitoring breeder **BODY CONDITION**
- Supplementation?
- If poor season,  
early wean**
- From January 15<sup>th</sup>,  
Pregnancy test heifers  
and sell empties  
(Lepto & Botulism vaccine  
to pregnant females)**





# FEBRUARY

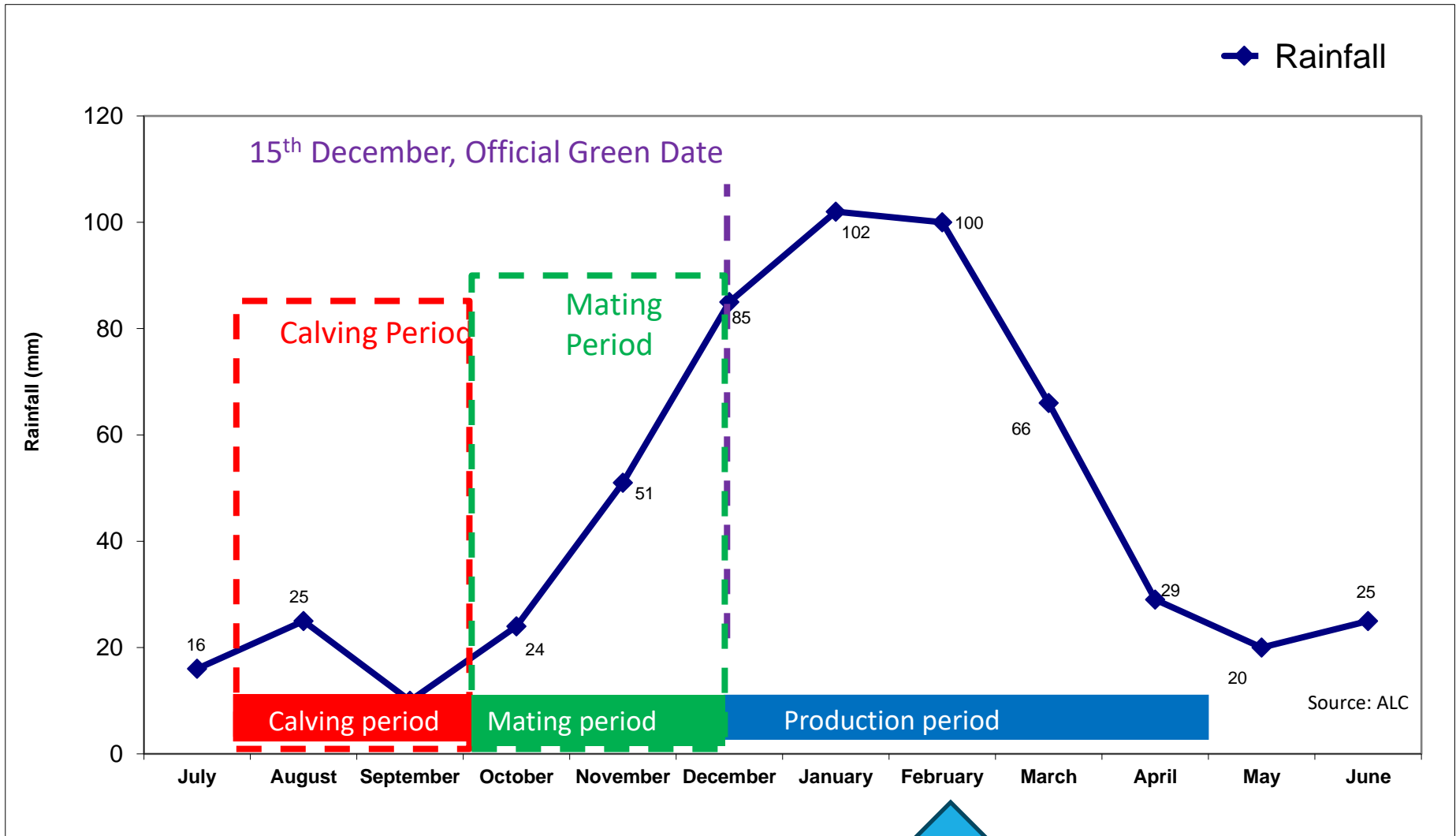


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- Monitoring pasture quality
- Monitoring breeder **BODY CONDITION**
- Supplementation?
- If poor season, wean**



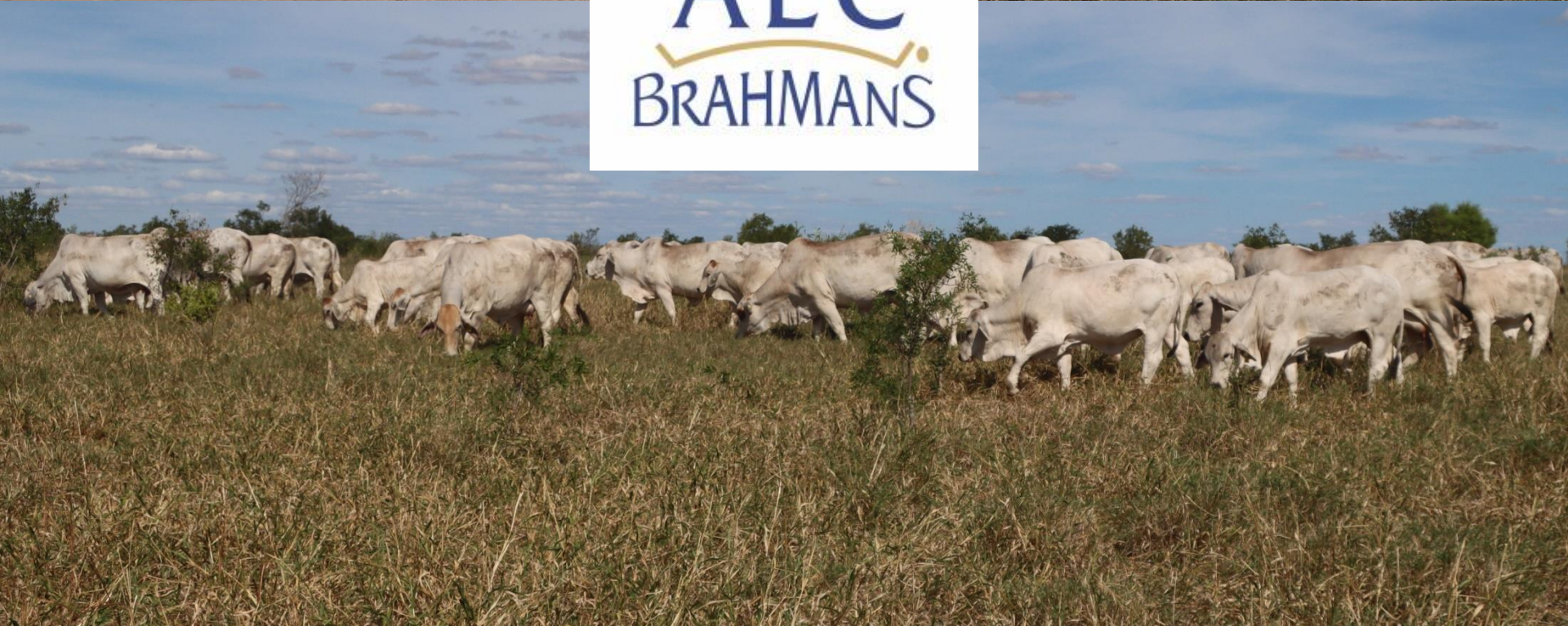
# BREEDING PROGRAM



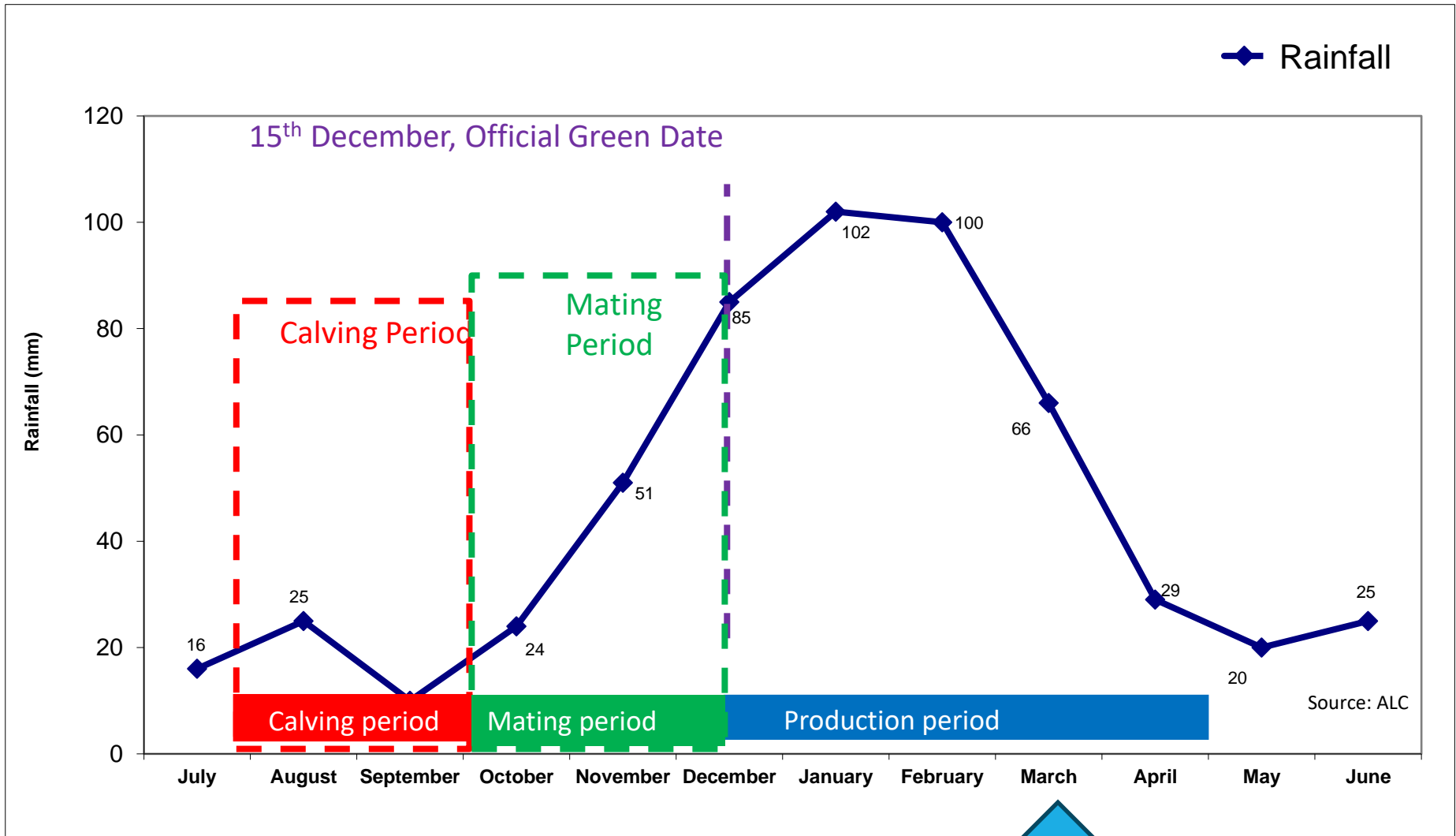
- Wean all calves (2<sup>nd</sup> Vac. for calves)
  
- Late March, pregnancy test cows and yearling heifers (Vac. for Lepto & Bot.)
  - Cull ALL empty and/or dry breeders
  - Now we have stock numbers for planning / budgeting
  
- Analyse rain received, pasture quality and quantity
  
- Make plan – adjust stocking rate to carrying capacity



ALC  
BRAHMANS



# BREEDING PROGRAM



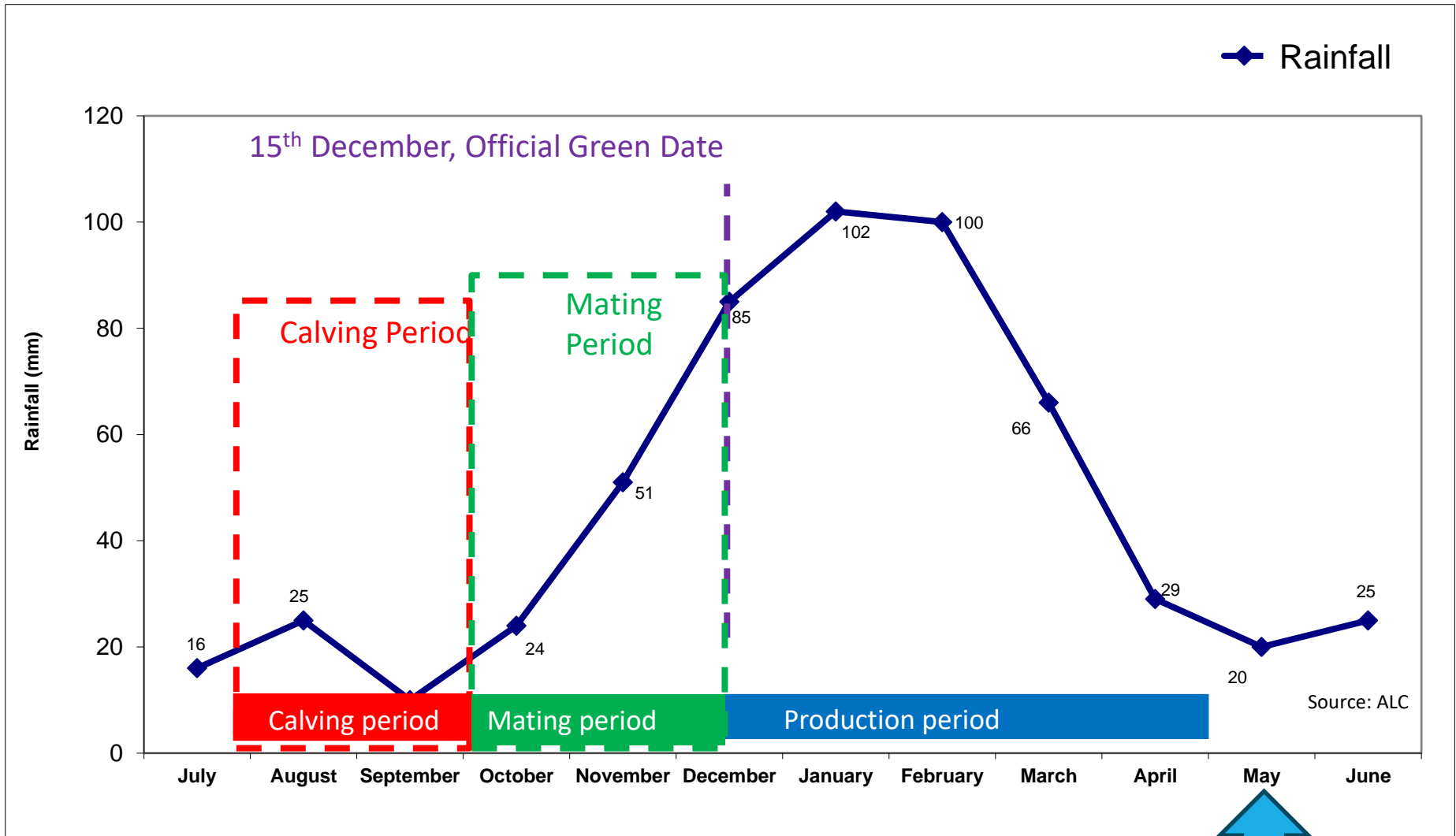
**MAY**

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- ❑ **Start marketing of sale cattle**
  - **Cull/ Empty females**
  - **Fat steers**



# BREEDING PROGRAM



# JUNE

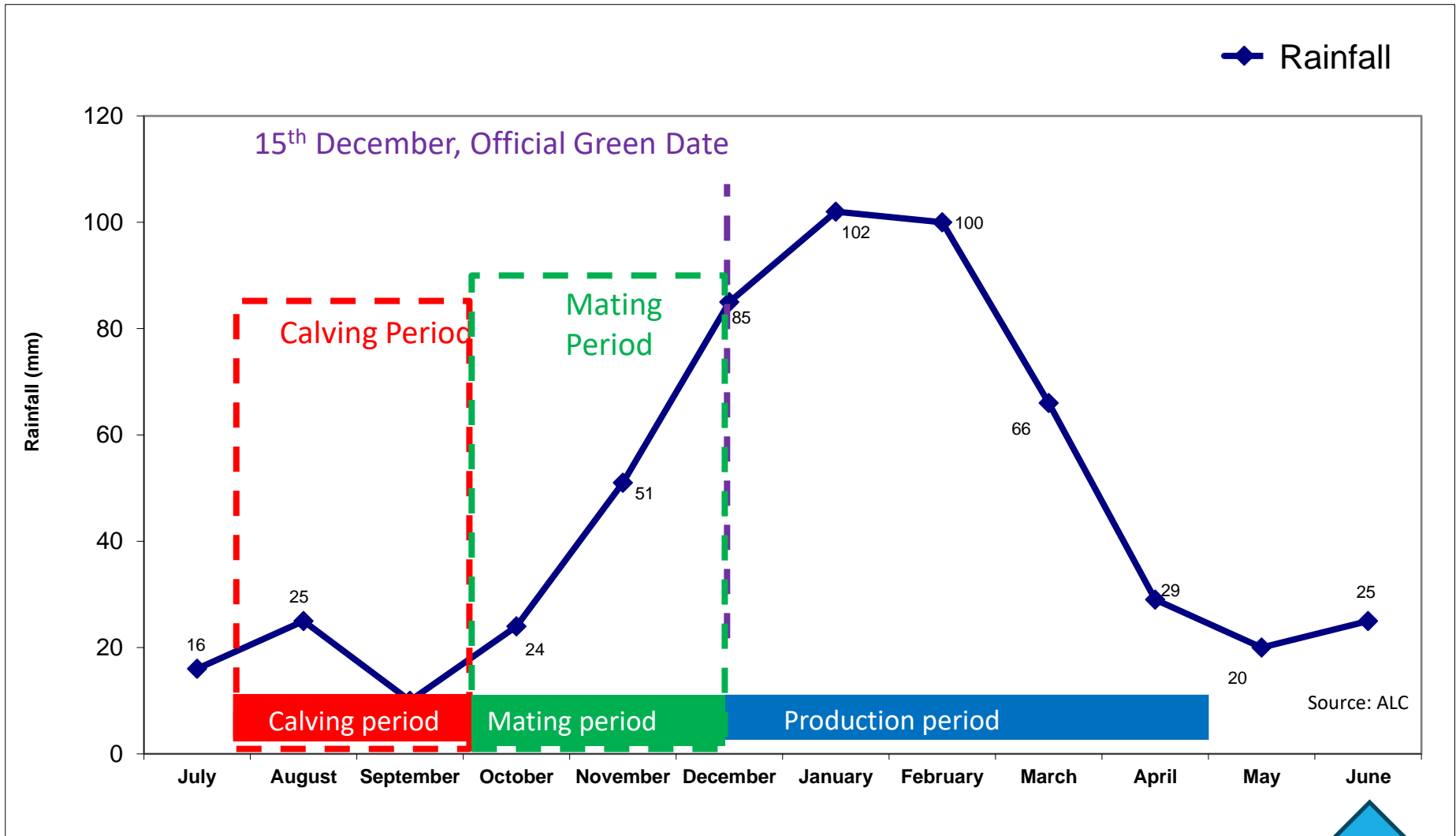
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- ❑ Ideally all remaining empty females and 2 yr old steers fattened and sold by June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- ❑ END OF FINANCIAL YEAR
- ❑ END OF PRODUCTION PERIOD

**GOAL: Only PRODUCTIVE animals remain grazing going into July**



# BREEDING PROGRAM



# • Minimal risk

- Plenty of options
- Cow is weaned  
(Low support costs)
- Calf is ruminating  
(Peak feed efficiency)
- Non-pregnant cows are sold..FAST!
- Maximum pasture area available to peak-production cattle throughout the dry period





## **What to watch out for?**

- More intensive system, room for error is greater.
- Do not crucify your cows... Wean calves according to cow body condition.
- Use of non-adapted genetics turns this program into a disaster.

# Summary

Herd management plays a vital role in profitable outcomes of a beef breeding herd.

- Calving in dry regions, where our rainfall is unreliable and at times minimal, we must have systems that drive profitability, regardless of the seasonal outcome.

- **Requires a disciplined focus on achieving the goal of a weaner and pregnancy every year.**
- **Timing is key to get maximum utilization out of our production period and minimise risk.**

- Adapted genetics play a critical role
- Financial rewards are there for our efforts

**“Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off you’re goal” - Henry Ford**