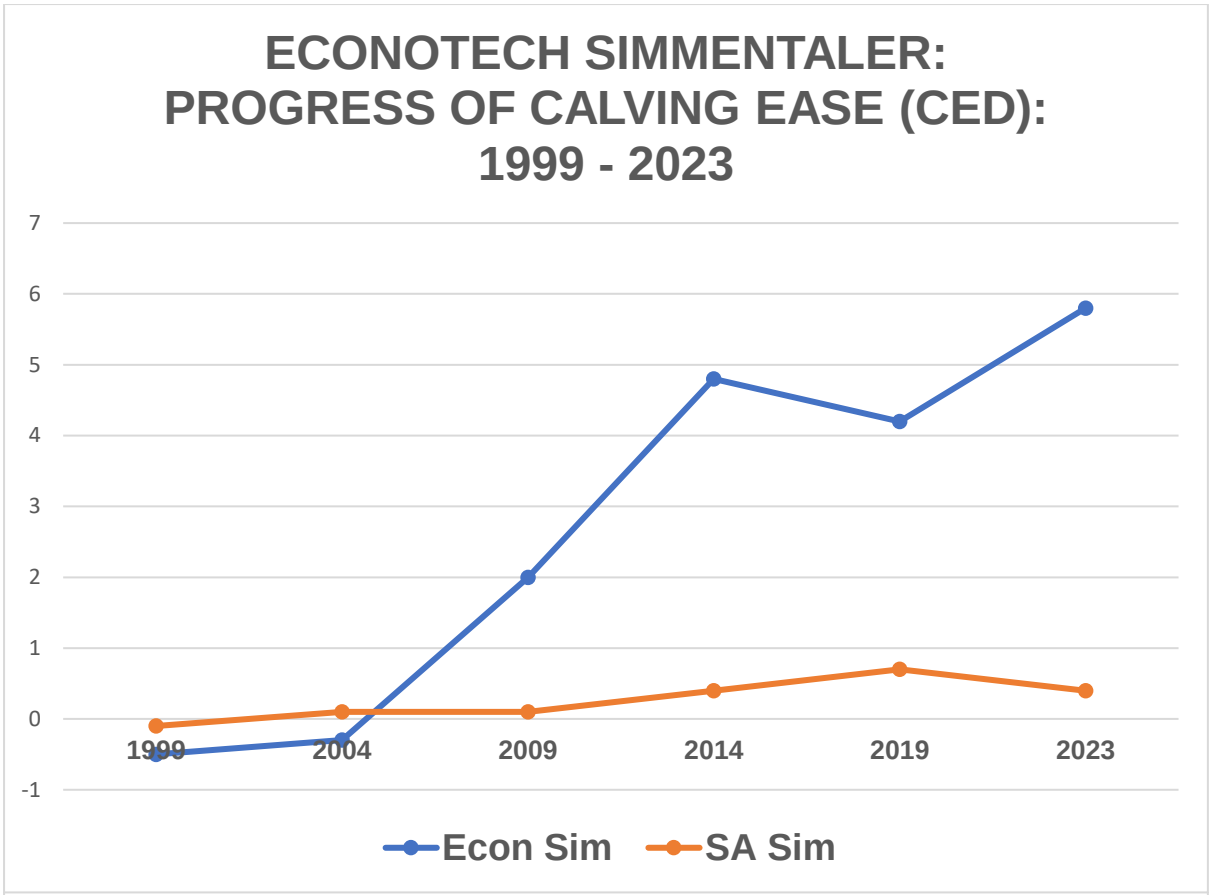
Progress of the Econotech Simmentaler Herd

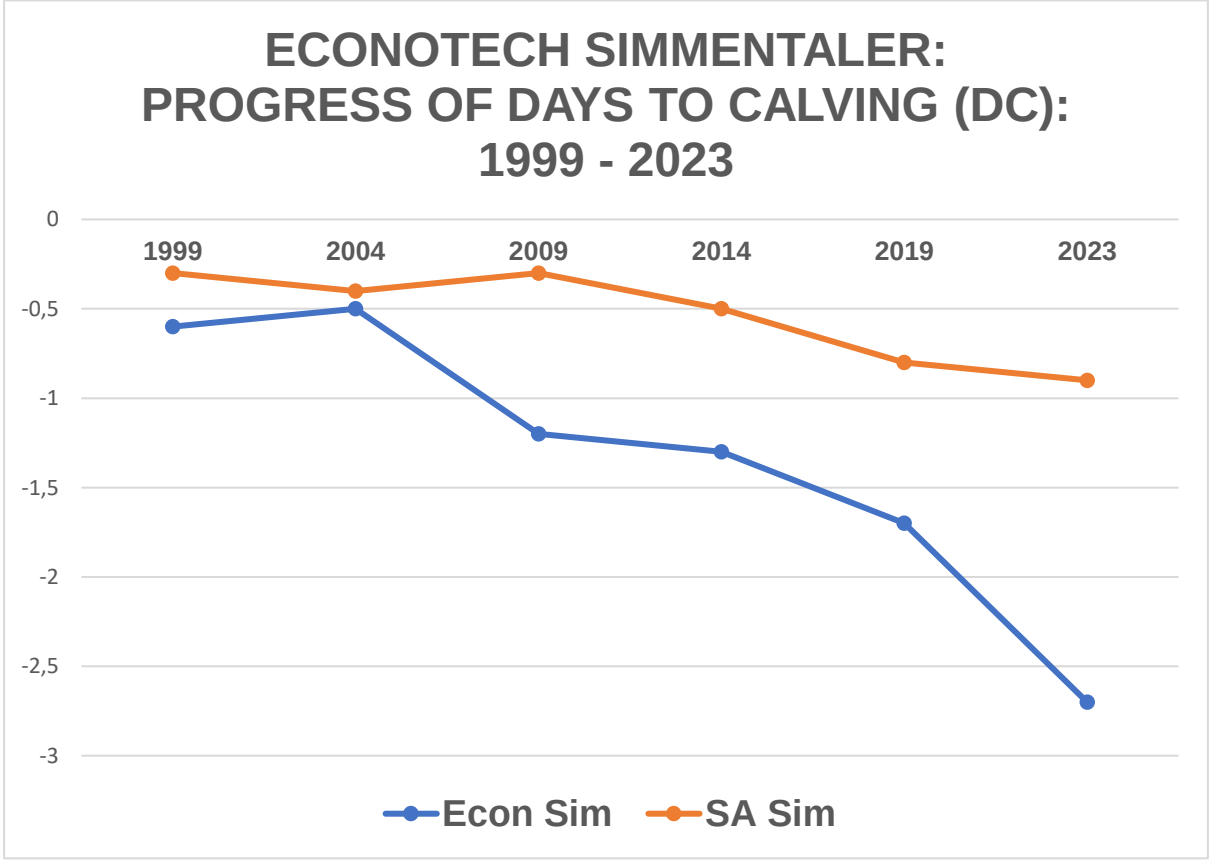
The Karoo is very kind to those that respect it in all its nuances. Our family on Doornbult-Boven (est. 1831) have learnt this lesson time and again the past two centuries.

Our herd of Simmentaler is a product of these lessons - farm for profit by adapting your animals to the environment and not the other way round.

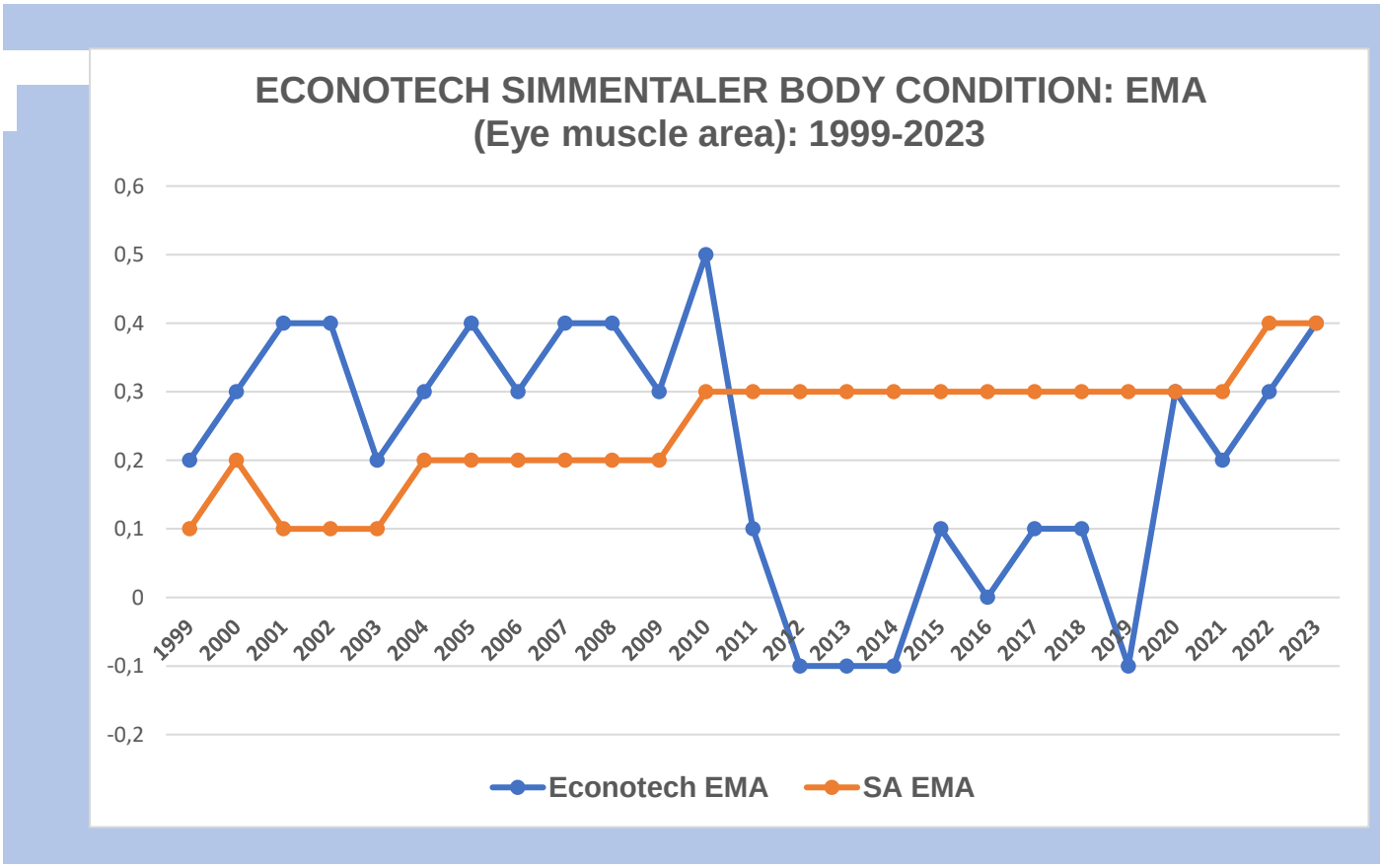
Fertility and calving ease are most important when farming in the Karoo. Breeding traits that underpin these characteristics are bigger scrotum circumference (SS) (highly correlated with earlier calving of heifers), shorter days to calving (DC), moderate milk and a lighter cow frame (MCW). The condition status of our herd (as measured by EMA, Rib and Rump Fat and Marbling) help also to raise their fertility. Lastly, one has to stick meticulously to those cows that out-calf and out-last the rest of the herd.

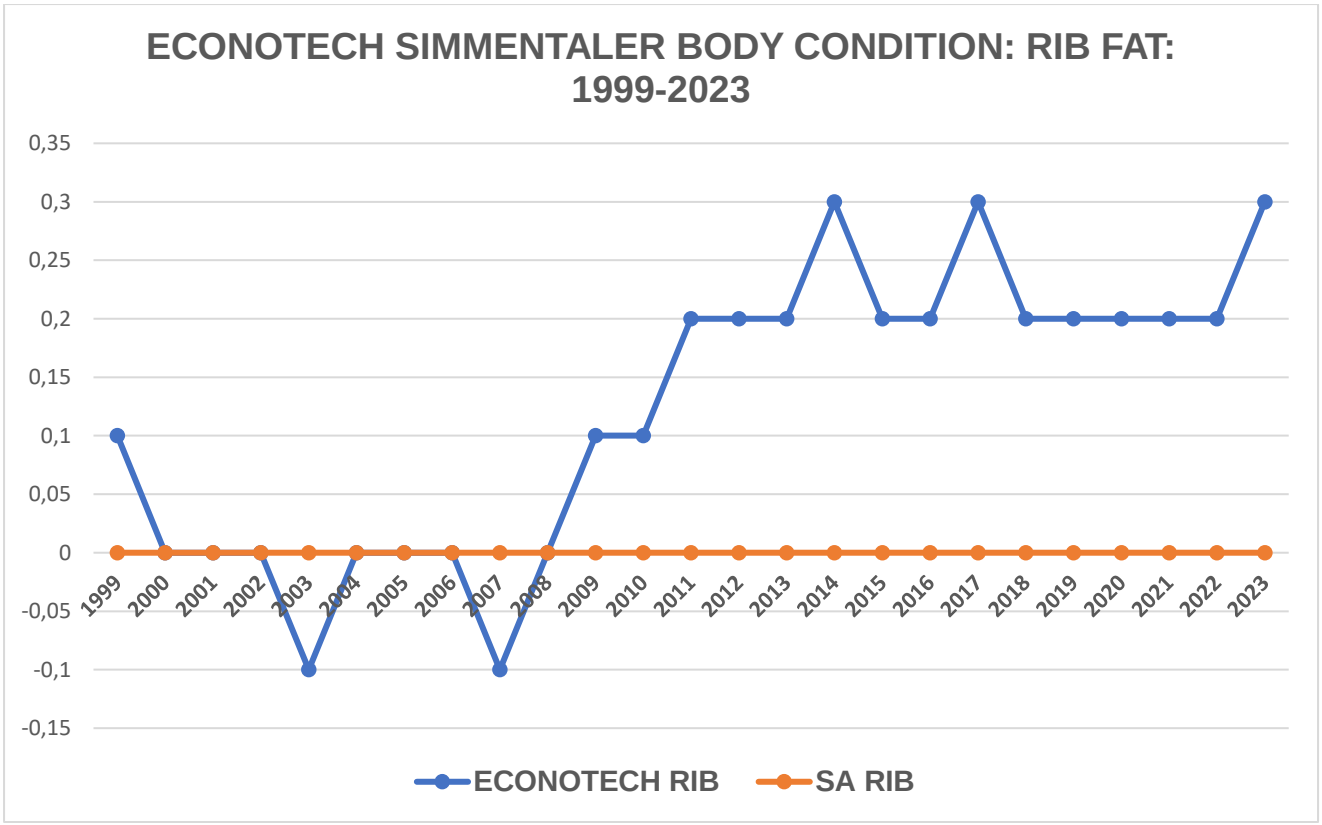
On the farm everything does not always work out according to the book. The next two graphs of our ebv's since 1999 shows that we managed to increase calving ease considerable in relation to the average of the SA crop. Fertility as measured by the progress with Days to Calving showed also a steep increase.


ECONOTECH SIMMENTALER:
PROGRESS OF CALVING EASE (CED):
1999 - 2023
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
-1
1999
2004
2009
2014
2019
2023
Econ Sim
SA Sim


ECONOTECH SIMMENTALER:
PROGRESS OF DAYS TO CALVING (DC):
1999 - 2023
0
-0,5
-1
-1,5
-2
-2,5
-3
1999
2004
2009
2014
2019
2023
Econ Sim
SA Sim

Our progress can be ascribed to our stringent culling regime re heifers and cows which do not calf within our parameters. The following graphs on condition traits shows that we are also on track regarding a higher Rib and Rump fat measurements. Our aim to increase the EMA (eye muscle area) or Marbling (IMF) of our herd is not yet so successful. This is at present one of our focus breeding objectives. Another focus area is to keep on increasing growth, but with lowering our cows' mature weight.




ECONOTECH SIMMENTALER BODY CONDITION: RIB FAT: 1999-2023
0,35
0,3
0,25
0,2
0,15
0,1
0,05
0
-0,05
-0,1
-0,15
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
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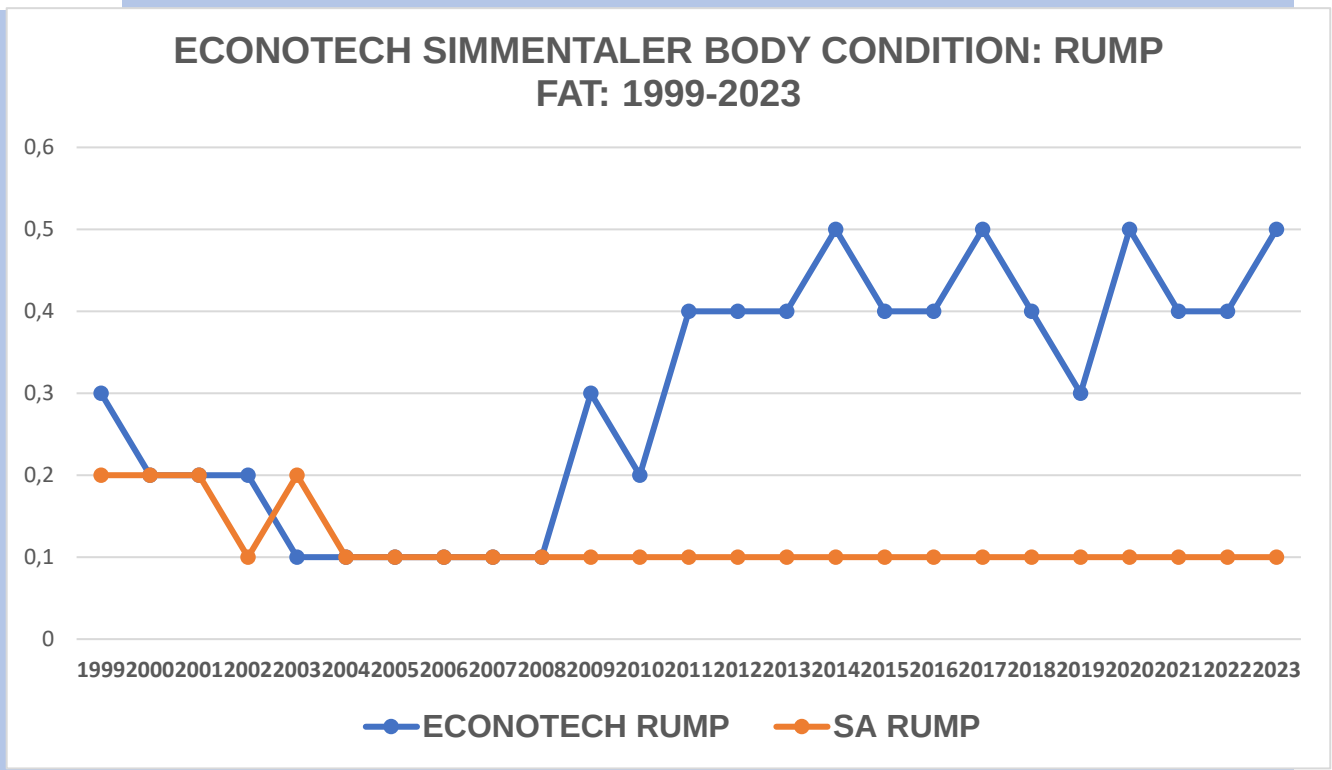
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
ECONOTECH RIB
SA RIB


ECONOTECH SIMMENTALER BODY CONDITION: RUMP FAT: 1999-2023
0,6
0,5
0,4
0,3
0,2
0,1
0
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
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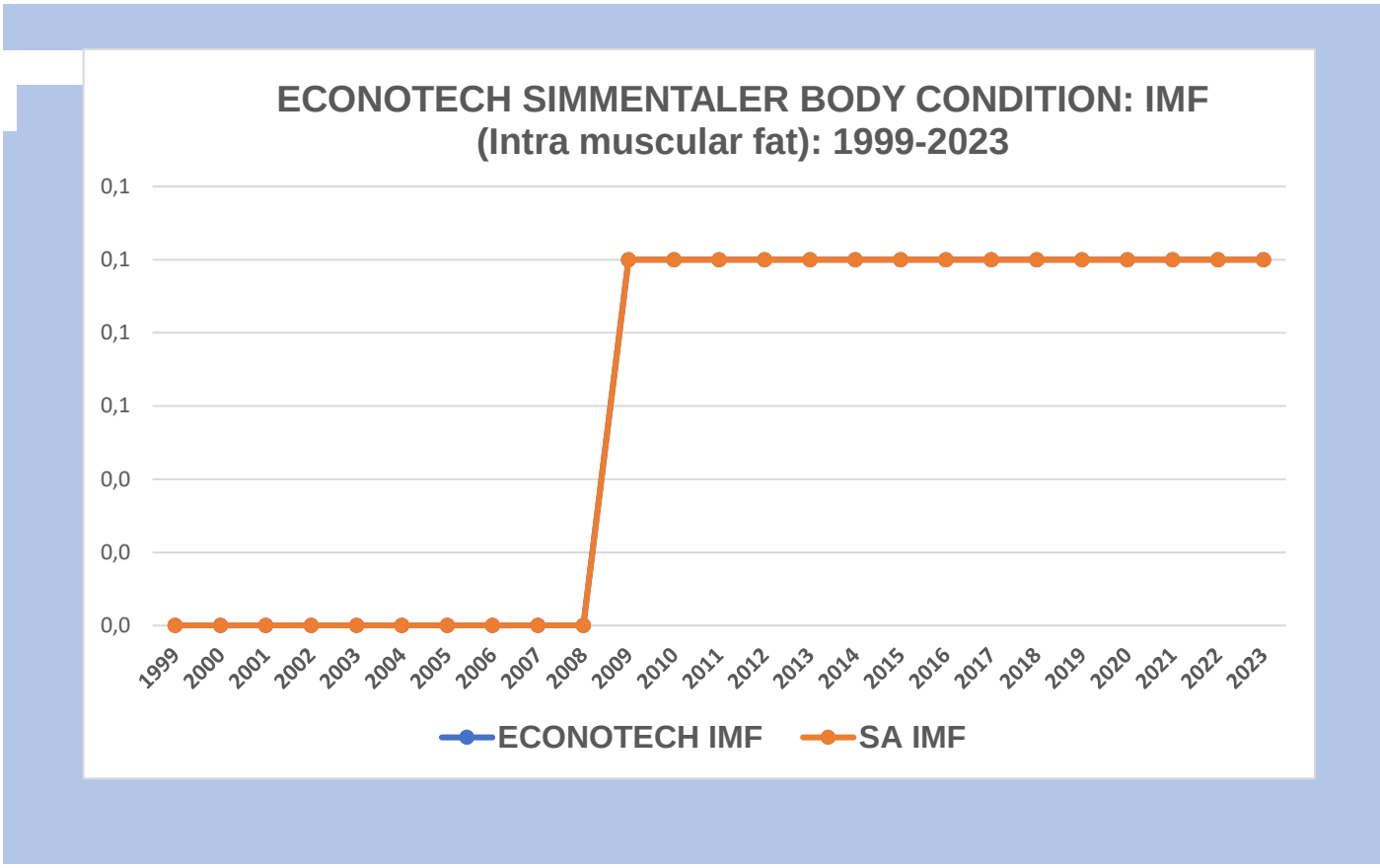
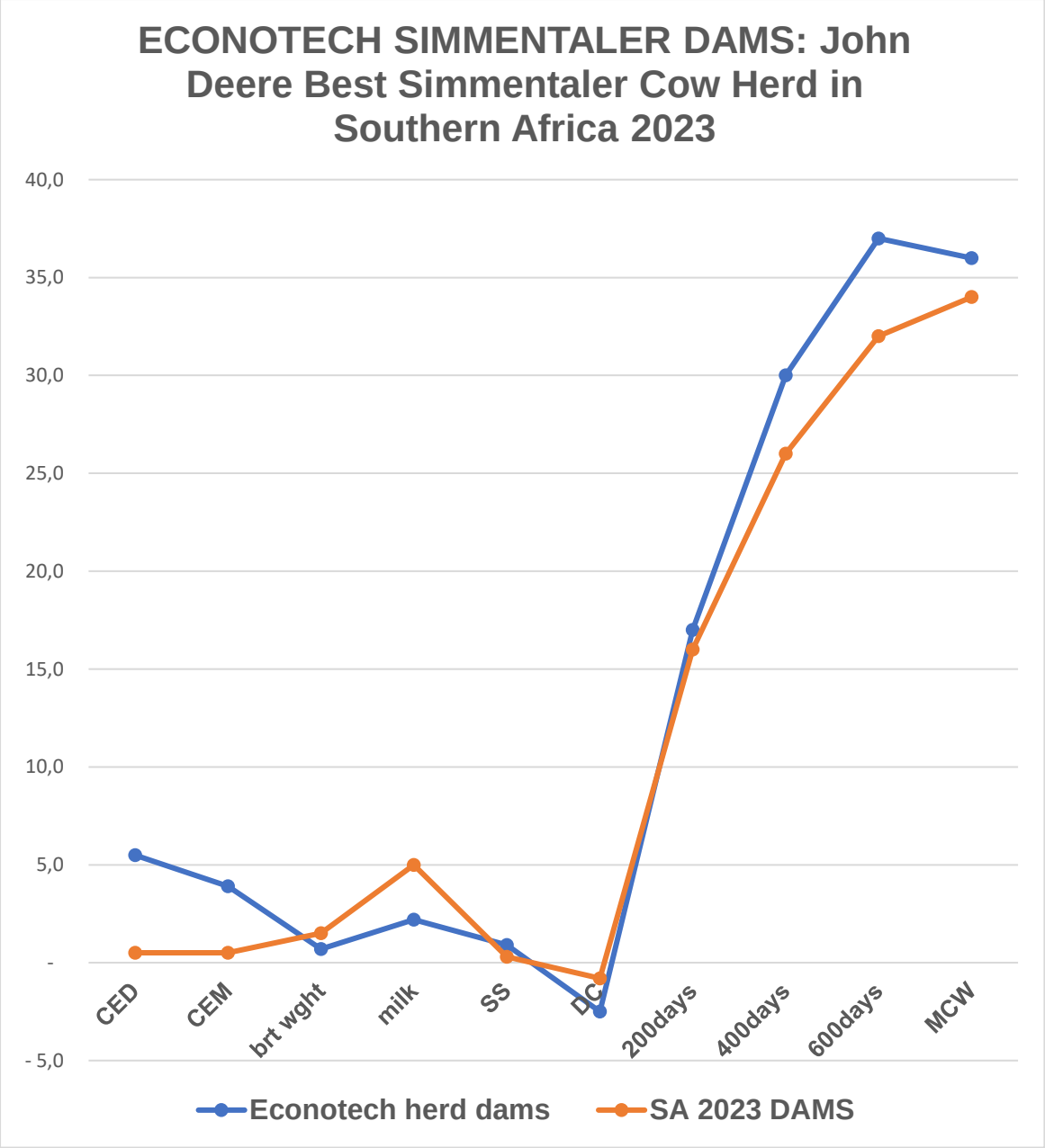
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
ECONOTECH RUMP
SA RUMP



The outcome of this breeding philosophy is that our heifers calf on average at 24 months. This is followed by our cows who calf on average at 368 days (ICP (Inter Calving Period)). Growth is, of course, also important

The last graph shows how we manage to bend the performance curve. Firstly, by having a higher Calving Ease (CE)/lower milk as well as higher scrotum size (SS) than the SA dam crop and, secondly, a higher growth at 400 and 600 days, but only with a slightly higher than average MCW in comparison to the SA 2023 dam crop.



Our breeding philosophy is in line with Prof. Bob Weaber's teachings. During his regular visits to the LRF Stockman School he emphasized the need to fit the cow to its environment. He mentioned various breeding traits that should be in place, such as:

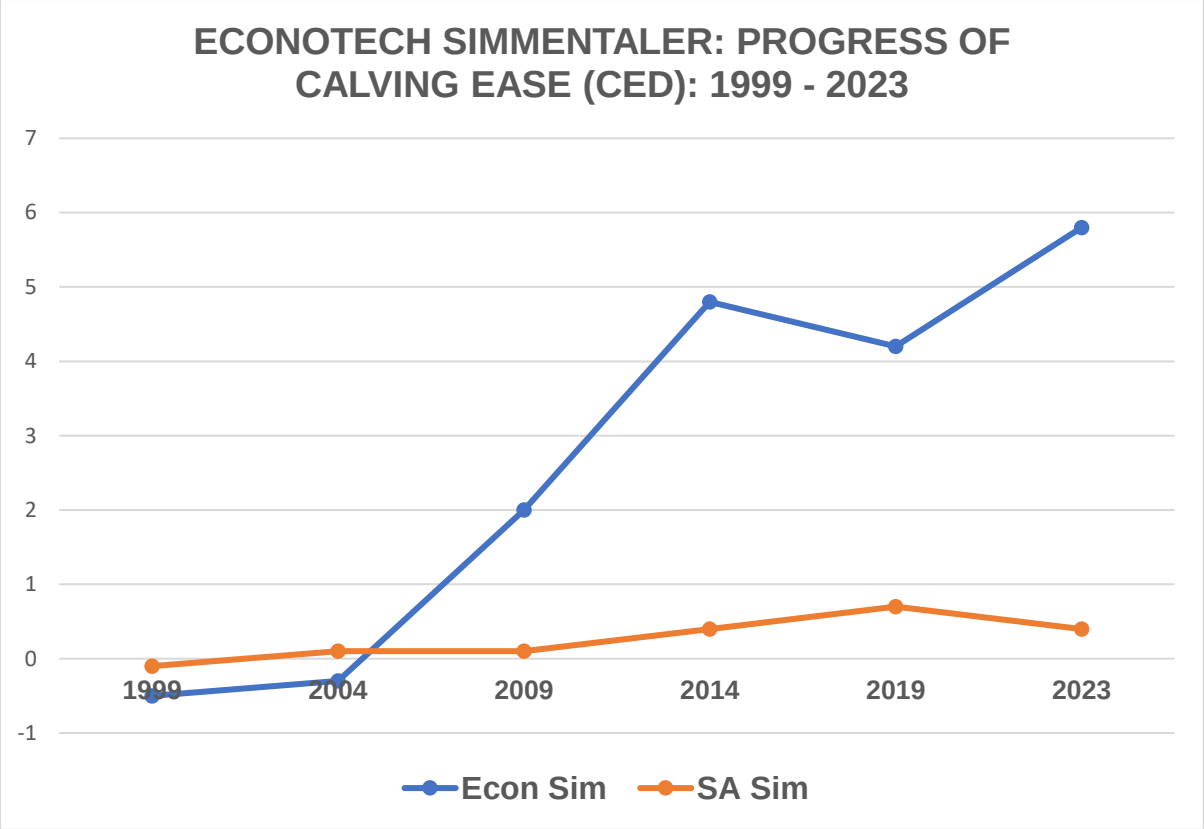
· * Cow frame/weight and milk production determine their nutrient requirements, which again should be in line with the environment; and

· * Body condition of cows have a major influence on their pregnancy rate.

We add to these principles the need to select for a high Scrotal Size (SS) as well as Calving Ease (CED and CEM). Furthermore, we utilise the findings of Australian research regarding the need to select for the various elements of Body Condition, namely REA (rib eye area) (or EMA, eye muscle area), Rib and Rump Fat as well as IMF (intra muscular fat or marbling).

Finally, outstanding cattle come from outstanding cows. Our reward from the LRF for the John Deere Simmentaler Cow Group for 2023 underscores this statement.

Our bulls represent the best of our breeding policy. Lastly, the bulls need to excel under veld conditions – only the most hardy ones are kept as stud bulls.


ECONOTECH SIMMENTALER: PROGRESS OF CALVING EASE (CED): 1999 - 2023
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
-1
1999
2004
2009
2014
2019
2023
Econ Sim
SA Sim