# Food provenance platform set to boost SA beef supply chain

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to reshape the future of the agriculture and food sectors, a top researcher warns there is now, more than ever, a greater global need for complete transparency and accountability in the local beef supply chain.



Anzill Adams, chief executive of newly launched BeefLedger SA, says Covid-19 has highlighted the need for the establishment of food provenance in the beef industry to enhance bio- and food security for 'ultimate consumer confidence and satisfaction'.

Adams, who is currently completing his PhD in blockchain traceability in the Mzansi red meat supply chain, describes BeefLedger SA as "a much-needed tool for greater transparency and accountability".

*Anzill Adams, chief executive of newly launched BeefLedger SA.*

With more than 20 years' experience in agricultural supply chain management, he is convinced that BeefLedger SA can ensure greater transparency and accountability. He says: "In developing the first ever blockchain-enabled traceability solution for the South African beef supply chain, it offers the industry a digital livestock identification and traceability system that can validate real-time 'farm to fork' product authenticity."

The University of Cape Town MBA graduate has previously held many top jobs in the agricultural sector, including coordinating the first land reform project in the South African wine industry on behalf of the government. He has also served as CEO of leading Stellenbosch and Paarl wine estates, and as a ministerial appointee to the Wine and Spirit Board.

"With the recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in South Africa and the global advent of Covid-19, the implementation of a livestock identification and traceability system is a priority for the South African beef supply chain," warns Adams.

BeefLedger SA is an international joint venture with renowned Australian blockchain firm BeefLedger Ltd, which has already launched its food provenance platform in China. Speaking from Queensland, chairman Warwick Powell confirms that BeefLedger SA "will provide a solid basis for adapting a combination of well-understood operational frameworks and guidelines, mature technologies and leading-edge information systems to achieve best practice outcomes for the South African beef industry."

Powell says: "This transparency will ensure the proper and proven certification at every stage of the beef supply chain."

*BeefLedger founder and chairman, Warwick Powell.*

The BeefLedger SA blockchain-enabled, credentialed traceability system will provide users in the Mzansi beef industry with the value-added benefits of access to credible and authentic data, sales history, consumer feedback insights, streamlined payments and heightened food security. The system will also contribute towards better disease prevention and more effective biosecurity management processes. It has the potential to revolutionise the industry by supporting food provenance-driven value, preventing food fraud and creating more transparent markets for participants.

**Integrated regulation between formal and informal sectors**

Furthermore, Adams believes that BeefLedger South Africa's technology will enable a fairer and more sustainable beef supply chain. "Credentialed food provenance creates an integrated link between various stakeholders, including government, leading industry players and smaller communal farmers."

This as demand for beef in Africa is expected to grow significantly. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimates that the consumption of beef on the continent will increase by 200% between 2015 and 2050. With supply-side constraints, pressure for credentialed products is expected to grow. Estimates indicate that Africa has a cattle herd well over 260 million head as well as a goat herd of over 236 million head.

Interest in blockchain is rapidly growing across agriculture. Blockchain allows people to share recorded transactions in a digitised, decentralised data log that is stored on a network of computers rather than on a single database. For the agricultural supply chain, blockchain technology promises increased efficiencies through enhanced data management, lower transaction costs, optimised logistics, more robust traceability and enhanced food safety protocols.

According to Adams, the BeefLedger SA digital platforms and tools will enable meat industries and their supply chain stakeholders in South Africa to meet the aspirations and needs of 21st century consumers.

"The future vision of BeefLedger SA is to develop a digital framework in line with international standards and obligations to implement LITS SA, the programme for food security and animal health in the broader meat sector covering lamb, goat, pork, beef, ostrich and poultry," he says.

"Horizontal diversification into other sectors, including the wine, seafood and mining industries will also be supported, with

further integration planned into the Halal, Kosher, fair trade and organic food sectors where certified traceability is a brand validator and a non-negotiable necessity."

**Pilot with SA beef industry leader confirmed**

BeefLedger SA confirms that it has secured a pilot project for the development and commercialisation of an integrated blockchain-enabled credentialed livestock identification and traceability system with a beef industry leader.

With its head office in Paarl in the Western Cape, Adams is supported by a team of seasoned entrepreneurs with many years of business, financial and agricultural experience. Furthermore, Carey Millerd, the chairperson of BeefLedger SA, brings over 35 years of working experience, mainly in financial services. Although he retired in 2016, he remains a non-executive director of various of the Prescient financial services group companies. Since then he has pursued interests in various businesses including those in the property, fintech, and agriculture sectors.

Beefledger Ltd has recently won two Good Design Awards in Australia – the highest honour for design and innovation in the country. Through a design strategy connecting Australian producers and Chinese consumers, it became the first ever blockchain technology winners of the prestigious awards.

The group is led by Powell, an Aussie who first began his career in academia, teaching Chinese history and European cultural history in the early 1990s. Through this later work in global business development, Powell has experience in, among others, cattle and sheep production. He continues to teach courses in innovation, creativity, regional economic development and blockchain technology at top Australian universities.

Meanwhile Charles Morris heads-up BeefLedger Australia with more than 30 years of experience in financial services, sales and accounting. He has in-depth supply chain knowledge from markets in the UK, Australia and China.

For more information, visit beefledgersa.com.

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