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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



MIKE SMITH

Angus New Zealand
President

I have had the pleasure of attending several autumn bull sales up and down the country and interacting with many of you who are participating in some pretty exciting technologies and others facing rather challenging circumstances whilst adapting and finding pathways forward. It was pleasing to see the willingness to pursue quality Angus genetics to keep beef programs flourishing on farms throughout the country. For the most part good clearances were had, with some more cost-effective purchases being made by farmers alongside record-breaking feats as records tumbled at Tangihau for highest on farm bull price and sale average on that memorable Monday, 24 June, that was such a pleasure to be a part of.

The bull sale after-match entertainment is always a great time to interact with the wider beef industry of sponsors, service providers, commercial and stud farmers alike, sharing knowledge and experiences from both inside and outside their sectors, with many learnings that can be implemented at home.

As innovation and technology develop in the

beef industry space, alongside a willingness from farmers to investigate more efficient ways of raising high quality Angus beef to market, there is genuine excitement about where we, as beef farmers, can take the Angus breed.

With calving beginning in the north as bull sales wind up amid downpours and gales, and the southerners buckle up for freezing winter months ahead that test both man and bovine, there is a great example of the diversity on display in our farming operations.

As we focus on the future and pathway forward, there is constant change around us. The opportunity is to embrace and position ourselves to take advantage of these changes, which will enable us to thrive into the future.

I look forward to the spring sales and catching up with many of you then. ■

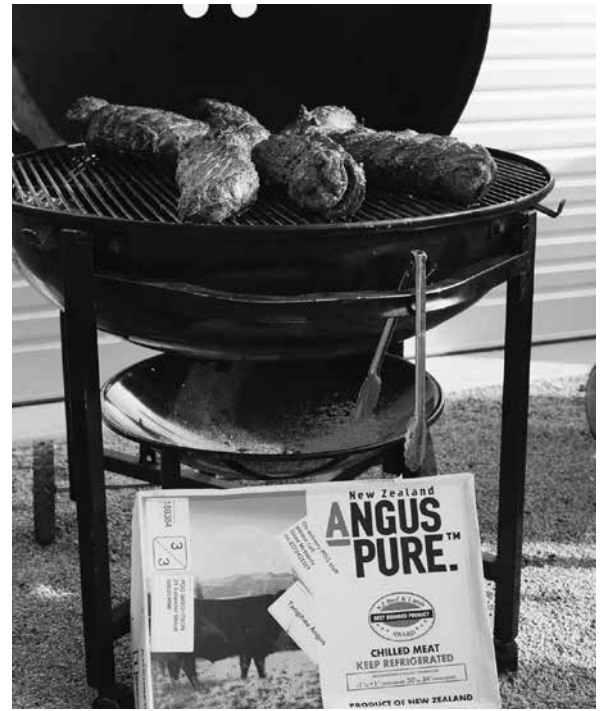
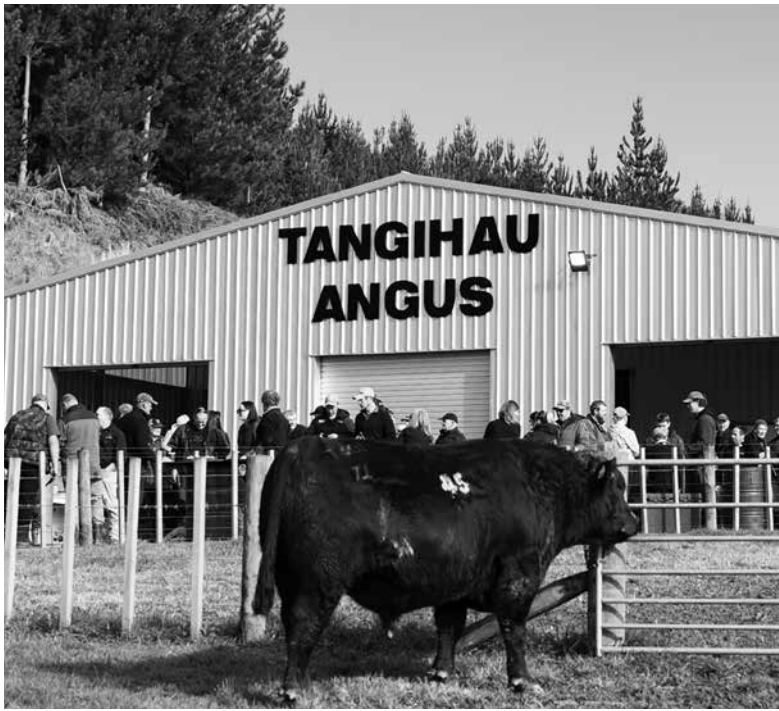


Dean McHardy, Emma Pollitt and Andrew Powdrell

TANGIHAU BULLS SMASH ON-FARM SALE RECORDS

DESPITE THE RECENT CHALLENGES OF EAST COAST FARMING, TANGIHAU ANGUS
STUD'S JUNE SALE DAY FAR EXCEEDED THE STUDMASTER'S EXPECTATIONS.





Jackie Harrigan

It's been an up and down couple of years for farmers on the North Island East Coast: lamb prices falling, hillsides coming down, costs going up ... but it was all on the up for Tangihau Angus stud on their sale day on Monday, 24 June.

With a clearance rate of 45 of 46 Angus bulls offered, and an average price of \$21,500, the sale was by far the most successful with the highest prices of the year to date. Two bulls smashed the records for on-farm bull sales.

The excitement was palpable when Lot 2, Tangihau 22T549 was keenly bid on and sold to Turiroa and Kaharau Studs for \$135,000 and then Lot 18 sold for \$115,000 to Rolling Rock and Earnsclough Studs.

Studmaster Dean McHardy said the sale was far and away more successful than he expected.

Selling 11 bulls to 15 stud buyers and clearing 45 lots showed the strength of the stud, which was established in 1949 to produce good, functional station bulls to serve the station's large commercial cow herd.

"The bulls need to be good, strong, functional cattle that can perform on the steep Tangihau hills at Rere, southwest of Gisborne."

The station covers 6680 hectares and runs 1400 commercial Angus cows, calving 230–250 stud Angus cows including calving two-year heifers and lambing 20,000 ewes.

McHardy has been lambing at the station for 35 years and says he took the stud in a new direction 15 years ago, searching the country for the type of cattle that would work well with the Tangihau cows but that also had a data set that he was keen to infuse the stud with.

"The bulls we produce have to look like a good East Coast bull – we have a type – and they need to be functional for the hills, but I wanted to offer a data set for each bull. We have full genomic records for the stud cows as well."

McHardy's data formula includes positive calving ease, moderate birthweight EBVs, 600-day growth EBV above 90kg, finding bulls with some positive EMA (eye muscle area) and positive fats, and lifting the IMF (intramuscular fat).

A big leap forward was introducing Albert of Stern to the stud three years ago, who really clicked with the Tangihau cows and came with a very good data set.

"He was a really functional bull and ticked all of the data points that we were looking for."

Sadly, he was lost off a hillside after two matings, so his progeny have scarcity value, but Dean was pleased that they now have Albert daughters in the stud herd and a few Albert straws, as well as 100 straws retained from Lot 2 this year.

"It's always the good ones that fall over, never the poorer bulls.

"He was a really good, functional type of bull and he just crossed really well with the Tangihau cows, but we are lucky to have

'THE BULLS WE PRODUCE HAVE TO LOOK LIKE A GOOD EAST COAST BULL – WE HAVE A TYPE – AND THEY NEED TO BE FUNCTIONAL FOR THE HILLS, BUT I WANTED TO OFFER A DATA SET FOR EACH BULL. WE HAVE FULL GENOMIC RECORDS FOR THE STUD COWS AS WELL.'

another crop of his sons coming through next year and he will go on in the herd through his sons and daughters.

“We also have three other sires with great data that fit the direction of the stud – our data requirements haven’t changed, we will just stick to our knitting.

“We are breeding bulls that will function and work on our Tangihau hills – we know if the bulls will work and handle the hills at Tangihau they will work for anyone.

“We need animals with positive fats,

because we are too steep to feed out with tractors, so the cows pretty much have to carry their own hay bale with them on their back and we take that off them during the winter.

“The data is really important, and tells us those bulls have the positive fat scores and the growthy genetics, but I won’t sacrifice structural soundness, feet, head and jaw or anything for data – I mean, if they are not structurally sound I won’t buy them, even if they have the good data.”

A year after they lost Albert, Lot 2’s mother

and two other stud cows were lost down a slip during Cyclone Gabrielle, much to the studmaster’s disappointment.

The whole cow herd has had genomics done, which Dean says has become an invaluable tool when selecting heifers into the herd.

Plans for the future are to keep producing the type of bulls that have sold so well this year, and Dean says he would like to lift the numbers slightly to produce 50 sale bulls each year. ■

| |
|--|
| SOLD 45/46 LOTS |
| Average: \$21,500 |
| <i>Top price: Lot 2 sold for \$135,000 to Turiroa/ Kaharau Studs</i> |
| <i>Lot 18 sold for \$115,000 to Rolling Rock and Earnsclough Studs</i> |
| <i>Lot 3 sold for \$90,000 to Oregon/Albert Hill studs</i> |
| <i>Lot 4 sold for \$72,000 and Lot 29 sold for \$14,000 to Puke-nui Stud</i> |
| <i>Lot 33 sold for \$55,000 to Tapiri and Elgin studs</i> |
| <i>Lot 16 sold for \$28,000 to Shian Stud Angus</i> |
| <i>Lot 17 sold for \$29,000 to Meadowslea Angus</i> |
| <i>Lot 15 sold for \$14,500 to Orere Angus</i> |
| <i>Lot 31 sold for \$12,000 to Moanaroa</i> |



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2024 BULL SALES JUST GET BETTER

DESPITE CHALLENGES IN THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY, BULL SALES HAVE HELD UP WELL, WITH SOME RECORDS FALLING



Lot 18 Tangihau Angus.

Jackie Harrigan

NORTH ISLAND

The 2023 bull selling season was a ripper and then along came 2024. The on-farm bull sale price record was broken twice at the Tangihau sale, Gisborne, with Lot 2 selling for \$135,000 to Turiroa and Kaharau studs, and Lot 18 selling for \$115,000 to Rolling Rock and Earnscleugh studs. Both bulls were sired by Albert of Stern, an influential bull in the Tangihau stud.

Turihau Angus, also of Gisborne, had a top price of \$78,000 for Lot 8, transferred to Cricklewood stud, and an average of \$12,931 with a total clearance of 66/66 bulls sold.

Shian Angus of Taumarunui also had an early season success, with the Sherson family selling 33 bulls out of 35 with an average of \$11,333, well up from last season's average of \$7378.

Lot 3 was the top price: Shian 22-T635 was bought for \$75,000 by Tangihau Angus, Gisborne. T635 was sired by Taimate Mako out of one of Shian's best breeding cows and had excellent scanning results for eye muscle area, fat cover and intramuscular fat. Lot 1 also sold to a stud for \$18,000, going to Ratanui Angus.

Most North Island sales had excellent

clearances and good prices.

Neville Clark, Carrfields stud stock agent for North Island, said that the market held up very well, and above expectations to some degree.

"I guess we went into the sale season a wee bit on edge, but the sales have shown that those who have stayed with their cows are serious players, they know the job that the cows do on the farm and how they have to perform, and the type of bull that makes that happen."

The averages have been great and he said the Tangihau sale, with its record prices and so many early lots going for stud transfers, was a career highlight for him.

"That was a good indication that if you can get the numbers right on the page and present the type of cattle that are going to deliver a profitable cow herd operation, then the demand will always be there."

"We have to be a bit careful because some high-figured cattle don't always deliver – they don't always suit our hill country systems – we have to be wary of having too many feedlot type cattle, that's not how most of our industry is set up."

He said he felt for the last few sales

vendors, being subjected to really bad weather and having to postpone, but both Kenhardt Angus and Turiroa Angus from Wairoa had very successful sales between them, \$7500 was donated to the Wairoa Mayoral Relief Fund: \$4000 from the Crawshaw family, and \$3500 from the Powdrell family as each stud donated half of the sales proceeds of one lot each.



Auctioneer Neville Clarke.



Lot 2 Tangihau Angus.

‘IF YOU CAN GET THE NUMBERS RIGHT ON THE PAGE AND PRESENT THE TYPE OF CATTLE THAT ARE GOING TO DELIVER A PROFITABLE COW HERD OPERATION, THEN THE DEMAND WILL ALWAYS BE THERE.’

SOUTH ISLAND

Bulls in the South Island also sold very well, after a challenging summer for many parts of the island.

Taimate Angus, run by the Hickman family at Ward, held a very successful sale on 19 June with a 100% clearance, selling all 88 bulls offered. The average reached \$11,062 and the top price was \$70,000, paid for Lot 28 by



Lot 3 Shian Tasman T635.



Simon Eddington.

Ratanui and Kaharau studs. Lot 28 was the top price across the South Island sales, with other high-priced bulls sold by Sudeley Angus cattle & Sheep Genetics, with Lot 13 selling to Kaharau Angus for \$43,000 and Woodbank Angus who sold Lot 120 to Oregon Angus for \$40,000.

Simon Eddington, PGG Wrightsons Genetics rep for the Upper South Island, reflected that despite the very dry conditions in many parts of the upper South Island, the Angus bull sale season went very well, and while the averages were back a little in some cases, clearance rates were very high.

“The bulls were presented in a very good condition and not impacted by the dry conditions, but it was pleasing to see that dry conditions at home didn’t put commercial

farmers off securing their genetics for the next season.

“It shows the strength of the beef market and an indication that if ewe numbers drop a little with the lamb prices down, that farmers will replace them with more cows and appreciate the lighter workload that will mean.”

“We had a bit of apprehension going into the season, but we have been very happy with the way bulls were selling and that farmers came along well-schooled in what they were looking for – scouring the catalogues well in advance and then sorting through for the type they wanted when they got to the sale.”

“Beef farmers are still chasing good genetics and are happy to pay well for them,” he added. ■

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2YR OLD BULL SALES RESULTS 2024

MAY

| Stud Name | sold / offered | Ave \$ | Top \$ |
|----------------|----------------|--------|--------|
| Colvend | 12 / 14 | 7041 | 12000 |
| Delmont | 26 / 30 | 7746 | 12200 |
| Glenwood | 12 / 14 | 6562 | 10000 |
| Hingaia | 26 / 29 | 7730 | 16000 |
| Kincardine | 15 / 16 | 7933 | 15000 |
| Penvose | 38 / 41 | 7542 | 18800 |
| Peters | 21 / 25 | 6950 | 11000 |
| Pikoburn | 15 / 15 | 6900 | 11000 |
| Puketoi | 16 / 19 | 5900 | 9000 |
| Ruaview | 16 / 16 | 6593 | 9500 |
| Stoneburn | 21 / 21 | 6428 | 9000 |
| Tarangower | 32 / 35 | 8771 | 15000 |
| Umbrella Range | 40 / 40 | 8200 | 13500 |

JUNE

| Stud Name | sold / offered | Ave \$ | Top \$ |
|----------------|----------------|--------|--------|
| Martin Farming | 28 / 29 | 8517 | 28000 |
| Matauri | 25 / 30 | 6220 | 11000 |
| Meadowslea | 59 / 73 | 7102 | 20500 |
| Merchiston | 27 / 28 | 7900 | 14000 |
| Mt Mable | 26 / 27 | 8500 | 16500 |
| Mt Possession | 13 / 18 | 6120 | 10500 |
| Okaka | 9 / 13 | 5444 | 7500 |
| Oregon | 33 / 33 | 8363 | 18000 |
| Orere | 18 / 18 | 8005 | 11000 |
| Pinebank* | 29 / 29 | 7850 | 15000 |
| Pine Park | 25 / 26 | 6400 | 11000 |
| Puke-Nui | 25 / 25 | 6880 | 13000 |
| Ratanui | 35 / 40 | 7920 | 14000 |
| Red Oak | 30 / 40 | 7666 | 12000 |
| Riverlands J | 22 / 22 | 7850 | 15000 |
| Riverlee | 8 / 10 | 5900 | 8700 |
| Rolling Rock | 23 / 24 | 9804 | 17000 |
| Shian | 33 / 35 | 11333 | 75000 |
| Stern | 93 / 100 | 10123 | 42000 |
| Sudeley | 55 / 55 | 11100 | 43000 |
| Taimate | 88 / 88 | 11062 | 70000 |
| Tangihau | 45 / 46 | 21500 | 135000 |
| Tapiri | 20 / 20 | 8170 | 11000 |
| Tawa Hills | 10 / 13 | 5400 | 7000 |
| Te Kupe | 5 / 5 | 10000 | 15000 |
| Turihaua | 66 / 66 | 12931 | 78000 |
| Turiroa | 51 / 51 | 8930 | 17000 |
| Waimara | 28 / 29 | 7200 | 14500 |
| Woodbank | 63 / 68 | 9039 | 40000 |

JUNE

| Stud Name | sold / offered | Ave \$ | Top \$ |
|---------------------|----------------|--------|--------|
| Atahua | 16 / 20 | 6650 | 11500 |
| Aywon | 22 / 24 | 5700 | 10000 |
| Black Ridge | 25 / 32 | 7820 | 18000 |
| Blacknight | 11 / 14 | 8045 | 12500 |
| Dandaleith | 25 / 30 | 7720 | 14500 |
| Dandaloo | 31 / 31 | 7625 | 15500 |
| Earnscleugh Station | 50 / 52 | 8290 | 16000 |
| Elgin | 22 / 23 | 8660 | 13000 |
| Fossil Creek | 68 / 76 | 7875 | 15000 |
| Glanworth | 22 / 26 | 7772 | 22000 |
| Glen R | 17 / 24 | 6230 | 10000 |
| Hallmark | 48 / 49 | 8708 | 36000 |
| Kaharau | 61 / 61 | 10975 | 37000 |
| Kaiwara | 24 / 26 | 7700 | 13000 |
| KayJay | 41 / 41 | 11646 | 29000 |
| Kenhardt | 46 / 53 | 8130 | 15000 |



Kendall Langston, Paul Studholme, and Odette Alexander, Goldwyn Angus



Leeffield Angus



Fiona Fraser



Kate Pont, Katie Williams, Kate Ramsden and Emma Mann



Bruce Bay Rainbow



Emma McNaughten (Pivot), Sol Centurion (Pivot), Sonya Knowles (PBB) and Megan Ellett (PBB)



Seymour Lambert



Jeremy Gunton



Mike Smith, Rob Sherson, Brian Sherson, Guy Sargent, Duncan Campbell and Tracey Sherson



Vicki Rowe



Woodbank Angus



Wayne Williams with David Scott



AngusNZ ON THE ROAD



Julie Cranke (FMG), Karen Williams (FMG), and Sarah Heddell



Tangihau Angus



Bannockburn bull sale serving whitebait



Chase Woodhouse



Jane Allan, Grant Crawshaw, Nancy Crawshaw and Mike Smith



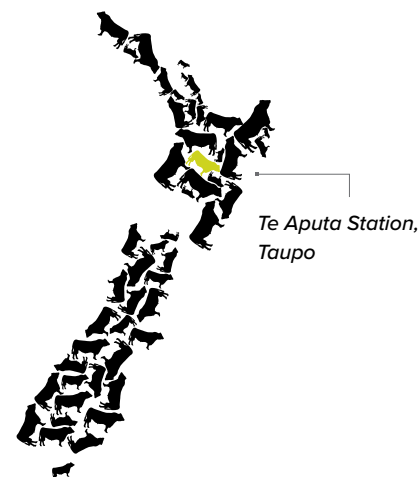
Lucy Thorneycroft and Bruce Orr

A man in a brown jacket and cap stands on a rock in a field with cows in the background. The man is smiling and has his hands on his hips. The background shows a rolling landscape with hills and trees under a clear sky.

FEED'EM WELL

A CENTRAL NORTH ISLAND BEEF AND SHEEP STATION HAS SEEN PRODUCTION TAKEN TO A NEW LEVEL.

Cam Collier: 'Feeding stock well is a good money earner if done well.'



TE APUTA STATION

- Manager Cam Collier.
- Located on western side of Lake Taupo.
- 2400ha (1900ha effective) predominantly pumice soil.
- Sheep and beef breeding and finishing.
- Sheep wintered 8500.
- Cattle wintered 2000.
- 140% lambing.
- 95% calving (based on cows wintered).

Russell Priest

Te Aputa Station on the western side of Lake Taupo is humming under the manager of three years, Cam Collier.

Not only has the station undergone extensive development and infrastructural changes but stock performance has been taken to another level.

Pivotal to this improved performance is Cam's philosophy of maximising the early growth of young stock enabling him to initiate the mating of ewe hoggets and yearling heifers on the station.

"I love my stock so make sure they are fed well when they're young. It's a good money-earner if you do it properly," Cam says.

And grow they do with ewe hoggets mated at an average weight of 46kg and yearling heifer mating weights averaging around 350kg.

Being a sheep and cattle breeding and finishing business with nothing sold store means Cam's feeding philosophy is also applied to finishing animals.

"Because everything's finished on the place, I can't afford to let them get too light in condition so everything must be near fully-fed.

"There's no money in having finishing stock losing weight. The shorter the time to slaughter, the better."

The station's slaughter weights and ages at slaughter confirm Cam's putting his philosophy into practice.

Fully fed for four months of winter on a daily break of kale and swedes and as much baleage as they can eat, the 220 R2 bulls grow on average 1.5kg/day before killing out at 57% at 380–400kg (\$2500) in October/November as two-year-olds.

Killed between December and March at 24–30 months the 100 steers weigh 350–380kg CW while the 80–90 cull and crossbred heifers (26–30 month) kill out at 330–340kg.

"We killed some in September this year at 300kg (22 months) 'cos the money was so good."

With lambing not starting until about



‘I’VE PUT THE CALVING DATE BACK SINCE I’VE BEEN HERE TO COINCIDE MORE WITH THE PASTURE GROWTH CURVE. THERE’S NO POINT IN CALVING EARLY ‘COS WE DON’T SELL WEANERS.’

December during the optimum growth period with 350kg/ha sulphur super.

“I try to grow as much grass as I can when the pastures want to grow because you don’t know when the sprinklers are going to be turned off.”

Nitrogen in the form of N-boost (50–70kg/ha) is often used in late winter to stimulate pasture growth on twinning paddocks to ensure ewes milk well.

Winters on Te Aputa Station can be long and hard due to its close proximity to the mountains of the central North Island. Dense fog frequently rolls off the lake often remaining for most of the day creating an unwelcome dampness, while heavy frosts suppress pasture growth, which doesn’t fully kick in until December.

The free-draining pumice soils are a godsend in winter allowing baleage to be fed out on the ground with minimal wastage and break feeding of green-feed crops to be carried out with little mud. However, in the summer, these same soils can dry out badly.

“If we don’t get rain for two weeks the blocks, particularly Horatea and the dairy unit across the road, start to suffer. They often struggle in the summer.”

Annual rainfall averages 1500mm and comes mainly from the west. Weather from the south comes straight off the mountains and while delivering little snow, it is always bitterly cold.

FEEDING FOR FINISHING

Winter and summer crops play a vital role in the station’s ability to finish all its home-grown stock.

“Crops are expensive to grow so you’ve got to make them pay.”

Cam maximises the return on brassica crops by generously feeding the R2 bulls in particular over the winter so they only need “topping up” when the spring arrives to achieve excellent slaughter weights and attract early season premiums.

Bulls and steers in three separate groups (two bull groups of 100 based on weight and one

September 10, few lambs are killed before Christmas (about 300 at 19kg). Most of the 7000–7500 lambs of the around 9000 born are killed through Alliance at an average of 19.5kg between January and the end of April.

FARMING IN A SENSITIVE AREA

Te Aputa station (2500ha – 1900ha effective) is one of several farms owned and operated by Hauhungaroa Partnership including dairy and dry-stock units. The partnership is run by a committee of management and Cam reports to an operations manager. The board has been very receptive to Cam’s initiatives since he has been manager.

Dissected by the Western Bay Road, the station ranges in altitude between 400–850m above sea level and consists of the home block (1100ha) with its excellent laneway system from front to back and Horatea (830ha). Most of the ineffective area is in native bush associated with fenced-off waterways flowing through the station down to Lake Taupo. Retiring and planting of these areas has been managed by Environment Waikato as a joint venture with the station which is also subject to a nitrogen cap.

A significant area is also covered in windrowed logs resulting from the higher ground on the station being developed out of bush in the 1980s. Mixed with a significant amount of topsoil (highly valued on pumice soils), these are slowly being dismantled (30ha/yr) using a digger, the topsoil removed and spread over adjacent pasture areas and the log piles minus the topsoil reformed. Being at higher altitude on the station, these piles offer significant shelter from the bitter southerly weather.

Situated 58km east-northeast of Taumarunui, Te Aputa Station is climatically quite different with the home block being of moderate contour and considerably higher (more summer safe) than the easy rolling and warmer Horatea. The higher reaches of the home block are bounded by the Pureora Forest and covered in pure pumice with a shallow topsoil. While pumice sub-soil also dominates the lower country on the home block and Horatea, the topsoil is far more developed and fertile.

Olsen Ps vary from 12 on the more recently developed country to 45 on the cropped areas. The soil pHs range from 5.6 to 6.1 and sulphate sulphurs from 4 to 20.

Pastures are fertilised in November

steer group) are given a brassica break each day and fed high-quality baleage to appetite.

“We prefer to feed baleage than hay because it’s easier to feed out using a wagon and cattle love it and put on weight.”

Bulls remain in their groups until slaughter to minimise fighting. Some bulls are sold as service bulls in early spring to the partnership’s dairy farm across the road which, together with bulls being killed, takes pressure off the demand for early-season feed. All R2 bulls are gone by January.

Steers are killed through Alliance as part of their “Handpicked” beef programme with most of them attracting a good premium.

Cattle, lambs and mutton are sold to Alliance through the Awhina Group, which was setup to maximise returns for a group of Māori agribusinesses.

R1 cattle, while not fed as well as the R2s, are also break-fed daily in the winter on brassicas supplemented with hay and baleage. There are generally two heifer, one steer, 1–2 bull mobs and a tail-end mob.

Replacement heifers are identified before going onto the winter crops and are fed better than their contemporaries to get them up to weight for mating.

Lamb-finishing stands of clover and chicory (45ha) and young grass (100ha) drought-proof and extend the lamb-finishing period enabling up to 7500 lambs to be finished at heavy weights, usually 19–20.5kg.

“Clover and chicory is brilliant for finishing lambs. We couldn’t finish nearly as many lambs at such good weights without it.”

CONTINUAL DEVELOPMENT

Under Cam’s watch, large areas of gorse and blackberry have been cleared and grassed, while old browntop-dominant pastures are being replaced as quickly as possible using a cropping rotation involving summer/winter stands of chicory and clover and winter crops of kale and swedes.

“Pastures revert to browntop quite quickly so we’ve got to crop a large area each year to keep on top of it.”

All chicory and clover stands are grown on the steeper contoured paddocks on the home block that can be worked by tractor. Cultivation out of old pasture and sowing occurs in the spring and is expensive as it involves initially discing then power harrowing to break up the turf.

“Areas we have worked before, we direct drill winter crops straight in. The following spring, the area is sown by ourselves in young grass using a cold tolerant and hardy grass called Legion, red and white clover plus a

small quantity of chicory.”

Most of the winter feed (100–120ha Sovereign kale and Clutha Gold swedes) is grown on Horatea on paddocks that have less than 10° degrees of slope so as to minimise runoff. After cultivation, the seed and fertiliser are broadcast together by a bulk-spreading truck. Horatea is also where most of the baleage (50–70ha) and hay (20ha) used to supplement the kale and swede crops is harvested and stored. It has 220 small well-electrified paddocks which protect the fences from cattle damage (not the case on the home block).

Immediately the kale and swede crops are finished, the paddocks are direct-drilled

with the same pasture mix used on paddocks coming out of chicory and clover. The young grass is ready for grazing in late November/early December and, according to Cam, the lambs love it.

Horatea has the facilities to store hay and pit silage, and if it is a growthy spring, extra paddocks will be shut up and harvested.

“Hay and silage is like money in the bank and you never know when you’ll need it in this farming environment.”

Hay sheds on both the home block and Horatea are always kept full. Te Aputa Station is sometimes called upon to supply other farms in the partnership if they run short.

“THERE’S NO MONEY IN HAVING FINISHING STOCK LOSING WEIGHT. THE SHORTER THE TIME TO SLAUGHTER THE BETTER.”



Looking down towards Lake Taupo.



Te Aputa Angus Cows.

HYBRID VIGOUR IMPORTANT COMPONENT

Cam is a strong advocate of hybrid vigour and its advantages and puts it into practice in both his sheep and cattle operations.

A minimum number of ewes are bred to Romney rams to breed replacements with the balance plus hoggets going to terminal sires. Enough Romney ewe lambs are weaned to be able to cull 700–1000.

Romney rams are mated to the two-tooth, four-tooth and six-tooth ewes while South Suffolks and Poll Dorsets are mated to the four and five-year ewes and hoggets. Occasionally, even the best six and seven year olds are retained and mated if in good condition. Rams are out for 2–2½ cycles at a ratio of 1:60–70 for the MA ewes and 1:50 for the hoggets.

“We used to put the rams out on April 1 but we’ve put it back two weeks because it can still be extremely cold in late August when they used to lamb.”

Ewes spend their whole lives in age groups with each group having its own rotation. Rotations are not fixed because of the necessity to work in with a number of cattle age groups. Winter rotations are no longer than 21 days, which means ewes don’t have much to live on over the winter.

“We’re constantly shuffling stock around over the winter, especially ewes and sometimes even shift them twice a day.”

Strategic use of nitrogen in late winter generates vital feed for lambing ewes and hoggets.

Ewe lambs are rigorously culled over the

summer leaving about 1800 hoggets to be mated to Poll Dorset and South Suffolk ram lambs. Rams go out on May 5 for 30 days after which about 70–90% are in lamb delivering about 1600 lambs (100% lambing to hoggets in lamb). Cam says lambing hoggets are fed as much as possible and usually give them a handy lamb, and it ensures she stays in good order moving forward as a 2th.

He unashamedly admits he’s extremely tough with his hogget culling and believes it’s the way to produce a robust, highly productive flock.

“If lambs can’t go for six weeks without a drench over the summer – autumn they go into the cull mob.”

Te Aputa Station’s overall lambing percentage from 5500 ewes and in lamb

Cam and Tori Collier with Henry, Edie and Neeve.



Te Aputa station rolls down to Lake Taupo.



hoggets is usually around 135–140% to ram delivering about 8700–9200 lambs depending on ewe numbers.

Lamb weaning date is dependent upon the covers on the new season's chicory and clover and young grass stands and when cull ewes can be killed. It is usually late December, but if covers are too low or ewes can't be killed until the end of January weaning will be delayed.

"It's better to keep lambs pumping away on mum for as long as possible if we can't get ewes into the works."

Ewe shearing takes place in blocks to suit the shearing contractor. Ewes rearing terminal lambs get shorn in late November and those rearing Romney lambs in mid-to-late December which is when weaning normally takes place.

Lambs are killed between January and the end of June with about 300–400 remaining to fulfil winter contracts. Cam's goal is to average 20kg for lambs killed.

Romney ram selection is based on both phenotype and SIL's maternal index. Presented with 80 rams, Cam selects about 40 he likes then makes his final selection of 20–22 focusing particularly on their weaning weight, number of lambs born and fleece weight (medium wool) breeding values. Rams cost \$1000–\$1400.

Since being at Te Aputa Station, Cam has upped the cow numbers by 100 to 700, made

up of 580 MA cows (including R3s) and 120 R2 in-calf heifers. Last year, 660 calves were marked representing a 94% calving (calves marked to cows vetted in calf).

The cow herd consists of groups of straight Angus, Hereford and Angus/Hereford cross (AxH). The Angus herd is mated to the best Angus bulls available, the AxH herd to the lesser Angus bulls and the Hereford herd to Hereford bulls to breed service bulls for the partnership's dairy unit. All mobs also have either a Simmental or Charolais bull running with them at mating time.

"The crossbred bulls and heifers are always heavier than the purebreds so it helps financially to have a few of them running around."

Bulls are run with the MA cows from January 1 at a ratio of 1:50 for three cycles. Mating starts for heifers on December 15 and lasts for two cycles using a 1:40 bull ratio. Heifers are so well grown that specialist heifer bulls are not necessary for ease of calving but R2 sire bulls are used.

"I've put the calving date back since I've been here to coincide more with the pasture growth curve. There's no point in calving early 'cos we don't sell weaners."

Cows are on clean-up mode through the winter (in their three breed groups), occasionally getting some hay. Lighter cows are supplemented with baleage. Calving takes place on the higher ground either

in blocks or with cows spread out over paddocks boosted with nitrogen.

Heifers calve in a central paddock behind a hot wire on nitrogen-boosted grass and are closely supervised. Three-to-four days after calving they and their calves are shed into adjacent paddocks and fed ad-lib grass. Usually only a handful of heifers are assisted.

"At the first sign of calving trouble we intervene, so calf survival rates are high." The rebreeding rate in R3 heifers is 92–95%.

At calf marking, the poorer Angus males are steered. These are grown on to supply the Alliance "Handpicked" beef programme and act as a useful buffer mob between bulls and females.

"Steers are easier to manage than bulls, cause less damage and there are fewer injuries."

Most herd replacements come from the Angus herd but a few AxH and Herefords are kept.

Te Aputa Station's herd sires come from Brian Sherson (Shian Angus) and Kjestrup's (KayJay Angus), the McKenzie and Downs families (Maungahina and Tawanui Herefords), John Hammond (Ruaview Simmental) and Grangers (Kia Toa Charolais).

Bulls are initially selected on phenotype then on EBVs, particularly the 600-day weight (because that's when most of the cattle are killed), and also on EMA and positive fats (for the Hand-picked programme).

PROS AND CONS OF FARMING PUMICE SOILS

Animal health can be a significant issue on pumice soils particularly for young cattle because of deficiencies of cobalt, selenium and copper. At weaning calves receive an injection of vitamin B12 and copper as well as a Matrix C oral drench (followed by another one 4–6 weeks later) and a 10-in-1 vaccine jab. After coming off the winter crops, they receive another B12 injection and a pour-on to treat lice and internal parasites.

R2 in-calf heifers get a B12 and selenium injection pre-calving.

Because ewes are under considerable stress in the late winter, they receive an annual vaccination against salmonella. They also receive a pre-lamb 8-in-1 jab and a long acting drench vaccination.

Two-tooth ewes get a pre-tup drench.

Staff on Te Aputa Station include Cam, his wife Tori (30 hours/week), Cam’s 2IC Jason Payne and Isaac Barr. They regularly communicate with one another via an RT system, a calendar in the smoko room and through regular meetings at smoko time. Cam



regards this aspect as vitally important to running the operation, everyone is included in farm discussions and ideas and everyone knows what’s happening.

“We regard staff as one of our greatest assets, hence they are highly valued. I can’t run the place by myself.”

Health and safety is taken extremely seriously, so the committee has a large input into high expenditure areas like repairs and maintenance to ensure things are kept safe and in good running order. Another large expenditure item is controlling blackberry and

gorse regrowth.

Cam was born and bred in Whanganui, leaving school at 16 to work briefly for stock and station firm Williams and Kettle before embarking on a farming career. After working on several farms around the Whanganui area, he graduated to managing a farm for 10 years for a well-known Whanganui farming family before moving to Te Apatu. It was while working on one of these farms he met Tori, whose father was managing the property. Cam (34) and Tori (30) have three children, Henry (7), Neeve (5) and Edie (3). ■

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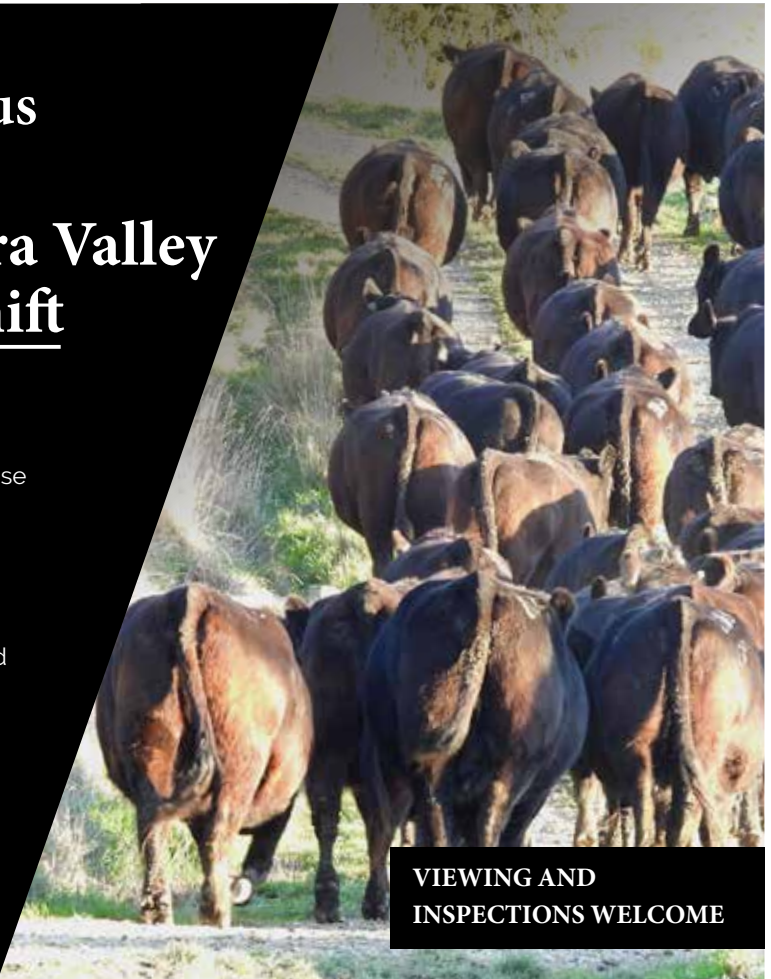
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Jeremy and Kate Cullwick, with Oscar and Bess.

VETS TAKE ON FAMILY BUSINESSES

Despite a baptism of flood under Cyclone Gabrielle's devastation, Jeremy and Kate Cullwick are getting to grips with the stud Angus business.

Jackie Harrigan

Jeremy and Kate Cullwick are busy people, combining building an Angus stud and farming a Central Hawke's Bay commercial sheep and beef farm with bringing up two children and leasing Kate's family Gisborne hill country station.

Kate also finds time to run, with her sister, a successful natural home bedding products company, Foxtrot Home.

Jeremy and Kate, along with Oscar, 13, and Bess, 10, live on the Cullwick family property that, after many years of successful veterinary careers for the two of them, they bought from Jeremy's family through a farm succession process five years ago.

The 740-hectare rolling hill country property at Wanstead runs 140 Angus cows, 20 heifers, 3000 Romney ewes and 1000 hogs.

Two years ago, the pair had the opportunity to take over the Waimata Angus stud from Kate's parents, Pat and Evelyn Watson, in the Waimata valley, northwest of Gisborne.

Kate had grown up with the stud and Jeremy loved working with cattle and says they had a shared passion for the Angus breed in their early lives and veterinary working careers.

"The stud are great hill country cattle and are able to perform in tough conditions. They will come through a winter or summer feed shortage and bounce back very quickly."

Pat and Evelyn concentrated on good phenotypes with excellent structure, growth and longevity, Jeremy says.

"We were very fortunate to buy the best 60 stud cows."

Relocated to Central Hawke's Bay, the stud

has been rebranded as "Tapahia Angus".

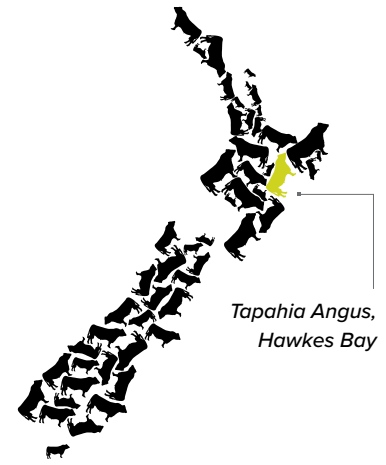
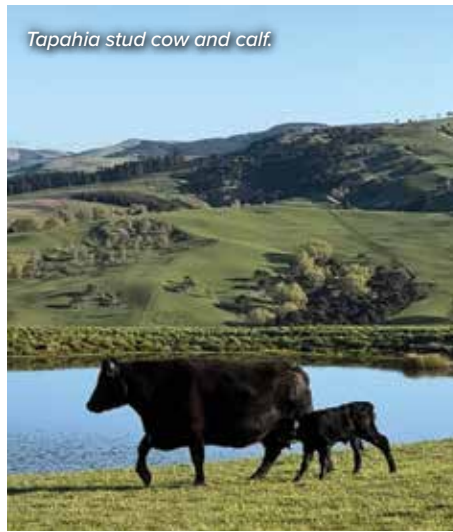
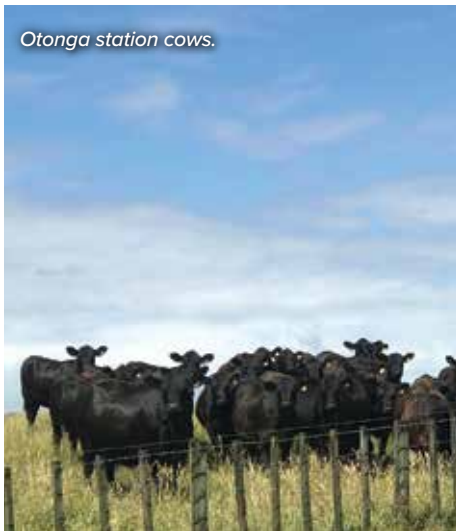
Jeremy says he has really enjoyed getting around the country and seeing Angus stud cattle, and understanding other breeders' programmes.

"It's all about a balance of a lot of traits – we will be targeting carrying on the strengths of the stud with good structure, fertility and longevity, plus growth and carcass data thrown into the mix."

"We will be mating yearling heifers and only retaining those who rear a calf as a two-year-old – we want cattle that do well on the hills through a tight winter and wean a calf at a good weight."

"We won't be chasing any one particular trait, but aim to first get the cow in calf and the rest of the traits will fall into line from there."

‘WE WILL BE MATING YEARLING HEIFERS AND ONLY RETAINING THOSE WHO REAR A CALF AS A TWO-YEAR-OLD – WE WANT CATTLE THAT DO WELL ON THE HILLS THROUGH A TIGHT WINTER AND WEAN A CALF AT A GOOD WEIGHT.’



Last year, they bought a top pure New Zealand bloodline bull from Rick and Deborah Orr from Red Oak Angus for \$25,000. They also purchased another top pure NZ bull from Okaka Angus with good Pinebank bloodlines.

“Kate’s father had a lot of pure New Zealand genetics - he only got into US genetics late in his career so we wanted to retain a lot of that purity. We are thrilled with the Red Oak bull, and are looking forward to his first progeny coming this spring.”

Another top stud sire was bought from Meadowslea stud this season to go over their younger heifers and NZ/US genetics cows.

“He is a good, thick, deep bull, with great bloodlines.”

The couple have sold a small number of two-year-old bulls in 2024 and have a small number for sale in 2025.

In a building phase, they have 17 ET calves due this spring, with 75 potential calves to register and intend to organically grow the stud to 140 registered cows.

Jeremy says he has really enjoyed getting around the country meeting other breeders and praises their friendliness and willingness to share information.

He attended the Wairarapa Ward Tour in 2023 and this season’s Hawkes Bay bull walk and the Gisborne sales week.

“They are a great community, very welcoming and had lots of good advice for a new breeder.”

In a baptism of fire, the couple took over the lease of Kate’s parents’ Otonga station on 1 February, 2023, and 11 days later Cyclone Gabrielle hit the region, causing a huge amount of damage to the farm infrastructure.

Jeremy says the cleanup has been huge and credits the farm manager of 25 years, Shane Hawkins, for helping them get through the cleanup following the storm and through the year.

The 1200ha effective station runs 2500 Romney ewes and a 650-cow commercial herd, selling weaners and yearlings and

providing a great market and proving ground for the Tapahia bulls.

“We are only selling small numbers and using the rest ourselves on the station, and the repeat buyers for our Angus steers and heifers speaks volumes for the cattle breeding programme.”

While the station woolshed, sheep and cattle yards suffered damage and silt inundation in the storm, Jeremy says the hills were not too badly scarred with slips and the valley road was opened quickly to allow access for families further up the valley and to provide an alternative route for East Coasters.

“It’s been a huge year working through all that and once things settle down I am keen to get more involved in the Angus breeding world as we are excited by the activities on offer and the opportunities to learn and grow.”

“We love our Angus cattle and Romney sheep.” ■

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| CW | EMA | RIB | RUMP | RBV | IMF | SRI \$ | API \$ | HDT \$ | |
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| DIR | DTRS | GEST | BW | MILK | 200 | 400 | 600 | SS | DTC |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| +4.8 | +3.4 | -6.6 | +4.0 | +17 | +48 | +94 | +113 | +2.8 | -3.6 |
| CW | EMA | RIB | RUMP | RBV | IMF | SRI \$ | API \$ | HDT \$ | |
| +62 | +6.5 | +3.9 | +4.3 | -0.1 | +1.0 | +\$136 | +\$155 | +\$127 | |

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|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|--------|--------|--------|
| +7.4 | +4.5 | -5.6 | +3.7 | +21 | +40 | +80 | +104 | +0.9 | -6.3 | +60 | +4.3 | +0.7 | +3.4 | +0.4 | +2.9 | +\$168 | +\$202 | +\$137 |

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Picton Park cows and calves.



ANGUS PASSION LEADS TO STUD

A Southland couple have jumped on board, setting up Picton Park stud.

Jackie Harrigan

Bradley Catto farms at McNab, Gore, on the farm his family have owned for more than 147 years, although he himself has just been farming the original 530-hectare Catto block since March 2024.

Bradley grew up at Tapanui, but he and his father managed to buy the original block from his uncle five years ago and now Bradley runs it with his partner Anna and 18-month-old Charlie.

At 27, Bradley has been farming all his life and went straight into the industry after finishing school. A three-year stint as stock manager at Meadowslea Angus stud at Fairlie for David Giddings opened his eyes to how much he enjoyed working with Angus cattle and his passion grew from there.

"I was able to see what was happening in the Angus industry and how it was going ahead with the cattle being produced."

Five years ago he and Anna went out on their own, leasing a property in Clinton with 230 commercial Angus cows, running them intensively and collecting lots of data from tagging calves, recording birth weights and growth rates and following the cattle

through. He says it was a great testing ground for his new Angus stud cows as being a part of a 230 cow herd they had no preferential treatment.

"We were pretty much doing all of the stud work but on commercial cattle."

It wasn't that they just loved data, but he says they got the passion for what you could achieve by doing it.

"We started with a reasonably mixed herd, and that was our way of getting the herd to where we wanted it quickly."

Four years ago they were attending the Meadowslea sale and managed to buy four females, and the Picton Park stud was born, named after the farm in West Otago where Bradley grew up.

"We realised that we were doing all the work of a registered stud, but not seeing the benefits of producing stud stock, so we took the opportunity to jump on board and get started."

Bradley and Anna, who is an AI technician, have added cows each year from Merchiston, Te Whanga and Red Oak studs. They have grown the group to 30 cows and also run 30 commercial cows, alongside 4,500



ewes and replacements.

The couple have focused on buying the right cattle for the direction in which they want to head with their stud.

"We have concentrated on the maternal traits to ensure their cows will rear a good calf and be nice balanced cattle that can handle whatever we throw at them," Bradley said.

"But we have not sacrificed our growth rates with 2024 stud calves averaging 282 kgs at weaning."

The block they have is a mix of flat, rolling and steep country and having moved from

a poorer leaseblock, they were impressed by how the cows stepped up to improve the pasture quality.

“Since we have a small stud, we are super conscious of making sure the cows and the bulls we produce carry through that hardiness and ability to go into the winter fat, to use that fat in the winter and put it back on in the summer, while also rearing a good calf.”

The Picton Park stud has already sold a small number of 2-year-old bulls privately to local beef farmers and the pair hope to increase the stud to 60 stud registered females and see where they go from there.

“We are excited about the huge demand for Angus cattle in the market and we really think the Angus cattle are tough and hardy and generally quiet and nice cattle to have around.”

AI technician Anna is in charge of breeding, allowing the couple to use a range of sires over their registered females.

They are very pleased with a purchase of a new sire in 2024 from Oregon Angus lot 14 T40 and are planning to introduce an ET programme next season to accelerate the use of some of the good cows they have brought in from other studs. ■



Bradley and Anna with Charlie.

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James Armitage
Hannah Devery

TEAM LEGACY



CAITLIN RHODES

I am Caitlin Rhodes, captain of team Legacy for the World Angus Forum 2025. Being part of the World Angus Forum is an incredible opportunity. I look forward to getting to know more people in the beef industry. It started during the selection weekend, where we met many passionate people sharing their ideas and thoughts on the industry. I also look forward to learning more about the global beef industry at the World Angus Forum, particularly the differences between New Zealand and other countries.

I am halfway through my studies to become a secondary teacher, focusing on agriculture and commerce subjects. Teaching is essential to me as students should have the opportunity to learn the basics of the agriculture industry, from understanding the difference between a cow and a bull to different management strategies.

I plan to continue focusing on introducing youth to agriculture, whether it is through involvement in A&P shows, teaching, or other means. Although teaching will involve me more in the classroom, I would like to remain connected to farms, businesses, and people working in the beef industry. In the next year or so, I plan to do this through my role as RAS Rural Ambassador 2024.



NICOLAS VERRY

My name is Nicolas Verry. I am 18 years old and in year 13 at Palmerston North Boys High School. Next year, I plan to begin my studies for a Bachelor of Commerce Agriculture at Lincoln University.

Upon finishing my studies, I am hoping to work my way into the sheep and beef industry, especially the stud side of things. I am not off a farm, but have uncles and grandparents nearby who are. Working my way up the ladder into farm management and ultimately farm ownership is a goal.

I am really looking forward to the networking and relationship side of the forum and all of the opportunities this will present. Being the youngest team member means I may have the opportunity to represent New Zealand at the next edition of the forum.

I believe this will provide me with the skills to continue to promote New Zealand's Angus cattle on the world stage into the future. Agriculture is full of leadership opportunities that I am looking forward to. I can't wait to see the doors this fantastic opportunity opens and the learning that follows.

Rural Ambassador 2024.



DOUGAL GIBSON

I was brought up with my younger brother on my parents' 800-hectare hill country farm called "Braeval," near Cave about 30 minutes inland from Timaru, farming sheep and cattle, along with an Angus stud that is in its infancy.

I spent four years of my primary school years home-schooled by mum before going to Timaru Boys – mainly to play hockey.

I left school to help mum and dad on the farm for just over a year before starting to do more casual work, mustering, engineering and silage making, etc.

I have been shearing for a few months now but injured my wrist going into winter so have been back at home doing the winter chores while trying to get my arm sorted.

My love for cattle started at a young age. Mum and Dad have always had a good herd of commercial cows producing big weaners of a good type for our country, so I have always been really involved with what goes on.

I am stoked to represent AngusNZ at the World Angus forum next year in Australia and look forward to learning so much more about the breed and the people involved.



KATE CAMPBELL

My name is Kate Campbell, I am 24 years old and grew up in North Canterbury. I attended Rangiora High School, where I excelled in cattle handling and judging in my spare time. I then went on to Lincoln University, where I completed a Bachelor of Agriculture.

I have since worked a couple years in Otago at Armidale Merino Stud, where I broadened my skills and gained more knowledge.

I have always had a passion for agriculture and the outdoors, with a particular interest in sheep and beef farming, fine wool and genetics. I am now working as a casual shepherd in the Rakaia/ Ashburton Gorge, and would like to work my way up the management ladder as I gain experience.

Even though I had stepped away from cattle showing to following other passions, I have always loved Angus cattle and have goals to have my own stud. I see the World Angus Forum as an awesome opportunity to connect with like-minded people from around the world as well as further develop my skill set.

TEAM INFINITY



TOM HAYWARD

Watching our family grow Twin Oaks Angus, producing performance cattle that maximise their clients' profits while maintaining type has created a strong interest and passion in me for New Zealand's beef industry.

It is a privilege to be attending the forum and representing all Angus breeders of New Zealand. The forum gives us the opportunity to learn more about the tools available internationally that we can apply domestically to maximise our productivity. The forum also, most importantly, offers the platform to meet new people with a common interest in Angus, which I am looking forward to the most.

I am in my third year studying a Bachelor of Laws and Commerce majoring in Operations Supply Chain Management at the University of Canterbury. After graduating, I aim to practice law with a business and agricultural focus and then use that experience somewhere within the primary industries with my supply chain degree to help New Zealand's world-class protein exporters. To be able to use the intricacies of my degree with the practicality of the forum is a further reason why I cannot wait to attend. Thank you Generation Angus for the opportunity.



HANNAH DEVERY

I'm Hannah Devery from Pikoburn Angus in Tuatapere, Southland, where my parents, Isobel and Alton Devery, have instilled in me a deep love for animals since childhood. From riding horses to working hands-on on the farm, my passion for agriculture has always been strong.

After completing school, I landed a role as a Customer Service Representative at PGG Wrightson, Tuatapere, where I've been for the past eight months. Despite being told by a teacher that being a stock agent was "a boy's job," I've remained determined to pursue my dream. My goal is to rise through the ranks and become a Livestock Representative at PGG Wrightson. My journey reflects my resilience and commitment to breaking stereotypes in agriculture, and I'm eager to see where it takes me next.

The ultimate dream is to be on the home farm alongside my Dad and be involved on and around the farm.

I'm excited about the upcoming World Angus Forum, where I'll have the chance to connect with like-minded individuals and expand my industry knowledge. It's also my first time travelling overseas, which makes this opportunity even more special.



JAMES ARMITAGE

My name is James Armitage and I was born and raised on sheep and beef stations.

I am now 18 years old and shepherding on North Range Station in Southland and have a direct link to Waimara Angus Stud, who have helped me get to where I am.

I hope to grow my knowledge on cattle judging to help me on farm for the future of our herd and learn more about showing and clipping cattle.

I'm excited to see different ways of farming in Australia, meet new people, and learn more about judging Angus cattle and compare where New Zealand is compared to Australia with genetics and the type of cattle they aim to breed.



BOB JOHNSTONE

I am currently working in Hawke's Bay on a finishing property as a shepherd, where we finish lambs, bulls and Wagyu steers.

In the future, I intend to grow my knowledge and skills to work my way up to a management position in agriculture and eventually go home to the family farm.

At the World Angus Forum, I am looking forward to being able to represent New Zealand in the cattle industry, which is one of my passions, and also to be able to meet people who are like-minded and embrace the challenges in a team environment.



KRISTEN DEVERY – RESERVE

My name is Kirsten Devery, and I am finishing up a Bachelor of Commerce in Agriculture at Lincoln University. Growing up on our family farm in Southland, I knew from day dot that this is what I want to do.

I have a particular passion for Angus cattle, inspired by my parents running Pikoburn Angus. My studies and experiences have deepened my understanding of genetics and breeding complexities,

highlighting the knowledge required in the field.

In the future, I want to enter the sheep and beef sector, with a focus on incorporating the Angus stud. I aim to carve out a meaningful role in agriculture, seeking opportunities to learn and innovate.

Looking forward to the World Angus Forum, I'm keen to connect with like-minded participants and industry leaders. It's a great opportunity to dive deep into genetics and breeding techniques, learning from the experts. Building meaningful connections at the forum will enhance my knowledge and open doors for future collaborations, helping me progress in my career and achieve my goals in agriculture.



FOUR DAYS OF DISCOVERY

Intensive lessons and presentations made a lasting impression on those chosen for the 2024 Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme.

Emma Hussey

The Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme was an intense four-day course packed full of amazing industry professionals with a wide range of knowledge who gave presentations to the cohort selected.

Over the four days a large range of topics were covered by the guest speakers, including:

- Mindset and attitude
- Budgeting and agri-finance
- Marketing and social media branding
- Genetics
- Global agritrends
- Farm insurance and risk mitigation
- Succession planning.

Other speakers came to talk about their farming businesses, where they opened up about the challenges and lessons from their farming operations and businesses.

I learnt a great deal from each topic covered, and every person who presented had something slightly different to take home. The two topics I learnt the most from were budgeting and agri-finance, and marketing and social media branding. These are very important parts of any agricultural business with finance and budgets being the foundation. Without it, you don't have a successful business, so cultivating an understanding of agri-finance was completely new but very important for me.

Marketing and social media branding has become the way of promoting your product, or for us Angus breeders, the bulls and genetics we are selling, so learning some of the

techniques and systems of marketing, social media, and branding, was very valuable.

I can now apply these to both the Mt Possession Angus social media platforms and my own Whisky Creek Rural Photography business to grow our target audiences and the product that we have to offer.

Being part of the GenAngus Future Leaders Programme was an amazing experience and there is not one part of it that I could define as the best part. The whole event was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, but if I had to choose, the best part was meeting 12 other like-minded people.

Everyone on the course was so open and friendly, all came from different walks of life, which led to many intellectual discussions during presentations, but also being able to open up about the things we have done and experienced. Being able to bounce ideas off people sharing a similar mindset was another great aspect of the others in the cohort.

The theme for Generation Angus Future Leaders 2024 was leadership. Before attending the course we were asked to read the book "Legacy" by James Kerr, where he writes about the "15 Key Lessons of Leadership" from the All Blacks.

The biggest part of leadership I have taken from the program was mindset and attitude. Both are very important, especially when it comes to the agricultural industry, being able to maintain a good mindset and attitude when the times get tough, which in New Zealand we have all seen with the economy or climate. On

the flip side, when you're at the top of your game, on top of the world, remembering to "not be too big to sweep the shed".

For others looking to apply for the Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme, I would highly recommend it. If you don't get in the first time make sure to try again the next year, don't let it stop you from still having a go.

I have learnt so much more about the Angus and beef industry, as well as from every one of the speakers we were extremely lucky to listen to. You will meet so many like-minded people, creating lifelong friends and contacts in both New Zealand and Australia. I learnt a lot more about myself, and it has inspired me to make changes in both my career and personal life for the better through the lessons that many industry professionals and guest speakers shared with us over the four days.

I wanted to also say thank you to Angus New Zealand and its members for the opportunity to be selected and sponsored to go on the Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme 2024. It has been the most amazing experience for a lack of other words.

I learnt so much from the speakers, organisers and others selected, but even more about myself. I have since adopted many aspects of the program since it concluded at the beginning of July. Being able to be part of the Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme 2024 wouldn't have been possible without the sponsorship of Angus New Zealand and the people who are part of it. ■



FOCUS ON A LEGACY

Lessons learned and connections made at the Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme 2024 will contribute to the ongoing success and sustainability of the Angus breed.



JIM BURROWS

I was fortunate to be selected to attend the 2024 Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme as one of two New Zealand and 11 Australian delegates. This four-day intensive programme, held in Christchurch, New Zealand, focused on personal, leadership, and business development, featuring exceptional experts presenting on a wide range of topics.

The theme was based on the book “Legacy – What the All Blacks can Teach us about the Business of Life.” I was unprepared for the profound impact this course would have on me, especially the personal development and mindset modules.

As a typical rural bloke, it’s easy to get caught up in the daily grind of farming, especially given the current challenges in the sheep and beef industry. However, this experience reminded me of the importance of being open to learning and change and thinking about what my legacy will be, emphasising the need to continuously work on oneself to create a meaningful and lasting impact.

DAY 1: Team building and mindset

The programme kicked off with a variety of team-building activities designed to foster collaboration and camaraderie among the delegates. We engaged in blow carts, drift bikes, and various games, which not only broke the ice but also highlighted the importance of teamwork in achieving common goals.

Pete Clark’s session on mindset was a revelation. He emphasised the significance of small, incremental improvements and their cumulative effect over time.

His insights on leaving a legacy resonated deeply, highlighting the importance of a growth mindset in both personal and professional realms. Pete’s key message was that mindset is more relevant than we often give it credit for, and the concept of 1% gains accumulating over time was particularly impactful.

This session set the tone for the days ahead, urging us to think beyond our immediate challenges and focus on the bigger picture of what we want to achieve.

DAY 2: Market analysis, insurance, breeding objectives, and succession planning

The second day began with Simon Quilty’s in-depth analysis of global red meat markets. Simon provided a comprehensive overview of market trends, explaining the factors influencing supply and demand. His prediction of a positive outlook for beef from 2025 onwards, due to a large cow kill and potential beef shortages, was particularly enlightening. This session underscored the importance of staying informed about global market dynamics and how they can impact our local operations.

Richard Officer from Achmea Insurance then discussed the importance of optimal insurance coverage, avoiding being over or under-insured. He highlighted common pitfalls in farm insurance and provided practical advice on assessing and managing risk effectively to ensure adequate protection.

Jake Phillips followed with a session on breeding objectives, where he questioned what traits are most needed and whether they are commercially relevant. He stressed the importance of understanding Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) and setting clear breeding goals. Jake’s presentation was a reminder that breeding decisions should be driven by market demands and long-term strategic goals, rather than short-term trends.

The day also featured a series of sessions on succession planning, led by Grant Sidnam, Alistair King, Phil Creagh, and Hayden Dillon. They highlighted the necessity of early planning and open communication to avoid common pitfalls. The importance of discussing and documenting succession plans early on cannot be overstated, as it ensures a smoother transition and helps preserve family relationships.

Nancy Crawshaw’s additional talk provided a platform for us to share personal stories, offering valuable lessons on what works and what doesn’t in succession planning. This sharing of experiences was incredibly beneficial, as it brought to light the diverse challenges and solutions different families have encountered.

Angus Street, the newly appointed CEO of Merino NZ, then shared his experiences from developing AuctionsPlus in Australia, an online stock selling platform, and his recent move to New Zealand. He discussed his leadership and communication techniques, reiterating many of the mindset messages from earlier speakers.

His key takeaway was that you don’t have to be an expert, but you must be willing to



learn. Angus’s session was inspiring and underscored the value of continuous learning and adaptability in leadership.

DAY 3: Branding, digital marketing, and ag finance

Diana Wood and Cheyne Twist kicked off the third day by discussing the underutilisation of branding in cattle programmes. They suggested up to 10% of income should be invested in branding and marketing efforts.

This session was an eye-opener, as it highlighted the potential of strong branding to differentiate our products in the market and command better prices. Investing in branding is not just about creating a logo or a catchy tagline; it’s about building a story and a reputation that resonates with consumers.

The next session on digital marketing expanded on this by emphasising the endless possibilities of online promotion. She stressed the importance of quality over quantity in content creation and the need to collect and leverage email data effectively.

The advice to use Google search words strategically and to get professional help if needed was practical and immediately applicable. Her session reinforced the idea

that the world is our oyster when it comes to digital marketing, and with the right strategies, we can reach a global audience.

Lawrence Field’s session on agricultural finance and benchmarking was another highlight. He stressed the importance of understanding financials and benchmarking performance year to year. Lawrence’s preference for benchmarking the kilograms of protein produced per hectare was a practical approach that provided a clear metric for measuring success. This session tied in well with the overall theme of the programme, which was about setting clear objectives and continuously improving to achieve them.

The day concluded with an inspiring talk by Sir Graham Henry. Despite many of the Australians not initially recognising him, his stories and messages about mindset, leadership, and legacy left a lasting impression on all. Sir Graham’s ability to captivate the audience and share his life lessons in a relatable way was a perfect end to an intense day of learning. His emphasis on the same themes we had been exploring — mindset, leadership, and legacy — reinforced their importance and left us all motivated to apply these principles in our own lives.



DAY 4: DISC profiling, youth leadership, and debates

Milly Nolan’s session on DISC profiling helped us understand our personalities and communication styles, enhancing our interpersonal interactions. This understanding is crucial for effective teamwork and leadership, as it allows us to appreciate and leverage the diverse strengths within a team. Milly’s session was interactive and engaging, providing us with practical tools to improve our communication and collaboration skills.

Marie Fitzpatrick’s youth leadership session challenged us to get involved and contribute to the Angus breed’s future, reinforcing the theme of leaving a legacy. Marie shared her extensive work with Angus youth in New Zealand and inspired us to take an active role in mentoring and supporting the next generation. Her passion and dedication were contagious, and her call to action left us all eager to contribute more to the community.

James Knight shared his story of running a large family-owned commercial breeding operation, covering succession, market-oriented breeding, daily management, and future goals. His story was both relatable and inspiring, providing practical insights into managing a successful breeding operation while navigating the complexities of family dynamics and succession planning. James’s

approach to breeding for specific markets and setting long-term goals was particularly relevant, reinforcing many of the lessons we had learned over the past few days.

The final day featured a lively debate where the Kiwis had to argue in favour of Australian Angus cattle, and the Aussies had to argue in favour of NZ Angus cattle. Despite our best efforts, the Aussies won, which either speaks highly of the quality of NZ Angus or perhaps highlights my poor debating skills. This debate was not just a fun activity; it also provided a platform for us to apply our knowledge and articulate our perspectives, enhancing our critical thinking and public speaking skills.

We concluded with a SWOT analysis presentation to Scott Wright, CEO of Angus Australia, and other Angus Australia extension officers. This helped us consolidate what we had learnt and formulate actionable plans for the future. Presenting our SWOT analyses allowed us to critically assess our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and develop strategic plans to address them. It was a fitting end to a programme that had been all about growth and improvement.

Looking ahead

The 2024 Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme was a transformative experience that equipped me with invaluable skills and

‘PETE’S KEY MESSAGE WAS THAT MINDSET IS MORE RELEVANT THAN WE OFTEN GIVE IT CREDIT FOR, AND THE CONCEPT OF 1% GAINS ACCUMULATING OVER TIME WAS PARTICULARLY IMPACTFUL.’

insights. I would like to extend my thanks to Nancy Crawshaw, Milly Nolan, and all the organisers and sponsors, including Achmea Insurance Australia, Angus Australia, RaboBank New Zealand, and Angus New Zealand. Their support made this life-changing experience possible.

For anyone interested in discussing the course further, or who may be interested in applying to attend this course, please feel free to get in touch. This programme has not only equipped me with invaluable skills but has also inspired me to create a meaningful personal legacy. The lessons learned and connections made will undoubtedly shape my future endeavours and contribute to the ongoing success and sustainability of the Angus breed. ■

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Nancy Crawshaw from Kenhardt Angus

ADDING VALUE TO PEOPLE

NANCY CRAWSHAW, FROM WAIROA, IS A 2024 ZANDA MCDONALD AWARD WINNER. SHE OUTLINES THE WORK AND OPPORTUNITIES SHE HAS GRASPED WITHIN THE BEEF INDUSTRY ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND AND HER HOPES FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SHE WILL RECEIVE THROUGH WINNING THE AWARD.

In April 2018, I moved to South Australia to complete a Graduate Role with Teys Australia at their Naracoorte abattoir, which was processing 750 head of beef per day.

I took up this opportunity to learn more about the beef industry beyond the farm gate. As breeders, we spend so much time and effort trying to breed better cattle that I wanted to learn more about the end product and what can be done to meet consumer requirements.

No matter where we are in the beef supply chain—from stud breeder, feed-lotter, service provider, or wholesaler—we are producing food. This is why I think it's important to learn more about what happens to our products beyond the farm gate.

The meat industry was great for learning about the impacts of animal health and diet on farm animals once the hide comes off. Additionally, understanding how different sizes of animals within mobs can negatively impact the customer with varying cut sizes was insightful.

A standout for me in meat processing was

the MSA (Meat Standard Australia) grading system. This is a standardised system used across Australia, which provides meat quality carcass attribute feedback to producers. It ensures producers have the information to make informed decisions in their breeding programmes to enhance the end product. Some attributes measured include carcass weight, tropical breed content, ossification, marbling, rib fat, and pH.

Being able to see the differences in carcass attributes and how they affected product value in terms of boning groups and customer requirements was fascinating. Spending time in processing plants to learn more about the beef supply chain can be beneficial for all producers.

At Teys, I was extremely fortunate to work with people of 26 different nationalities and learn about their cultures. One thing that astounded me was that some of the team had very little knowledge of farming and cattle, but regardless of their nationality, they all knew 'Angus' was

the premium beef they wanted to take home for their families. The brand recognition Angus has in the marketplace globally is something we shouldn't take for granted.

Regardless of what industry we are in, people are critical to business success. In Quality Assurance, I describe the role as being a police officer of the meatworks. QAs are the gatekeepers to ensure the products are at the highest food safety standard, ensuring everyone who eats it has a desirable eating experience.

No one in our QA team had prior experience in food safety, so we made training the number one priority. By training and empowering our team with the knowledge to make the right decisions under pressure, they made the role their own and took the Quality Assurance standards on the plant to a new level.

I moved to my current role with Angus Australia to relocate back to New Zealand and get closer to my passion for genetics and breeding cattle. Working in the extension space includes youth programmes, co-

ordinating events, and educating members, commercial producers and service providers.

In the Youth Programme, my role involves co-ordinating the different youth scholarships and programmes we provide to ensure attendees get the most out of these experiences. Two highlights of our youth programme this year have been getting the Trans-Tasman Exchange back up and running and holding our premier youth event, Generation Angus, in Christchurch.

Without the youth programmes and volunteers who ran them when I was growing up in New Zealand, I wouldn't have had the opportunities I have received to date. Being able to work in this space to create life-changing events for the next generation is extremely satisfying.

In extension, we also work with commercial and seedstock producers to help them achieve their specific breeding goals. This year, we have spoken at a number of producer days and workshops to help producers and service providers improve their knowledge of genetics and how to use the tools available to make informed decisions.

In this role, I am lucky to work with commercial producers facilitating BredWell FedWell workshops for MLA. These workshops have been great for looking at both genetics and feeding to determine the limiting factors in beef enterprises and ensure producers go home with some key lessons to add value to their businesses.

It's been great to learn about the entire paddock-to-plate production system in Australia and to understand the differences in genetics used on either side of the Tasman and how these are impacted by the beef supply chains.

ZANDA AWARD

The Zanda McDonald Award was created in 2014 with the aim of finding young people in Australia and New Zealand's agricultural industries with the drive to thrive.

I was lucky enough to be shortlisted in November last year, and after a thorough interview process, was privileged to be named alongside Tim Dangen and Carla Muller as the 2024 NZ award finalists.

Tim and Carla are incredible people doing amazing things in their respective areas in New Zealand agriculture, and through the process, we have been lucky to build friendships that extend to all previous award finalists. This award has been unlike anything I've experienced



Jared Briggs, Nancy Crawshaw and Shane McManaway.

previously, and I've been lucky to learn something through every step of the application process, which has been invaluable.

The award was set up in memory of Zanda McDonald, who tragically passed away after an on-farm accident at the age of 41. He has been described to me as "a legendary thinker ahead of his time. Every ringer in the top end knew him, even if they hadn't met him yet."

I may have never had the opportunity to meet Zanda, but my perspective is: "What would you need to have achieved by the time you are 41 years old to have a Trans-Tasman agricultural award named in your honour, supported by 250 of Australasia's top agricultural leaders?"

Moving back from Australia, I wanted to keep moving forward and didn't want to take it easy. The opportunities and people I met in Australian agriculture were incredible, and I wanted to continue this growth in New Zealand. I saw the award as a great opportunity to challenge myself and get back out of my comfort zone.

The most powerful thing that has come from the award is the network and being surrounded by incredible people who are so willing to get alongside the next generation to share their wealth of knowledge.

The award is really a family, and until you become a part of the group, it's challenging to grasp how truly powerful it is. Since the award summit in March, I have been incredibly lucky to connect with members from the group at events and on properties, which have already

opened doors I never thought were possible.

The award package includes two one-week-long tailored mentoring trips through Australia and New Zealand, which I get to go on alongside Tessa Chartres, the Australian 2024 award winner, who is the General Manager of Business Development at Murray Irrigation based in Deniliquin, NSW. On these trips, we get to spend time with industry leaders within the primary sector and beyond.

I see the award as a platform to accelerate our growth in agriculture while being surrounded by the most supportive industry leaders. Through this award and the opportunities it presents, I hope to use the knowledge and learnings to benefit the wider agricultural community.

People are our biggest asset in agriculture, and if we can attract the best people in agriculture and help them develop to prosper, our industry will be in a better place. My proudest achievement at Teys was working with our QA team to see them grow and achieve things in their careers they previously didn't think were possible. This is something I discovered how passionate I am about through the award process.

Through the mentoring trip and opportunities provided through the award, including a \$10,000 grant towards a professional development course or further education, I want to work out how we can continue to develop and add value to our people in agriculture. ■



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From the board table: MEMBERS CONTINUE TO LEAD THE INDUSTRY

ANGUS BREEDERS ARE LEADING THE BEEF INDUSTRY AND CONTINUING TO RAISE STANDARDS.



KENDALL LANGSTON

As 2024 continues to challenge all of us in business, it has been so exciting to see the prices and clearances across our members' bull sales.

Sure, the market has thrown some curveballs in terms of increased costs, commodity pricing, weather bombs and continuous change, but one thing has remained constant. Our members lead the beef breeding industry in New Zealand and continue to raise the standard.

I have really enjoyed getting out and about to sales and connecting with members, their clients and those supporting the industry.

Despite missing the East Coast "bull week" due to weather, the friendship and collegiality support networks across the Angus New Zealand Association are in good shape. The Generation Angus programme showcased some of our young talent and future leaders and was a chance to share insights and ideas with our good friends at Angus Australia. I have also enjoyed the feedback by phone and email from members.

It is fair to say, it has taken the government a while to settle and to get clear on some of the changes to policy, but I personally feel it is refreshing to see decisions being made and some change beginning to roll out that will encourage and support our agricultural sector in general. All farmers certainly need to see some brightness after a very tough 12 months.

It was reassuring to hear that Mystery Creek Fielddays experienced the return of many overseas companies as the world reconnects post-Covid. It

also goes without saying that a reduction in interest rates will be something all New Zealanders will be eagerly anticipating.

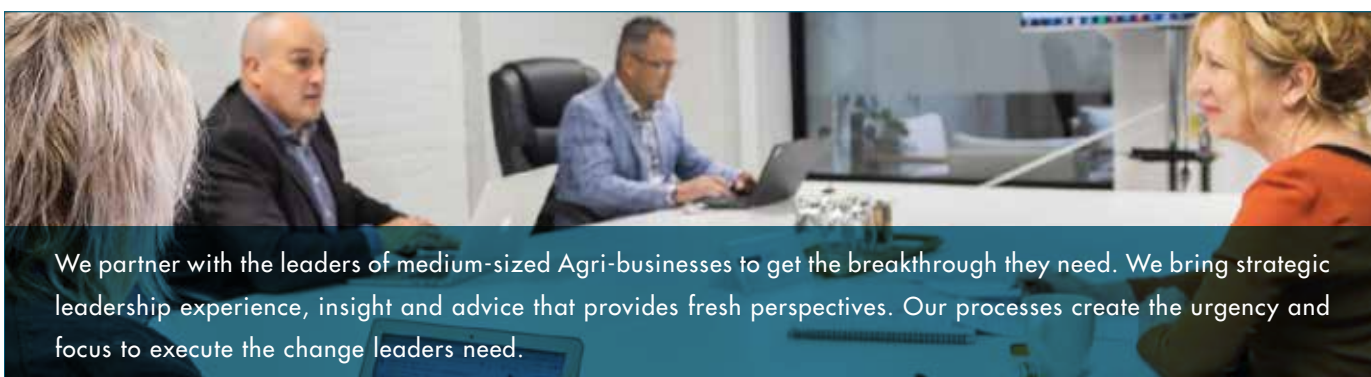
All industries are working hard to succeed in this market. Across the board there has been a return to core business, a focus on efficiency and ensuring business overhead and people structures are optimised for a period of tight economic times. Many business leaders have not led during a tight market and, as such, need some support and guidance from those with experience. It is a time to be supportive and, if you can, to check in on mates and offer a helping hand.

As a governance team, we have invested in governance training for members, have been actively reviewing service levels and investing in strategic partnerships across the industry as we seek to positively contribute to innovation, the wider beef industry and genetics.

I wish you all well as we enter spring and a new season of vitality and growth. I hope to see you around the traps.

Nga Mihi ■

Kendall Langston is an independent director of AngusNZ and a strategic business advisor with Pivot and Pace.



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KATE PONT

Learning more about breeding and producing good beef is as easy as watching YouTube videos on many aspects of beef breeding.

On the Raising the Steaks channel, a joint venture between AngusNZ and Gallaghers, Angus breeder Kate Pont from Waimara Angus in Southland has made videos that are short, interesting and easy to learn from.

Kate talks to a variety of experts in the industry, and has an easy-to-listen-to style of interviewing and drawing out details.

The series was born out of a desire to make technical information and expert advice easy to access and available in a 'bite-sized education' format of videos.

Kate has been making the series for the past 12 months and has talked to and videoed many interesting experts and industry speakers.

Users can follow the channel and turn on notifications to be alerted to the upload of each new episode. You can also search for the channel Raising the Steaks on Facebook.

The Raising the Steaks partnership with Gallagher shows how innovative and connected they are to making things easier on farm, says Kate.

"When we started this last year we focused a lot on their TWR5 unit, which is really intuitive and awesome to use along with their wireless weighbars, but since then they have brought out the collars and the front foot weigh system as well as continuing to add heaps of cool features to the TWR5 like the pedigree function."

She added that the Gallagher app is outstanding and the data transfer from it to her stud recording systems is so simple.

"Something I find really awesome about them is that if we have ideas on things that would make it better or simpler, they listen and pretty much start working on it straight away. Their online support is really great too and they have heaps of videos for all the different functions on their app and head unit."

Kate is always on the lookout for new topics to cover in Raising the Steaks and would love feedback from users on what they want to learn about.
Email her at: Kate@angusnz.com



@raisingthesteaks

* Click on the 'subscribe' button. It doesn't cost you anything. Will just make it easier for you to find the page in the future



BEEF BREEDING EPISODES

- A six-part series explaining EBVs, start with the absolute basics and worked down into describing each individual EBV, when and how to look at it, and how it will make improvements to your herd.
- An interview on bull buying
- A couple interviews on how to set breed objectives
- Mark Enns on cow fertility
- Muscle scanning with James Westgarth
- Genomics with Jason Archer
- BVD insight
- Semen testing with Xcell
- Tagging calves at birth with Gallagher

OTHER BEEF PRODUCTION TOPICS

- Raising the bar: Heifer sale
- Cattle trading margins
- Commercial genomics
- BIF Build Better cows
- Bull care
- Breed objectives
- Feed efficiency
- Trace minerals
- Structural assessment
- Cow herd report card
- Igenity
- IMF deposition

PLANNED EPISODES

- Animal health with vet Andrew Cochrane
- Re-sharing some stuff done last year on seasonal things like calving
- Hopefully follow someone's journey with Gallaghers front foot weighing system
- Continue sharing any new research etc
- More on what to look for in trading stock.



New Partnership | Raising the Steaks Ep 1

536 views • 10 months ago



Semen testing process | Raising the Steaks Ep 6

73 views • 9 months ago



Tagging and Weighing Calves NZ | Raising the Steaks Ep 5

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Learning the gear | Raising the Steaks Ep 2

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/raisingthesteaks>

Join the group or invite others to join. Great place for you to share information or to let us know what you would like industry information on.





Carrying out a Structural Assessment of a Bull

There are fed bulls and there are bred bulls, and it is the latter commercial buyers should be targeting when buying bulls.

To help farmers select bulls that are functional for a number of years, Beef + Lamb New Zealand has enlisted the services of Accredited Structural Assessment Technician Bill Austin.

B+LNZ Genetics, with the help of Austin, has put together a video which steps farmers through the process of assessing the structure and docility of beef bulls using the Beef Class Structural Assessment System.

In the 14-minute video, Austin urges farmers to ignore a bull's overall bodyweight and condition on sale day and focus on whether its Estimated Breeding Values meet their overall breeding objectives and their structural soundness.

The Structural Assessment considers a bull's temperament, the front and rear claw set, the front and rear feet (hoof angle), the rear legs side and hind views, the front legs' front view and the sheath and navel.

To view the video visit beeflambnz.com and search "beef class assessment"

BEEF RESOURCES TOOLBOX

Better Beef Breeding learning module: Based on the popular workshops, the online module helps farmers to select the right bull for their needs. It can be completed in sections, allowing users to come and go as they wish.

Better Beef Breeding book: From setting breeding objectives to bringing your new bull home. This book provides detailed information to guide you through the bull selection process.

Visit beeflambnz.com, and search "Better Beef Breeding"

INZB Podcast Series: Each episode offers invaluable insights into INZB programme outcomes as well as advancements in livestock genetics. From AI-powered cattle monitoring to genetic tools and the future of beef farming in New Zealand.

Visit blnzgenetics.com/informing-nz-beef

Body Condition Scoring beef cows

Body Condition Score (BCS) is an important production measure of the energy reserves of an animal, in the form of fat and muscle. Body Condition Scoring to a standard scale allows consistency within and between herds over time and more objective assessment of BCS differences.

In a 20-minute video, B+LNZ Genetics' Anna Boyd covers what a Body Condition Score is, why you should utilise this management tool, when you can Body Condition Score on farm, and demonstrates how to Body Condition Score beef cows.



Visit beeflambnz.com and search "Cow BCS"



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IRISH BEEF UP NON-REPLACEMENT DAIRY CALVES

Beef genetics are likely to play an increasingly important role in this country's dairy industry as it grapples with the issue of non-replacement (bobby) calves.

Jason Archer, Beef + Lamb New Zealand's Head of Genetics, recently visited Ireland to see first-hand how the Irish dairy industry has successfully reduced the number of non-replacement dairy calves slaughtered at a young age every year to around 15,000.

"The visit highlighted the opportunities available to reduce the number of non-replacement dairy calves born in New Zealand and beef genetics would be an important part of the solution."

Dr Archer says that the Irish dairy industry has taken a unified and multi-faceted approach to maximising the value of surplus calves produced from their dairy industry. This has included the use of sexed-semen, quality beef genetics, a national data recording system, and the development of a Commercial Beef Value (CBV). This attributes a monetary value to each calf based on its genetic merit.

All of these have contributed to improving

the quality of the surplus calves available.

"The Irish have taken a long-term view and have been diligent in using all the tools and systems at their disposal to help future-proof their industry using both incentives and regulations."

He says being so close to their markets, the Irish also have a greater awareness of the reputational risk posed by bobby calves and this has helped drive industry change.

Dr Archer says he would like to see the New Zealand industry develop a similar system to the CBV that could be assigned to dairy beef calves at weaning.

The value would identify the genetic quality of the calf and act as a predictor of its productive potential. However, unless that information was shared throughout the value chain, there would be less incentive for dairy farmers to improve the quality of the calves they produce.

"We need some mechanism that differentiates the animals that have the genetics and have had the management to underpin those genetics."

Dr Archer said this would require information transfer and the market acting on

that information, but biosecurity could also be part of the package.

While Ireland's concerted efforts to reduce bobby calves have been relatively recent, Dr Archer says they are definitely on the right track.

"Irish dairy farmers need to be able to sell their calves as there are no alternatives. Strict regulations, in which all cattle are registered and all deaths are tracked, do not allow animals to be killed and buried on farms, so dairy farmers need to be offering good quality calves to the market. Added to this, Bord Bia, the Irish Food Board's quality assurance scheme, will no longer accept milk from any farm slaughtering non-replacement calves."

Dr Archer says these incentivise dairy farmers to look beyond gestation length and calving ease when selecting beef sires and think about the traits that make the resulting calves an attractive proposition for finishers and processors.

"They need to be able to sell that calf and they need to give the next person something to buy. Otherwise, the farm is effectively forced to rear the calf themselves."

While the Irish operate similar livestock

systems to those seen in this country, farms are generally smaller and there is a strong focus on beef production, with very few sheep.

Their industry has advanced cattle progeny testing, including feed and methane efficiency testing and genotyping.

There is also an advanced level of farmer support offered through the Teagasc Knowledge Transfer team and assurance through Bord Bia.

Dr Archer feels New Zealand could learn a lot from the way the Irish have dealt with the issue of non-replacement dairy calves.

“While we couldn’t completely follow in their footsteps due to the structure of our industry, we can certainly emulate the way they have developed a long-term plan and thought about the building blocks required. They have worked collaboratively to put these building blocks in place. ■






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NO STRANGER DANGER WITH HILLCROFT BULLS

Tony Leggett

Temperament is a key priority when Isabel Barker is selecting Angus bulls for tailing up after artificial insemination finishes in their South Waikato dairy herd.

She has been buying about a dozen two-year-old bulls from the Crawford family's Hillcroft Angus stud at Ohinewai for the past eight years and says the exceptional temperament was a standout quality the first time they attended an annual sale.

"They had mobs of 30 or more bulls in three or four grass paddocks near the sale ring and there were people wandering through them. My husband and I just couldn't believe how quiet and unruffled the bulls were," she says.

"There was no pushing and shoving, the bulls

were just settled and not bothered by a whole lot of strangers in the same small paddocks."

The Barkers have been customers ever since, typically buying about a dozen bulls each year to cover their 500-head herd of mostly straight Friesian cows. They run a large dairy and beef finishing operation on about 900 hectares at Korakonui, south-east of Te Awamutu.

"Hillcroft was recommended to us as a good option when we were sourcing bulls. Temperament is a big focus for us because we have a large team of staff and we need to ensure their safety at all times," Isabel says.

"We try to avoid bringing bulls up the race to our yards and prefer to have staff cutting bulls out or joining them with a mob of cows as they pass by the bulls down a lane."

Their approach to selecting bulls is to check their temperament and structure in the holding yard, and then go through their estimated breeding values as a final filter on the shortlist to bid on.

"We have a type of bull we like. They need to be light on their feet, have clean shoulders and good temperament. Then we cross reference their EBVs to ensure we have calving ease and steady growth through to 600-day weight," she says.

They typically average about \$3300 or a little more for their two-year-old selections at the annual Hillcroft sale and these are used for two matings. This year they are considering buying some yearling bulls to see if they can get an extra year's use from them.

“We have to be a bit careful with them when they reach three years of age as they are getting very heavy by that time.

“We are mating them to our mixed-age Friesian cows, but we’re mindful of the risks at calving time from using a bull which doesn’t fit our selection criteria so that’s why we’re targeting bulls that offer lower birth weights for calving ease,” she says.

All 150 head of Angus-sired progeny from each mating are finished on the property. Steers are slaughtered at up to 360kg carcass weight by 2.5 years and heifers a little earlier at about 270kg carcass weight.

“We’re really happy with the Hillcroft bulls. We’ve never had one go lame or not perform in the paddock, and the temperament is exceptional,” Isabel says.

REPEAT BUYERS FOR CALVES

Repeat buyers return each year for Brett Worth’s 60 Angus-sired dairy beef calves.

The South Waikato dairy farmer netted close to \$600 each for his calves last spring when they were sold at an average live weight of 108kg at less than 100 days of age. The repeat buyer interest is a strong signal to him that his breeding strategy is hitting the mark with beef finishers.

He’s been buying bulls at the Crawford family’s Hillcroft Angus sale at Ohinewai for the past six years and usually comes home with about 12 two-year-olds each time.

“Their bulls come off tough hill country but there’s nothing like the Angus breed to forage hard and bounce back quickly when the feed is there and conditions improve,” Brett says.

He farms a mix of breeds in his herd of 470 dairy cows, from Friesian to Jersey-Friesian-cross and a sprinkling of Milking Shorthorns.

When selecting bulls, he likes to see ‘stretch’ and depth, but they must also be finer in the shoulder to reduce the risk of calving issues when used to follow-up the three-week artificial insemination programme in his dairy herd. Estimated breeding values, particularly for calving ease and birthweight, are used as a secondary tool in lining up his selections at sale time.

“We actually put Hereford bulls in for a week after the AI finishes, just so we’re certain of the sire and to ensure there is no room for error with our heifer replacements. Then we put Angus bulls in for another six weeks to complete the mating.”

He finds Angus bulls from Hillcroft are very sound in the feet and rarely have any lameness. “Occasionally, one will have a bit of soreness, but after a day or two out of the cows, they have recovered and ready for work again.”

He uses a financing option from stock firm Carrfields to purchase his bulls, which means they are used in the herd and sold a few weeks later. He is considering buying some yearling bulls at this year’s sale but has limited area for holding a mob of bulls through for another season to use them again

DAIRY BUYERS DOMINATE AT ANNUAL SALE

Hillcroft Angus studmaster Fraser Crawford says about 70% of the bulls sold at their annual spring sale go to dairy farms.

“We’ve put a lot of emphasis on selection for calving ease and producing bulls suited for heifer mating in beef herds and the dairy sector, without sacrificing true Angus type and soundness in our cattle, because we need easy-doing, meaty cattle that thrive on the hills,” he says.

“Our aim is always to produce bulls that are extremely good value for money and we’re

‘THERE’S NOTHING LIKE THE ANGUS BREED TO FORAGE HARD AND BOUNCE BACK QUICKLY WHEN THE FEED IS THERE AND CONDITIONS IMPROVE.’

typically averaging around \$3000 for two-year-olds and \$2200 for yearlings.”

Fraser says he’s noticed an increase in confidence from dairy and beef farmers in using EBVs to help select the best bulls to suit an individual’s breeding strategy. Many buyers shortlist a number of bulls and then refine their intentions based on the EBVs for calving ease and growth, especially with heifer mating.

“We’ve got some meaty types in our 65 rising two-year bulls for the sale this spring, with useful EBVs too. There will also be 80-plus yearlings selected for heifer mating and, as always, some top picks among them,” he says. ■



Rising two year old heifers from Hillcroft stud will start calving in September.



Fraser Crawford and his son Hunter often work together to weigh calves soon after birth.

BULLS FIT FOR THE DAIRY MARKET



DAVID WARBURTON

Dairy farmers have different requirements when using bulls in their dairy herds compared to a beef herd.

The primary income for the dairy farmer is the milk cheque.

Secondary and significantly minor income relative to the milk cheque is the sale of the beef cross calves.

To achieve the primary income, they need cows in calf as early as possible to have the milking potential for a long lactation.

The cow needs to have a nice, easy calving of a live calf in order to maximise lactation performance.

If the calf is born early, this is an added bonus of getting more milk in the vat.

From a genetic point of view, the key traits to achieve the primary outcomes focus on the following EBVs:

- Calving ease direct (more positive is better)
- Gestation length (more negative is better)
- Birth weight (smaller number is better, up to a point).

Secondary beef cross calf income

The secondary income of the beef cross calf sale is also a consideration.

In 2030, Fonterra would like to see no bobby calves being sold for that purpose. This means calves need to be reared and enter a production system. What that looks like is not yet well understood, but you can be assured the calf will need to be able to grow fast and be well-muscled. If the animal is grown to a normal slaughter age and is castrated, some good carcase characteristics will also be desirable. If the animals are kept as bulls this is less important.

The important EBVs for the finished beef cross animal are:

- 200, 400 and 600-day growth
- Carcase weight
- IMF.

When thinking about breed complementarity, we need to consider matching traits as well.

We know the straight Friesian has lots of growth and a large frame. They need extra muscling, in particular the eye muscle in a medium frame package with a bit of IMF for marbling to produce

the ideal finishing beef-cross progeny.

If the receiving dairy herd is a Kiwi cross herd with a distinct Jersey type, then they are smaller, slower-growing, already have some marbling from the Jersey and also lack muscle. Using a bull with extra growth, muscle and frame can be of great benefit to the finishing ability of the beef-cross animal.

It is important to remember that the primary income dwarfs the secondary income so don't get carried away with increasing the growth and carcase EBVs if the dairy cow can't have an unassisted calving with a live calf produced. The dairy farmer always remembers calving paralysis over a saleyard premium for big calves – and so does the vet.

Biosecurity Aspects

The third aspect of the dairy bull market is biosecurity.

All bulls entering dairy farms should be:

- BVD tested negative
- Vaccinated for BVD 2 x
- Vaccinated for Leptospirosis 2 x
- TB free
- Some dairy farmers will require IBR vaccinations as well.

Some risk assessment should be made about ticks and theileria. Ticks can infect cattle with the theileria organism. Theileria causes anaemia, which first presents as lethargy. Selling naïve bulls into endemic tick regions can be a disaster for bull libido. The time when bulls go out for mating is the time of peak tick numbers on farm.

In terms of actual animal size, most dairy farmers want their bulls to be between 500 and 600kg, not obese, not skinny and, above all, they must respect people and hot wires. ■

Dave Warburton is a production animal vet, for the past 22 years based at Vet Services Hastings, and a stud Angus and Hereford cattle breeder.

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