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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



MIKE SMITH

Angus New Zealand
President

The 2025 bull sale season has kicked off with real momentum, buoyed by the exceptional strength of the beef market. Beef farmers are seeing the fruits of their hard work, with high-priced schedules across prime stock and fattening cattle providing a solid financial backdrop to this year's sales.

Following a strong weaner cattle season, demand has remained firm, and confidence is clearly reflected in the sale ring.

Across the country, Angus bull sales in particular have exceeded expectations. Farmers are investing heavily in premium genetics to capitalise on record beef values, and the results are speaking for themselves.

Sale clearances have been excellent, with strong bidding and prices underlining the appetite for quality sires. Buyers are clearly focused on securing bulls that will help drive production efficiency and carcase quality — key traits in a competitive market.

The strength of New Zealand's beef industry is underpinned by strong global demand. While local producers are thriving, conditions in some major beef-producing nations have been less favourable. Ongoing droughts, floods and outbreaks of disease in key international markets have placed pressure on supply, creating opportunities for NZ exporters.

Farmers here are well positioned to meet that demand. With a focus on genetic improvement and sustainable production, the sector is not only weathering global challenges but thriving amid them. The bullish mood at bull sales is more than just optimism — it reflects a wider confidence in the direction of the industry.

As the season progresses, all signs point to continued strength in the market. For many in the beef industry, this is a well-earned chance to invest in the future, backed by strong prices, global demand and the enduring value of high-performing Angus genetics.

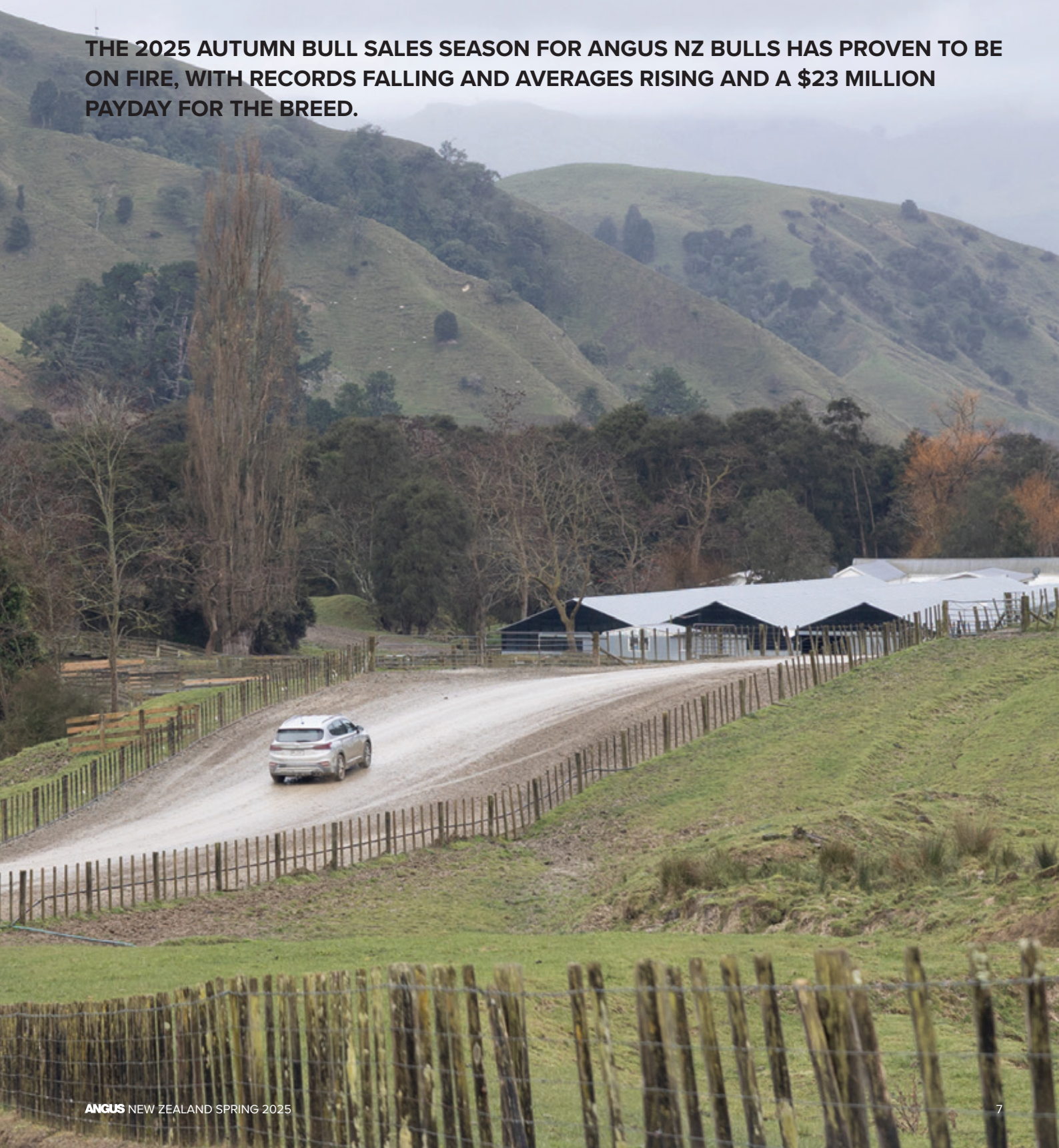
Mike Smith
Angus New Zealand President



Cruising to the Tangihau Sale, 2025.

ANGUS NZ BULL SALES ON FIRE

THE 2025 AUTUMN BULL SALES SEASON FOR ANGUS NZ BULLS HAS PROVEN TO BE ON FIRE, WITH RECORDS FALLING AND AVERAGES RISING AND A \$23 MILLION PAYDAY FOR THE BREED.





Lot 16 Tangihau, sold for record price of \$161,000.

Jackie Harrigan

A \$23 million payday for the AngusNZ breed has seen more than 1946 bulls sold this season, with the top price record falling not once but twice, just days apart.

With all of the autumn bull sales wrapped up, the top prices and averages for many breeders were up considerably on the past few years, with a national average of \$11,900.

The top-priced bull this season was sold at the Tangihau sale in late June for \$161,000. The sale average hit \$24,880 and all 50 bulls sold.

On the previous day, the top-priced Cricklewood bull reached \$156,000 with a similar average of \$24,357 for 13 bulls sold of 13 offered.

Past president of AngusNZ and new honorary life member John Cochrane says it's a really positive news story for the Angus breed.

"Demand for Angus bulls is obviously outstripping supply at the moment and we are seeing prices go up and up."

With the conversion of farms to forestry, the Southland farmer says commercial cow numbers are not growing, but Angus bulls must be replacing other breed bulls in commercial beef herds.

"I wouldn't say anything derogatory about other breeds or bulls, but the strength of the Angus market and the Angus product at the moment is leading commercial farmers to

invest in black Angus genetics.

"When you go to a restaurant, or even to a burger joint, you can see Angus (or maybe Wagyu) on the menu and that resounds with people, and builds the marketing story," he adds.

"When commercial farmers are selling black weaners and steers, there is a good demand and premiums paid – in the saleyards, in the feedlots and by the meat processors."

Farmers are observing what's happening in the marketplace and are investing in good Angus genetics.

John also commends the breed on being one of the first to adopt DNA technologies, which means buyers can be sure they are getting accurate data.

"The AngusNZ seedstock producers have put a huge effort into their breeding programmes and the prices they are receiving are a testament to their investment in technology and a real vote of confidence in their drive for balanced genetics.

"The new confidence in genotypes combined with strong phenotypes means the commercial guys are prepared to pay up to \$20,000 for a good commercial bull.

"And the stud guys are seeing those results and are prepared to invest heavily in stud sires to maintain a great pipeline of genetics for the commercial farmers."

Return on investment is great with, weaners selling for \$1200 each.

John says with a \$15,000 Angus bull investment, the calf breeder only needs

to sell 13 calves to pay for the bull and potentially with a lifetime of four years of sire duties covering 40–50 cows each year and a disposal value of up to \$3000, buyers can buy bulls with real confidence.

A growing social media presence push the success stories, and young Angus people being seen on mainstream TV channels, all feeds into the marketing and pushes the momentum and broader Angus success story.

AngusNZ is definitely the flavour of the month and the number of bulls sold has increased year-on-year for the past 5–10 years, John says.

"When I used to fly up to meetings and Angus events I used to ask town and city folk I sat with on the plane which breeds of cattle they were aware of and often they could only name the Angus.

"It's a good positive story showing real confidence in the beef industry and we need positive stories at times like these."

PGG Wrightson auctioneer Neville Clark dropped the gavel to seal the deal on both the Cricklewood and Tangihau top-price achievers, and he agrees with John's sentiment.

"Greater focus on genetics is also working to advantage the most successful breeders," Neville says.

"We are now presenting cattle with 40 years of EBVs documented. People who breed bulls know how to use that science to best advantage. Anyone now in the market has an excellent bunch of cattle to select from."

Breeders are gathering the rewards for the hard yards they have put in over the years.

“How commercial farmers have responded, with the exceptional demand for the bulls offered, shows the importance now placed on buying the best available genetics. Bulls are not a one-night wonder. They need to be able to carry on for several years, influencing the long-term success and profitability of a herd.”

Neville suggests the few recent lean years resulted in a big bounce back this year, which helped underline the strength of the market for bulls.

“Going into the bull season last year, things were less positive and many farmers decided they’d be able to get through with one bull short, which may have cost them in dry cows. Now the market for beef is at \$8 per kilogram, that thinking was shown up as a false economy, and no one repeated such a decision this year.”

He also acknowledges the strength of the East Coast sales, where both the huge prices were achieved.

“While the Tangihau bull was outstanding, East Coast breeders were more widely to the fore over the past few weeks. Breeding Angus has made the East Coast what it is. The region produces sound, functional cattle



Cricklewood Angus sold Nuhaka U909 for \$156,000 to Puke-Nui Angus.

that deliver and are true to their breed type.

“Stockmanship is the key: breeders who know and understand their herd and can mate accordingly. Sixty per cent of the bulls sold there go to farms outside the region. That testifies to the value placed on good East Coast station-bred cattle,” Neville says.

He believes the strong bull selling season is the start of something even more rewarding for farmers.

“For the last 10 years I’ve been saying

1930 ANGUS BULLS SOLD

\$23,988,888 IN SALES

TOP SALE AVERAGE OF \$24,888

that the world will face a protein shortage. I believe the record prices paid for bulls over the last few weeks indicates we are now on the cusp of that. If so, this is just the start of markedly increased profitability for New Zealand farmers,” he says.

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 *olivia murray*



Crowd enjoying the hospitality at Tangihau.

BULL SALES RESULTS 2025						
WARD	REGION	SOLD	OFFERED	AVERAGE	TOP PRICE	GROSS SALES
Ward 1	Northland	25	29	\$8,040.00	\$25,500.00	\$201,000.00
Ward 2:	Bay of Plenty-Waikato	25	25	\$11,062.00	\$18,500.00	\$276,550.00
Ward 3:	Taranaki-King Country	197	204	\$10,439.00	\$32,000.00	\$2,056,483.00
Ward 4:	Gisborne	357	357	\$18,163.00	\$161,000.00	\$6,414,489.00
Ward 5:	Hawke's Bay	144	146	\$13,359.00	\$26,000.00	\$1,909,245.00
Ward 6:	Wairarapa	150	153	\$11,783.00	\$46,000.00	\$2,121,473.00
Ward 7:	Whanganui-Manawatū-Rangitikei	97	102	\$9,558.00	\$48,000.00	\$969,690.00
Ward 8:	Nelson-Marlborough	241	251	\$12,014.00	\$62,000.00	\$2,986,749.00
Ward 9:	Canterbury-Westland	294	316	\$9,711.00	\$75,000.00	\$3,098,736.00
Ward 10:	Otago-Southland	400	419	\$9,333.00	\$71,000.00	\$3,954,473.00
TOTAL		1930	2002	\$11,346.20		\$23,988,888.00

NORTH ISLAND SCORCHERS

Once again, the results from the Gisborne AngusNZ stud sales lead the country, with 100% clearance of 355 bulls offered. The top price once again was the Tangihau sale, where studmaster Dean McHardy upped last year’s record on farm sale price of \$135,000 with a bull selling for \$161,000.

Lot 16 Tangihau U418 sold to Keith and Gaye Higgins of Oregon Angus, Masterton.

Stud master Dean McHardy says the sale gives them confidence that sticking to their breed programme was the right thing to do.

There is a lot of data on the bull, with balanced breeding values and no extremes, he says.

Ten lots were transferred to 12 studs to go

on and breed the type of bulls that Dean says were a feature in his sale.

A lot of people are going for type – that good big barrelled bull, with a good head that “really looks like a sire bull” and good structural soundness on the ground.

“These are really good East Coast type bulls, that have the good data as well.”

The Fossil Creek bull, that sired Tangihau U418 and numerous other sale bulls was an outcross bull for a lot of people, Dean said, whose strength is the females that he leaves on the ground.

“We are getting a really good type through the females, they are really good functional cattle with good data, and then we can cross

them with anything.”

“We have got more Fossil Creek progeny coming through, and they have proven popular.”

The other stud transfers for Tangihau were: Lot 1 to Glenwood Angus for \$34,000; Lot 6 to Colvend Angus for \$65,000; Lot 10 to Elgin Angus for \$23,000; Lot 38 to Dandaleith Angus for \$19,000; Lot 41 to Stern Angus and Mt Mable Angus for \$110,000; Lot 42 to Shian Angus for \$58,000; Lot 46 to Waitangi Angus for \$20,000; Lot 48 to Kaharau Angus and Turiroa Angus for \$17,000 and Lot 50 to Tawa Hills Angus for \$20,000.



Stern Angus sold Rob Roy of Stern to Cricklewood Angus stud for \$75,000.

SOUTHERN STUNNERS

The top priced South Island bull sold in South Canterbury at the Stern Angus sale at Pleasant Point. James and Fiona Fraser sold Lot 37 to Cricklewood Stud for \$75,000. James said Lot 37 was an outstanding example of balanced EBVs and great phenotype, and the bull attracted a lot of interest across New Zealand and Australia.

"We believe he has a really promising future."

James was delighted with the strength of the Stern Sale, with 93 bulls sold from 103 lots, saying strong stud interest saw seven bulls selling for transfer. Lot 3 sold to Kaiwara Angus for \$34,000; Lot 13 to Umbrella Range Angus for \$24,000; Lot 28 to KJ Angus for \$65,000; Lot 38 to Delmont Angus for \$38,000; Lot 5 to Stoneburn Angus for \$30,000 and a bull to Puketi Angus for \$10,000.

Commercial bulls were also sought after and sold well, averaging \$10,000, James said, and half of the commercial bulls sold for \$5–8,000, showing really good value for money.

"All the sales reflected the really strong position of the beef industry at the moment and we look forward to that continuing into the future."

The Otago/Southland ward sold 400 from 419 offered with a sales average of \$9333 and top price of \$71,000, with \$3,954,473 in sales.

The second top price for a southern Angus bull was \$71,000 paid for Fossil Creek Urban 032, sold to Rob and Tracy Sherson at Shian Angus, Taumarunui.

The Fossil Creek stud is now owned by Blair and Jane Smith and their bull sale result was 71 sold out of 75 offered, with an average price of \$11,774.

Jane says they were thrilled with the mood of the sale and how it reflects the positivity of the sector.

"I think some farmers held off buying last year but have come into the market with a bit of money in their pockets this season."

The Fossil Creek 2025 sale featured 16 sons of the same sire, Te Mania Rustler, who had bred particularly well with the maternal herd, Jane says. One of those sons was the top-priced bull, Urban, and Jane says he had impeccable structure and a strong phenotype along with good data.

"He just was the whole package really," Jane says.

"And we were really pleased that our loyal

commercial clients were able to buy the similar genetics of his brothers."

Other stud transfers were to Mount Linton at \$25,000 and to Taimate Angus at \$20,000.

Jane notes the positivity at sales in other parts of the country and says farmers are getting more and more tuned into EBVs and making sure they are looking at both the phenotypic and genotypic information.

"ALL THE SALES REFLECTED THE REALLY STRONG POSITION OF THE BEEF INDUSTRY AT THE MOMENT AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO THAT CONTINUING INTO THE FUTURE."

"At the Tangihau sale, it was a thrill to see three of the top-priced bulls were bred from a Fossil Creek sire, and it was fantastic to see the progeny coming from him.

"We were pleased that our average and others were not too high across the country, because we don't want any of our loyal

commercial farmers to get priced out of the market.”

The Nelson Marlborough region was similarly buoyant, with 241 sold from 251 offered, a sale average of \$12,014, and top price of \$62,000 for a Taimate bull from Ward and \$2,986,749 in sales in the region.

PGG Wrightsons stud stock agent John McCone, based in the South Island, reiterates that the industry is in great heart and underinvestment in bulls with last year’s dry season in parts of the south led many commercial farmers to quit an old bull for \$3000 and reinvest in some new genetics.

“The season built and built and they may have come in with a bit of FOMO and helped by the beef schedule defying gravity, commercial farmers were happy to spend \$15–\$18,000 on a bull, which we haven’t seen before.

“They probably made an extra \$150–200 per head for their weaner calves and they were happy to take that money and reinvest it in a new herd sire and a higher-than-usual price point.

“It’s great to see that the B+LNZ Genetics messaging and field days and the social media and education on the value of EBVs and how to use them is really ramping home . We saw

farmers down here in the south using those tools and paying better money for the bulls that had the right EBVs for their herd and chasing those bulls – at the expense of the lesser animals.”

McCone is upbeat about the immediate future, saying the season and grass growth will always determine farmers’ decisions.

“The outlook for the next year or two looks

good as the booming prices for commodities keeps lifting, and the bulls are improving year on year.” ■



Fossil Creek Urban with a \$71,000 price tag paid by Shian Angus, Taumaranui.



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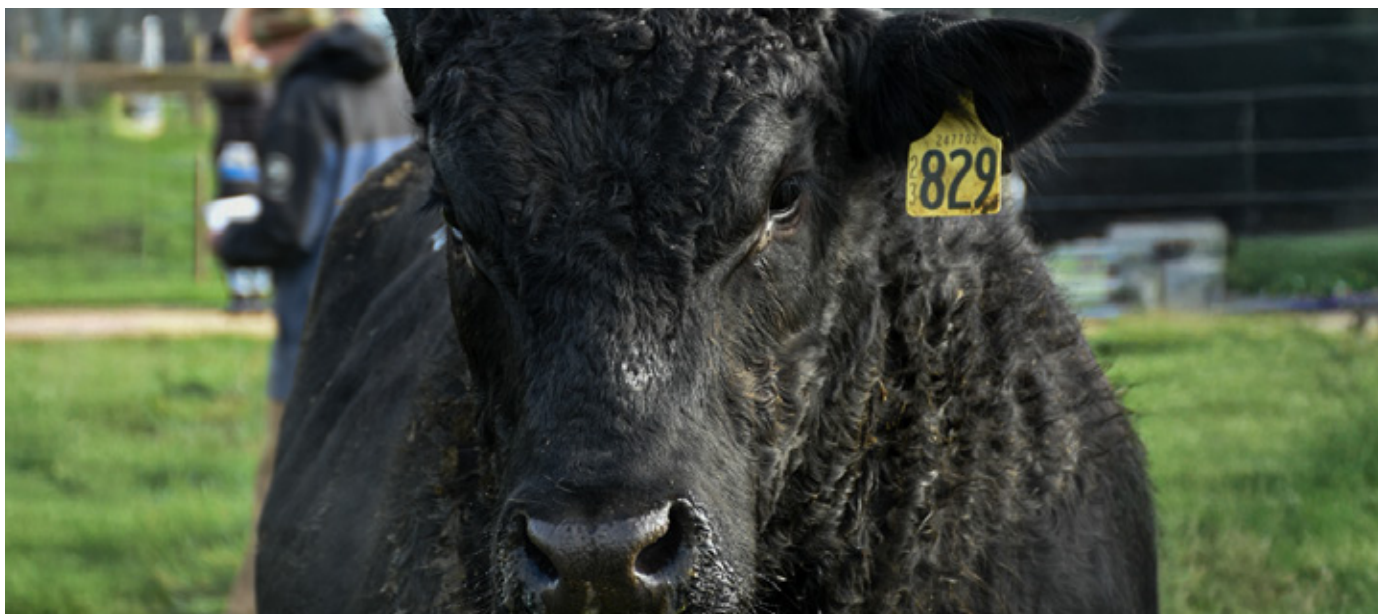
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2YR OLD BULL SALES RESULTS 2025

MAY

Stud Name	sold / offered	Ave \$	Top \$
Bannochburn	11 / 12	7388	9000
Colvend	18 / 20	7027	12500
Dandaloo	34 / 34	12706	36000
Delmont	33 / 33	10000	18000
Glenwood	13 / 14	8038	13500
Hingaia	27 / 31	8462	16000
KayJay	43 / 43	16321	46000
Oregon	17 / 17	14647	40000
Penvose	40 / 44	8350	16000
Peters	21 / 23	8214	16500
Pikoburn	15 / 16	8740	19500
Puketoi	21 / 22	7047	14000
Ruaview	17 / 17	10676	48000
Stoneburn	24 / 24	8250	14000
Tapiri	22 / 22	10363	16500
Tarangower	36 / 36	11444	32000

JUNE

Stud Name	sold / offered	Ave \$	Top \$
Aywon	15 / 15	10900	15000
Black Ridge	32 / 33	7820	18000
Blacknight	16 / 16	9218	15000
Brackenfield	19 / 20	9315	15000
Cricklewood	13 / 13	24357	156000
Dandaleith	30 / 30	13133	20000
Earnscleugh Station	60 / 62	9066	45000
Elgin	27 / 28	13566	23000
Fossil Creek	71 / 75	11774	71000
Glanworth	25 / 27		19000
Glen R	28 / 32	6400	8500
Hallmark	59 / 59	12915	20000
Hingaia	27 / 31	8462	16000
Kaharau	66 / 66	17158	38000

JUNE

Stud Name	sold / offered	Ave \$	Top \$
Kaiwara	26 / 29	8200	12500
Kenhardt	51 / 51	12627	22000
Kincardine	22 / 25	9522	18000
Leefield Station	15 / 17	8766	1200
Martin Farming	30 / 31	9709	16000
Matauri	25 / 29	8040	25500
Merchiston	34 / 34	10400	19000
Mt Mable	28 / 29	13821	26000
Mt Possession	22 / 22	13750	66000
Okaka	14 / 19	6357	8000
Oregon	41 / 41	12280	40000
Pinebank	28 / 29	9150	17000
Pine Park	32 / 32	10800	14000
Puke-Nui	24 / 24	12437	21500
Ratanui	39 / 39	15166	31000
Red Oak	31 / 33	8830	15000
Riverlands J	20 / 20	9600	17500
Rolling Rock	25 / 25	11062	18500
Shian	39 / 39	11038	18000
Stern	93 / 102	12478	75000
Sudeley	63 / 66	11067	21000
Taimate	96 / 96	13541	62000
Tangihau	50 / 50	24880	161000
Te Kupe	6 / 6	11783	14000
Turihaua	72 / 72	19569	92000
Turiroa	49 / 49	16898	40000
Umbrella Range	49 / 50	13000	50000
Waimara	31 / 31	10000	14000
Woodbank	65 / 71	11532	30000

AngusNZ makes every effort to accurately record sale results but takes no liability for any error or omission in this content.



Ben, Robyn & John Murray



Elsie Law



Sophie from PBB at Tapiri Angus Bull Sale



Dandaleith whiskey bottle winner



Oreere Sale



Mt Possession Sale



Tangihau Bull Sale

AngusNZ ON THE ROAD



Dean McHardy/Jane Allan/Keith Higgins



Cathy Donaldson & Sherson ladies



Gumboot Weather



Umbrella Range Jeremy Gunton



Dandaleith Sale



Kylie Johnson/Rob Sherson



Tapiri Angus Sale



food/flowers at Kaharau



Paul Revell/Ed Sherrieff



Tiara Lambert



John McCone/ Ryan Hussey

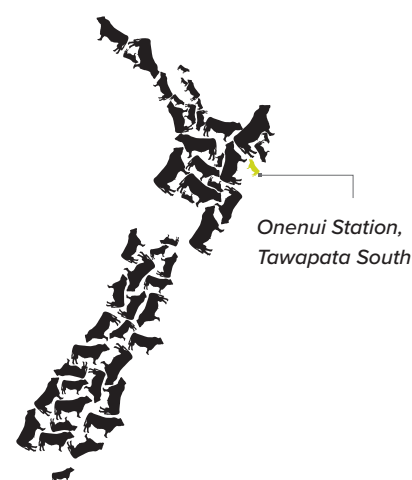
PENINSULAR POWER

ONENUI STATION, ON THE SOUTHERN TIP OF MAHIA PENINSULA, WAS A FINALIST IN THE 2025 AHUWHENUA EXCELLENCE IN MĀORI FARMING AWARDS AND HAS MANY STRINGS TO ITS BOW. BUT THE POWERHOUSE IS IMPROVING THE SHEEP PRODUCTION, FUELLED BY THE GROWING ANGUS COW HERD AND ITS ROLE IN AIDING PASTURE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTAINING PRODUCTIVE HILL COUNTRY.

The original woolshed and homestead were on the terrace by the ocean but new buildings were established on the flat plateau when the road was put in to Onenui. The station has 20km of coastline – always a sheltered spot for the staff and shareholders to catch a fish or two.

ONENUI STATION FARM FACTS

- **Total area:** 3476 ha
- **Effective grazing area:** 1700ha
- **Covenanted Ngā Whenua Rāhui kawenata:** 836ha, rest coastal retirements.
- **Contour:** 350ha flats, 500ha medium hills, 850ha hard hills, 50% exposed and south facing.
- **Subdivision:** 42 paddocks hill country, ranging 15ha–180ha
78 paddocks on 350ha flats averaging 4.5ha.
- **Water supply:** Gravity fed water system on flats and easier hills, dams and creeks on harder hills.
- **Rainfall:** 950mm/year, traditionally summer dry
- **Olsen P:** hills average 20, flats average 40
- **Soil pH:** Hills average 5.8, flats average 6.1.



Jackie Harrigan

Photos by Alphapix.nz, courtesy of Ahuwhenua Trophy 2025

The land at Onenui station on the Māhia Peninsula was discovered by Māori Pacific voyagers in the 10th century and now has innovations and modern farming practices placing it squarely in the 21st century.

The stunning 3476-ha property has a commanding presence on the southern tip of the peninsula, encompassing Waikawa Portland Island and the plateau country at the tip and the medium and steep hill country marching back up the peninsula.

The station has been in development mode for the past 10 years and on the back of it has achieved great advances in production and profitability, allowing them to cashflow more development of lamb finishing, lucerne

cropping, subdivision and erosion area retirement and planting.

Their progress was highlighted and lauded as a finalist in the 2025 Ahuwhenua Excellence in Māori Farming Awards when the judges were impressed by the improvements in animal performance and feed production, guided by strong finance and benchmarking practices and clear and comprehensive governance and strategy tied to support of their community and shareholders.

The current major farm development project, started in 2016 and drawing to completion next year, has been reclamation from scattered scrublands of 1046ha of hill country into productive use.

Consents were obtained and the scrub

STOCK NUMBERS ONENUI STATION	
Stock numbers: 2023/24	
SHEEP	
MA ewes	4168
2th ewes	1487
Ewe hoggets	2413
Ram/other hoggets	435
Breeding rams	116
Other	5
Total: 8624	
Total SSU: 7746	
CATTLE	
MA cows	327
R3 heifers	103
R2 heifers	179
R1 heifers	221
R1 steers	361
R2 steers	61
Breeding bulls	25
Total numbers: 1277	
Total CSU: 6014	
Total SU: 13760	
Sheep/cattle ratio: 56/44	



Angus cows have been farmed on Onenui for many years, and are credited with the success of the sheep and lamb production on the station.

‘IT’S GREAT TO BE ABLE TO GET THE EARLY LAMBS AND OLDER EWES WEANED AND AWAY OFF THE PROPERTY BEFORE THE MARKET GETS FLOODED AND THEN WE CAN CONCENTRATE ON PUTTING CONDITION ON THE REST OF THE EWES BEFORE IT GETS TOO DRY.’

sprayed and burned. The subsequent fertilising, regrassing and subdivision has been a great success story and exciting to be a part of, manager Logan McClelland says.

Logan has been manager for four years. After completing a Waipaoa cadet training scheme he spent two years as shepherd followed by two years stock manager for Gisborne farmer Dan Griffin before snagging the Onenui managerial role at just 24 years of age.

The development country was 50–60% scrub cover, so clearing it was in effect like buying another 500ha of clear land, and has allowed increasing stocking rates and better pasture control and performance, Logan says.

“The development was like buying land at only \$2000 per hectare rather than \$15,000 a hectare.”

“With capital fert and a lot of fencing going on, we have been able to lift our stock units from 12,000 to 16,000, increasing both sheep and cattle stocking rates on the property.”

SHEEP POLICIES FOR EARLY COUNTRY

The Romney flock is the engine room of the Onenui operation, with policies geared around the environment on the peninsula, which has its advantages and disadvantages, Logan says.

“This country is really early country,” he

says. “The grass growth slows but doesn’t really stop all the way through winter, and we don’t really get below 5C in the winter, although in a southerly the windchill factor can make it seem colder.

“So we can start lambing our early terminal ewes on 15 July, mated to Sufftex rams, and then the maternals in the Romney flock start on 1 August.

“Because we are very exposed to the south, lamb wastage can be high if we are hit by storms.”

Lambing performance hit 150% last year, with a five-year average of 145%, and a short scanning result of 181%, not including the triplets.

“We feel that we are sitting around the optimum spot, as we don’t want too many more triplet lambs.”

One third of the 6000-ewe Romney flock, including any poorer types or older ewes, are mated to the terminal rams and the aim is to finish 60% of their lambs off their mums in early November with the remaining lambs finished on crops.

Logan says the sheep policy is set to summer dry conditions being the norm, although he says since he has been there they have had a string of wet summers, which have been great for pasture production.

The station has 120ha of lucerne growing on the plateau at the south of the peninsula, an

area built up over the past 14 years, alongside 200ha of improved ryegrass/clover pastures. The lucerne crop has proven invaluable as the older ewes and lambs are set stocked on hills for lambing but after docking they move onto the lucerne from September 1 and then both older ewes and lambs are killed at the local Affco works in November.

“It’s great to be able to get the early lambs and older ewes weaned and away off the property before the market gets flooded and then we can concentrate on putting condition on the rest of the ewes before it gets too dry,” he says.

“The lucerne is awesome – getting ewes and lambs onto it lightens off much of the hill country too at that time of the year as it’s generally pretty short. As a summer crop we can finish our lambs on it, but we need to manage it properly to not push it too hard otherwise we will reduce its longevity. We aim to get at least eight years out of each stand.”

Raphnobrassica, a hybrid of kale and Raphanus sativus (radish) is also cropped across 20ha each summer for one season of lamb finishing and as a pasture regeneration tool, being sown back into ryegrass and clover mixes.

As lamb sales remain the key profit driver for the station, the plan after weaning is to have all of the trade lambs on either lucerne or raphno, with only the replacement ewe lambs

out on the hill, so if it turns dry the capital stock are not compromised.

The target is to kill lambs at 21kg carcase weight average over the season. The first lambs went off their mums at 19kg CW last year with weights increasing to 21–22kg CW later in the season as they finished on the lucerne.

“Having the lambs on the crop makes a big difference,” Logan says.

The coastal property is in the facial eczema zone but Logan says using St Leger FE-tolerant genetics for the past ten years has worked really well and the genetics really suit the peninsula environment.

Internal parasites and potential resistance to them is the other challenge Logan says they have, along with all other farmers, but the lucerne crops help to act as a break crop and to decrease the larval challenge.

To keep the age of the flock relatively young for coping with the challenging country, 1800 replacement ewe lambs are kept on the station. They are not mated as hoggets, but are used as a buffer mob, wintering on the more-exposed country so that lambing ewes get the more sheltered paddocks.

Holding more replacements means they can become trading stock and sold down along with trading cattle if destocking is required in a prolonged dry period.

While the committee of management have discussed and done a pilot on breeding the wool off their Romneys using Wiltshire genetics, Logan is pleased that the wool is still there, as the price has been improving and last bi-annual shearing made a profit on wool sales.

“We have been making a bit of money off the wool – the most recent shearing it cost us \$4 per sheep to take the wool off and we made a profit of \$8 per sheep, so that’s a good start,” he says.

The Romney flock produces good clean white wool and the wool is harvested twice each year by shearers who come in from Gisborne and sold to Segard Masurel.

ANGUS COW HERD ENABLING EWE PERFORMANCE

The Angus herd on Onenui have been on the station for many years and while the lambs might be the profit driver, the cows are the engine allowing the sheep flock to shine.

“You have to give some of the income from the sheep to the cows - if we didn’t have those cows our sheep wouldn’t be able to get 145% lambing on the hills,” Logan says.

“The Angus are a really good hardy breed – they really suit the climate here and there is great demand for the store stock.

“They have a good temperament and suit the hill country.”

Seeing the Angus cows mobbed up and cleaning up the hill country in the middle of winter explains how the station looks so clean and clear from weeds.

The cows have a base of Kenhardt genetics from nearby Nuhaka, but Logan says for the past few years they have been trying a range of genetics, buying yearling bulls for mating to the yearling heifers and using them over the cows as they grow older.

“We mate 180 yearling heifers, as long as we can get them up to 350kg at mating time.

“We have been looking for yearling bulls that have low birthweight EBVs and good calving ease, but also still good growth out to 400 and 600-day weights.

“We are chasing maternal traits and once we nail them, we will start to think about chasing some positive fats.”

The first calving heifers are calved on the flats and the older cows calve on the hills among the ewes and lambs. Calving starts in mid-September after mating from December 1 for the cows and November 15 for the first-calving heifers.

‘THE ANGUS ARE A REALLY GOOD HARDY BREED – THEY REALLY SUIT THE CLIMATE HERE AND THERE IS GREAT DEMAND FOR THE STORE STOCK.’



The Rocket Lab launch pad puts 13–14 Electron rockets into space each year.



Farm staff: James McKay, Jarem Hari, Poppy Ormond and Manager Logan McClelland.

The cows consistently scan 93% and calve around 90%, but Logan says they have a bit of misadventure, so they try to keep the cows out of the really steep country. The cows and calves are mobbed up for mating and rotated around from calf marking.

Weaning is mid-March and calves usually weigh about 220kg average. Once weaned the calves are taken through one winter and then sold from yearling to 18 months, depending on the feed situation and market.

“Trading cattle are handy to have as a flexible stock class in case we have to destock. We sell the steers on farm around 400kg and they usually go down to the Hawke’s Bay and Manawatu to beef finishers.

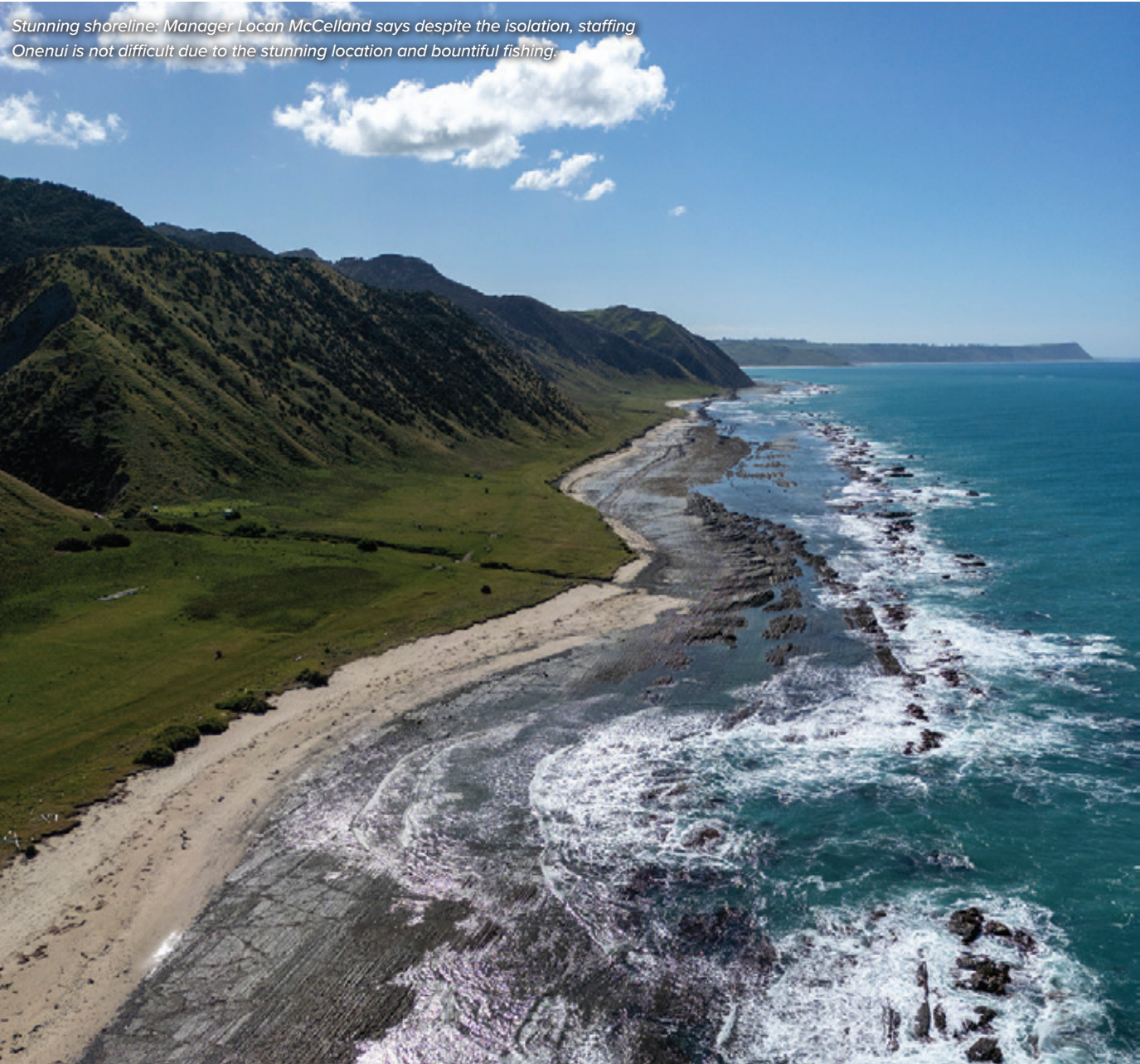
“Before the development we were locked in to selling calves as weaners, but now we can

INNOVATION:

Since 2016, Tawapata South has been home to Rocket Lab, the world’s first private orbital launch range, built at the southern tip of the Māhia Peninsula on the station. The first Electron rocket launch lifted off in May 2017 and each year since the company has bettered its number of successful launches. The relationship aligns with the proprietors’ strategy to diversify income opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the whenua.

Rocket Lab’s presence has brought investment into the region, creating local employment opportunities and fostering innovation. The ability of Tawapata to integrate traditional land use with cutting-edge technology demonstrates their commitment to long-term sustainability.

The access road has been upgraded as a result of the relationship and monthly launches have no effect on stock or staff, as an exclusion zone is maintained around launch time. Farm staff are kept informed of the programme and say it does not impact on the running of the station, although the middle-of-the-night launches are sometimes difficult to sleep through.



Stunning shoreline: Manager Locan McCelland says despite the isolation, staffing Onenui is not difficult due to the stunning location and bountiful fishing.



Angus progeny are kept on the station and steers sold as yearlings to private buyers for finishing. This stock class provides a trading buffer if an intense summer-dry calls for destocking.

carry them on for longer and make a bigger margin from them.

“Adding in 500ha of more productive hill country has allowed us to lift calving cow numbers from 450 up to 650 cows including the heifers and I would like us to be able to lift that to 750 cows and 6500 ewes.

‘BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT WE WERE LOCKED IN TO SELLING CALVES AS WEANERS, BUT NOW WE CAN CARRY THEM ON FOR LONGER AND MAKE A BIGGER MARGIN FROM THEM.’

“Over the next ten years we want to keep our sheep production where it is and keep lifting our cow calving percentages and keep building stock numbers with more trading stock to flex if we need to.

Over the last ten years the station has had up to 60km of new fences each year added to subdivide some of the larger paddocks, and to replace fences.

“We’ve also put in a large gravity-fed water system feeding the flats and easier country - it’s been a great programme to be part of and

HISTORY:

Tawapata South was discovered in the 10th century by the tipuna Tamatea-Ariki-Nui, Ruawharo and Tupai - Pacific navigators whose journey from Hawaiki established the whakapapa of the people of this land.

Ruawharo founded the first house of learning, Ngaheru-mai-tawhiti, on Waikawa (Portland Island) which became a spiritual centre for the whole East Coast.

Tawapata South was incorporated under the Māori Affairs Act 1953 on July 21, 1967, when several owners of Maori freehold land amalgamated their holdings into a legal management structure similar to a company and called it the Proprietors of Tawapata South.

The governing committee of management provides strategic oversight, balancing sustainable farming while upholding tikanga, kawa, and mātauranga. The group’s aspirations are guided by the four Pou: Tangata (people), Tikanga (Māori principle), Taiao (environment) and Tahua (business) shaping their planning and decision making.

Their mission is grounded in whakapapa, which connects them to their taonga and carries kaitiaki obligations. They manage their relationships to ensure the wellbeing of their lands, waters and people and their strategy is structured over three phases within a five-year plan, allowing them to set, implement and report key milestones to shareholders and whanau.

The proprietors are committed to fostering strong relationships within the community and they provide scholarships to support the education and development of their people. A lasting relationship with Kahungunu Marae, where they hold their annual general meeting, reinforces the connection to whanau and to their cultural heritage.



The 120ha of lucerne established on the flat tip of the peninsula. Waikawa Portland Island is at the tip.

awesome seeing all that work go on and the production improving.”

Logan has enjoyed living at the end of the road, at the end of the peninsula, and says although it’s almost two hours’ drive out to Gisborne, it’s not hard to get good staff.

“This is a very unique property. Not many stations have 20km of private coastline – there is always a sheltered spot to go fishing and it’s an awesome place to live.”

He and his partner Stacey have a baby girl Finley and are happy to stay and say they appreciate the way the trustees have been focused on upgrading infrastructure, including roads, housing and other amenities.

‘THIS IS A VERY UNIQUE PROPERTY. NOT MANY STATIONS HAVE 20KM OF PRIVATE COASTLINE – THERE IS ALWAYS A SHELTERED SPOT TO GO FISHING AND IT’S AN AWESOME PLACE TO LIVE.’



Looking up the peninsula from the flat country, the hills get steeper and harder.

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES:

An environmental plan was developed in conjunction with Hawke’s Bay Regional Council and is developing its second iteration. Situated on the tip of the peninsula with areas of highly erodible cliffs along some of the 20km of coastline, fencing off erodible areas and planting with willow poles and on debris dams to stop the flow of sediment into the sea has been a major focus, and now the programme is shifting to planting native species alongside the willows for native regeneration.

The proprietors have joined the Emissions Trading Scheme and are retiring erosion areas of a size required under the scheme.

Goat control has been an important part of the native regeneration. There is an ongoing relationship with DOC for pest control and revitalisation of the endangered shore plovers which nest and breed on Waikawa Portland Island, off the south coast of the peninsula. A relationship with MPI also undertakes weed management of the invasive Cape Tulip weed.

A large, detailed image of a black Angus yearling bull shown in profile, facing left. The background consists of rolling green hills under a blue sky with soft clouds. In the top right corner, there is a logo for 'Hallmark Angus' with 'EST. 1977' and 'MILKING' on either side of a central emblem, and 'FOR MATERNAL MASTERS' written below it.

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WAIKAWA PORTLAND ISLAND AND SHORE PLOVERS

Onenui station has its own island, Waikawa Portland Island, which lies 1.3km off the southern tip of Māhia Peninsula. The island is windswept and barren and just 3.2km in length, 700 metres at its widest point, and 100m at its high point.

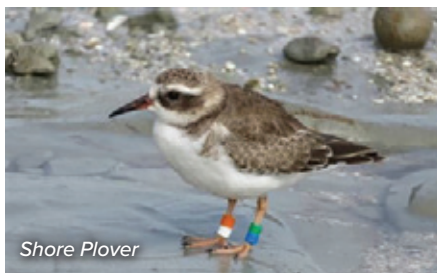
These days, Rocket Lab satellites whiz above the island, but 600 years ago the great waka Tākitimu landed there and the tohunga (high priest) Ruawhoro set up a university, Ngaheru-mai-tawhiti, for five or six students each year.

A whaling station was established there in 1830 and was one of New Zealand's first. A lighthouse was built in 1878 and from 1887 sheep were farmed.

Onenui runs a self-replacing flock of 300 ewes on the 125ha of native grasses in the grazing area on the island, and Logan says they use a barge to bring lambs and cull ewes back and take old rams out there for a last turn.

"It's like a wee island holiday for them.

"We are just keeping the island tidy really, it's not run intensively."



The main visitors to the island are Department of Conservation staff checking on the critically endangered shore plover.

Twelve birds from a captive breeding programme were translocated there in 1998.

Since then additional birds have been liberated and the population is now more than 70, a self-sustaining group.

Waikawa's ideal for the birds because there are no predators and it has a wide inter-tidal zone with rocky areas teeming with food. The plovers are a species that nest on the shore and show very little fear of humans and so need a sheltered predator-free place to rebuild their numbers.

DOC monitors the birds closely and removes eggs each season to rear them in a breeding facility near Christchurch. ■

TAWAPATA SOUTH, ONENUI STATION.

- **Tribal affiliation:** Kahungunu, Rongomaiwahine, Rakaipaaka, Ngāti Hikairo
- **Number of owners:** 2209
- **Committee of Management:** Lester White (Chairperson), Philip TeHau (Deputy Chair), Murray MacGregor, Natalie Paewai, Corban Paewai.
- **Staff:** Logan McClland (farm manager), James McKay (fencer/general), Jarem Hari (shepherd/general), George Ormond (fencer/general).
- **Advisors:** Ian Allen (farm supervisor), Robyn Tomlinson (secretarial and accounting, Coates and Associates)

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YARNING ABOUT COWS

Two years on from the devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle, a northern Hawke's Bay couple are building a yarning culture among rural people.

Jackie Harrigan

Ten years into their journey as stud Angus breeders, Max and Lucy Tweedie are finding their groove and hitting their straps, offering 60 rising two year bulls and 50 spring-sold yearling bulls for heifer mating each year from their northern Hawke's Bay station.

Rather than being all about the bulls, the operation is heavily focused on producing highly maternal cows and selling bulls armed with the same genetic power.

Two years after Cyclone Gabrielle hit northern Hawke's Bay, and with many of the surrounding valleys still showing the scars, 31-year-old Max and Lucy have also thrown their energy behind a campaign to help rural people get connected and keep talking.

Reluctant to call it a mental health campaign, Max says it's more about helping rural people build resilience by bringing them together and getting them yarning.

He was approached after the cyclone by Hawke's Bay farmer and content creator Jack Jensen about hosting a free concert to

lift the spirits of small rural communities in the region.

"Jack leads a movement called Spark that Chat that has a huge following on social media, and he was looking for a venue in Tutira. Our bull sale barn was the perfect place and we all know the power of bull sales to bring a community together."

The resulting event featured five live bands, low and slow BBQ, bouncy castle and face painting, a few beers, a huge crowd and fantastic community spirit.

Eight further 'Fuel Your Stoke' concerts were held around the province and it got Max thinking about an idea to further join forces with Jack. The 'Cut the Bull' campaign is helping him out with merchandise to market to raise money for further initiatives for community gatherings.

Hoodies and rugby jerseys have been sold for the past two years, with \$26,000 raised in 2024 and \$17,000 in 2025.

"The whole campaign is not actually about mental health – it's about

communicating and working on yourself and yarning and getting along and connecting with other people – and getting a bit more rubber band into the job."

'Spark that chat' has a huge social media presence and Jack creates and pushes out videos of conversations with people (including at the Hallmark bull sale) around the premise that a simple conversation can help someone who is struggling and potentially save someone's life.

The goal of Spark that Chat is to foster well-being by creating opportunities and space that support vulnerable conversations, growing connections and resilience among individuals in the community. The end game is the potential to save lives.

Max says it's really low key and is a change of language for many people.

"We don't dwell on the mental health aspect – or even the struggling aspect – it's really about giving people tools to build their own resilience and the opportunities to

get together and practice those strategies.”

“The merch is great because people really love to wear it. We like to think it’s iconic – like Swanndri – and wearing it is a low key way of supporting the campaign and showing you are aware of being present and thinking about what you are grateful for.”

GROWING A MATERNAL COW HERD

The common saying is that behind every great man, there is a great woman...and to Hallmark Stud’s Max Tweedie, the saying translates well to cattle – “behind every good bull is a highly maternal cow.”

Max was born with a pretty refined Angus pedigree, his grandfather John Bayly was himself a second-generation NZ Angus breeder. John managed to grow the Cricklewood herd of Nuhaka up from the ‘belt buckle height’ days of Scottish bloodlines that his father Humphry Bayly and his great mate John MacFarlane travelled to Scotland to source (along with their favourite whiskey tippie), through ‘the great frame race’ where breeders swung to North American genetics to go tall and long, and then settled back on the more

‘WE BELIEVE THIS DISCIPLINE AND FOCUS ON THE LOWLY HERITABLE, HARD-TO-RECORD, (BUT HIGH REWARD) TRAITS IN THE MATERNAL ENVIRONMENT ARE THE NEXT FRONTIER IN CATTLE BREEDING.’

functional and productive herds of today.

Max was only nineteen years old when he was allowed to flush a heifer his grandfather had purchased from the Queen of Hearts sale at the National Beef Expo in Feilding. Goldwyn F405 was his foundation cow, and eggs flushed from her provided Max’s first crop of sale bulls – one of which sold for \$21,000.

“I thought I had really cracked the big time then,” Max laughed, “despite the fact that I shouldn’t really have flushed her as a heifer – but it only got much harder from there!”

He held his first bull sale at 21, in 2016, and was farming, alongside working for Beef+Lamb Genetics on the beef research programme for five years in his twenties, including being a North Island field officer followed by National Beef Genetics Manager.

In 2015 the Cricklewood herd was split, and sadly in 2021 John passed away, but some of the Cricklewood genetics came to the Hallmark herd, adding power and capacity and genuine Angus breed character. Then in 2017 most of the Heather Dell herd was purchased, and Max credits this herd with adding extra maternal strength, calving ease and female quality.

At this stage, Max’s vision for a true maternal focus for the improvement of cows for New Zealand hill country was cemented with the combination of the Heather Dell genetics and Cricklewood females.

Conversations with Will and Viv MacFarlane of Raukawa in Hawke’s Bay, (descendents of John MacFarlane, of Scottish forays to buy bulls and whiskey fame) led to a partnership whereby the Waiterenui Angus females joined the Hallmark herd in 2022, and Will and Viv continue to mentor Max and his wife Lucy, who are now on their own farming venture in the Putorino hills behind Tutira in northern Hawke’s Bay.

Max is unashamedly all about the cows and chasing the reward of creating genuine improvement of cows for New Zealand hill country.

“We believe this discipline and focus on

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26

ANGUS NEW ZEALAND SPRING 2025

the lowly heritable, hard-to-record (but high reward) traits in the maternal environment are the next frontier in cattle breeding.”

“Visualise what sort of cow herd you wish to build and the steers will follow.”

THE MODERN CLASSIC COW

Max and Lucy, with their son Macca, run their Hallmark Stud on Kokopuru Station, 1350 hectares of long and skinny hill country at Putorino, behind Tutira in northern Hawke’s Bay. The farm has 20% rolling, 10% cultivable and the majority steep hill country.

The station also has a simple sheep policy, lambing 2500 terminal ewes.

“We buy in ewes and all go to terminal rams. The sheep policy is the simple part of the operation - the cattle policy is more

complex,” Max said.

Calving more than 500 recorded stud cows on a hill country property with a spine of rugged hills and having no commercial cows (the last left when the Waiterenui cows arrived), means they are pushed on to the hills to clean up and maintain the pastures for the sheep.

“We put more pressure on our stud cows. We do lose some every year but we need to farm them under pressure and ensure they can perform – they need to get in calf easily and produce a good calf and hold their condition and last a long time.”

Running more than 500 recorded cows also means a complex data collection operation and that takes a competent team comprising operations manager Mat Harvey, senior shepherd Stephanie Rees and general Caleb Everson under Max’s leadership.

Max talks about the Modern Classic cow

exemplifying the type of cow for Kiwi farmers that will lift cattle profitability in the fight against land use change and prove the relevance and viability of the New Zealand hill country cow.

“She needs to be fit for purpose – weaning more, heavier, earlier calves year in, year out.

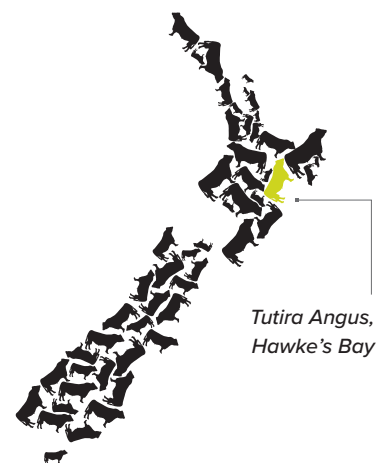
“In order to deliver this we have a strong belief in and focus on structural soundness and environmental suitability. We are looking for functional cattle that handle hill country with ease and will last a long time, delivering their genes to the next generation.

“It’s not about always getting more more growth, more calving ease, more carcass we believe that form must follow function. Our animals must have the sort of type and kind to deliver the improved performance we have selected for.

“We won’t accept a new ute, with all the

‘FARMERS COULD MAKE MUCH BIGGER PRODUCTION GAINS INTERNALLY BY HAVING MATERNAL-TYPE SIRES GENERATING THEIR REPLACEMENTS RATHER THAN TERMINAL-TYPE SIRES.’

Hallmark Bull sale 2025.



*Tutira Angus,
Hawke's Bay*



extra features we have had to pay for, to break down or fall apart in the first 100,000km so why would we accept it in our cattle?

“At Hallmark, we are happy to accept a touch less performance in order to build a more sustainable cow herd that has the right form and function to get the job done.

“What does maternal mean to us? It means that sound-as-a bell, low-fuss, get-it-done on bugger-all, fiercely protective (yet gentle to handle), goldilocks-milking, whopping calf-bringing, high condition, early breeding, matronly powerhouse mother.”

“And she does it year in and year out, for ages!

“Describing and creating that truly maternal cow is not easy – that is why not many other breeders are doing it, but we think it’s where the profitable cows for hill country are.”

‘WE ARE LOOKING FOR FUNCTIONAL CATTLE THAT HANDLE HILL COUNTRY WITH EASE AND WILL LAST A LONG TIME, DELIVERING THEIR GENES TO THE NEXT GENERATION.’



Max, Lucy and baby Macca.

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SIRES OF YEARLING BULLS

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DIR	DTRS	GEST	BW	MILK	200	400	600	SS	DTC
+2.8	+6.5	-4.7	+3.0	+22	+48	+89	+110	+5.6	-6.8
CW	EMA	RIB	RUMP	RBY	IMF	SRI \$	API \$	HDT \$	
+53	+6.0	+1.7	+0.7	-0.2	+1.6	+\$161	+\$177	+\$114	

BLACK RIDGE R12									
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	RBY	IMF	SRI \$	API \$	HDT \$	
+62	+6.5	+3.9	+4.3	-0.1	+1.0	+\$136	+\$155	+\$127	

SIRE MATED TO YEARLING HEIFERS IN 2023 AND 2024

HALLMARK BART T184																		
DIR	DTRS	GEST	BW	MILK	200	400	600	SS	DTC	CW	EMA	RIB	RUMP	RBY	IMF	SRI \$	API \$	HDT \$
+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

Contact: **Alton Devery**, 021 685 428 or isobel_devery@hotmail.com

BREEDING EARLY MATURING, SOUND CATTLE, WITH STRENGTH AND THICKNESS

EMPHASIS ON HEIFER CALVING

Part of Max's drive to produce long-lasting and productive cow herds is an emphasis on setting up first-calving heifers for their lifetime of production.

Max says there's often the trade off on commercial farms – do you mate hoggets or do you mate heifers?

"Our goal is to make heifers as easy to mate as anything so they don't need to be a fundamentally mollycoddled or cotton-wool-treated stock class to get them to breed.

"They are becoming easier, and helped by how strong the cattle market is, it's a natural place to rebuild your herd from."

Asked about the change for farmers, whether it's getting easier to get heifers to mateable weights or whether the heifers are hitting puberty at lighter weights, Max says there is a dearth of information.

"We just don't know enough, so we are about to embark on a programme of putting collars on heifers for reproductive data collection and analysis tracking their performance.

"We have lined up our 220 heifer cohort and are working with two other herds to gather more data and more deeply understand how and when they are cycling."

"The 320kg minimum mating weight recommendation for heifers is no longer fundamentally applicable," he says, "we simply don't know enough about how heifers are changing at that yearling/pubescent stage, and mature sizes have increased.

"We will be tracking body condition, weight, cycling and then pregnancy rates, from pre-mating right through to that first mating outcome – the first pregnancy test basically. Even cooler would be to track them through to their first calving as well...

to look at the post-partum anoestrus interval and leading into that first rebreeding heat – that's the goal."

Max says the fundamental piece is that research shows much of the variation in lifetime maternal production is determined by their first mating as yearlings, calving and their first return to oestrus.

"What we do know is that most of the variation in their longevity is explained by the first 2.5 years, where we can see really big differences between animals' lifetime production."

Max quotes Smeaton et al. 1986 who said early conceiving females wean heavier calves and have more productive lifetimes.

"Most people would argue that fertility traits are too low in heritability, and there is much more variation explained by feeding and the environment and of course it is, but the opportunity of being able to get heifers in calf early, on the smell of an oily rag is enormous – and so we want to pull as many levers as we can.

'WE ARE MEASURING MATERNAL DISPOSITION AT CALVING, BECAUSE THAT MEASURES HOW GOOD A MOTHER THEY ARE.'

"It should be the highest reward part of your herd, especially if you are fronting up and spending big money on the bulls.

"The engine room of strong maternal value is mating as many heifers as you can and putting downward pressure on puberty and early conception.

"We had a bit of a mistake after the

cyclone when we had lost fences, we had an opportunistic mating that resulted in accidentally calving 20 heifers in the following autumn so those heifers were obviously cycling long before we could see or we thought that they would be.

"We need to learn more."

BULLS FOR YEARLING HEIFERS

The other part of the equation for Max is the bull. With that in mind Hallmark, along with selling 60 R2 bulls each autumn, have for the past three years offered a spring yearling bull sale with bulls aimed squarely at heifer mating.

"People have been looking at their heifer mating as a terminal exercise. Heifer's calves have been treated as a byproduct - the calves are born light, are hard to grow and don't have much power, but our argument is that if we get this yearling bull thing right, they should be generating your best replacements.

"Mating yearling bulls over yearling heifers means you have a shorter generation interval, you have a much higher selection differential (more to choose from) and from that you can increase selection intensity and really narrow down which are going to be your best replacements.

"Farmers could make faster herd improvement internally by having maternal type sires generating their replacements rather than terminal type sires out of heifers."

In the past 15 years Max says there have been huge advances in the quality of the yearling bulls being bred and offered for sale.

"In the past it was hard to find easy-calving cattle that actually had any punch



Kokopuru crew in Blowhard : Operations manager Mat Harvey, senior shepherd Stephanie Rees, Max and general Caleb Everson.

and growth they are antagonistic traits.”

Genomics have introduced another piece of information going towards the Breeding Values, he says.

“It’s another tool, and while the cost is enormous in a big herd, we think it’s just a necessary cost of doing business.”

“The best version of the truth now is one that has genomics in behind it.”

One advantage of genomics, he explains, is that it does spread the cattle out and finds more variation – bulls are no longer placed closely to their mid-parent average.

“There is more influence from grandparents and other relations which can find some real great nuggets not otherwise revealed.”

MAXIMUM MEASUREMENT

Max firmly believes in the “mandate to measure” – both measuring to manage and measuring to improve. He believes EBVs are a key piece of the puzzle (providing cattle have form and function) and at Hallmark they record all of the traits available to Angus NZ breeders along with those that are not, like body condition, udder and structural traits.

Max is particularly committed to

measuring as much as they can on the maternal side.

“We are measuring maternal disposition at calving, because that measures how good a mother they are.”

Using a six point scale, each cow is scored on how she reacts to people around her when she has a new calf, ranging from aggressive to highly protective through to poorly maternal. Poor maternal score cows are culled.

Of course, highly protective can also border on highly aggressive and Max says it comes down to not being a health and safety issue.

“We can’t have cows that will beat you up but they need to be very keen on protecting their new calf.”

Concentration on maternal disposition scores means the bulls and replacement heifers out of higher maternal disposition cows compounds the growth of maternal strength in the herd, Max says.

Udder scoring is another area of interest. With a ranking used in the United States, Max and his team score the udder suspensory ligament as cows with a strong ligament, causing udders held tight to the body, have longer productive lifetimes.

Teat size is also scored – small teats are

“WE CAN’T HAVE COWS THAT WILL BEAT YOU UP BUT THEY NEED TO BE VERY KEEN ON PROTECTING THEIR NEW CALF.”

easy for the calf to attach to meaning they get their colostrum feed quickly and have a stronger start to life. Large, pendulous or bottle-shaped teats are difficult for the calf to attach to, often leading to mastitis, early dry off and subsequent dry quarters – ultimately meaning fewer and lighter calves.

Hallmark is also involved in a group of Angus breeders who have pooled resources and developed, with Abacus Bio, a suite of four selection indexes describing modern beef industry production systems and markets.

Max reports on two of these in a star system to allow easy ranking of bulls in order of economic value. The E-star ratings are for Maternal (specifically related to the beef cow/calf operation) and Efficiency (to identify bulls that are superior for maternity and efficiency traits). ■

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Fun with crocodiles at the World Angus Forum 2025.

A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

Fresh from his trip to the 2025 World Angus Forum, James Armitage plans to spread the word among young New Zealanders about the potential for working with the Angus breed.



JAMES ARMITAGE

For me, the World Angus Forum has been a life-changing experience due to the connections I have made, the new and different ideas I have been exposed to and all the future opportunities. The skills and knowledge I gained will be invaluable for me and my future in this industry.

One of the biggest highlights from the trip was the people I met and the connections I made along the way. Travelling and spending a lot of time with the other teams from around the world over the course of the trip meant we got to spend time with like-minded people making it so much more than just a competition. I'm excited for the future to be

able to travel to some of my new mates' farms one day and be able to bring ideas back to New Zealand.

This opportunity has given me a lifelong passion for the stud side of beef farming, coming from a commercial background to seeing the work and knowledge that goes on behind the scenes.

I've enjoyed learning what makes a bull from pen to paper and seeing the different types of cattle farmers are breeding for various different reasons across different climates and markets. Seeing this has helped make me think outside the box at some things we could be trying differently.

Since being back, I'm glad to have already been to my local high school and spoken to the Young Farmers Club members about my experience at the World Angus Forum and all the opportunities out there. In doing this, I'm hoping to spark some of them to think about opportunities like this to get them involved, to grow the youth of the Angus industry.

More and more opportunities are available to young people who want to learn and it is really impressive that these opportunities

can lead to travelling NZ and the world with so much support and enthusiasm from those wanting to pass on knowledge.

I plan to continue to research and get involved in every opportunity I can to grow my knowledge about the breed, also trying to get over to visit my new friends on their farms to see the different ways of farming around the world to bring back new ideas that we can use to boost the NZ Angus herd.

'I'M GLAD TO HAVE ALREADY BEEN TO MY LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL AND SPOKEN TO THE YOUNG FARMERS CLUB MEMBERS ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE AT THE WORLD ANGUS FORUM AND ALL THE OPPORTUNITIES OUT THERE.'

I want to mention a special thanks to Angus NZ and Generation Angus for all the time and organising it took to send us over to represent New Zealand. I hope that over the years I will be able to give back to the breed to show my thanks for all the time and effort. ■

MAKING GLOBAL CONNECTIONS IN THE ANGUS COMMUNITY

Working alongside a diverse team from a range of countries was both a challenge and an opportunity as team leader for Kirsten Devery. Everyone brought something different to the table.



KIRSTEN DEVERY

Being part of the 2025 World Angus Forum was one I'll never forget. As a young person passionate about the beef industry, this international event was more than just a forum — it was a platform that brought together future leaders, breeders, and innovators from across the globe.

I felt incredibly honoured to be selected as team captain for the Universal Barbarians, made up of young people from a variety of countries.

Working alongside such a diverse team was both a challenge and an opportunity. Everyone brought something different to the table — whether it was a unique way of approaching a problem, a cultural perspective, or insights into their home country's agricultural system.

Even though we came from different corners of the world, the common thread that connected us was our shared passion for the Angus breed. I quickly learned the value of adaptability, patience, and trusting my instincts, often outside my comfort zone.

The people were the absolute highlight of the entire experience. The level of passion, energy, and forward-thinking among the young people at the forum was nothing short of impressive. I think it's fair to say the future of the Angus industry is in good hands. What stood out to me was the sense of global unity within the Angus community. Wherever you were from, you were welcomed with open arms. That sense of belonging extended far beyond the competition — it was a reminder that the Angus industry is built on connection, collaboration, and shared vision.

One of the biggest takeaways for me was the power of networking. Most days, we had events or functions that brought together competitors, breeders, and industry leaders. These weren't just social events — they were learning opportunities.

Informal chats over drinks or on the bus rides often turned out to be some of the most insightful moments of the entire forum. Whether it was hearing about someone's stud, discussing genetic trends, or sharing stories about our different farming systems, I constantly found myself absorbing knowledge. People were incredibly generous with their time and genuinely invested in helping the next generation grow.

The competition itself was well-organised and diverse. It tested us on a wide range of practical and professional skills — from cattle handling, public speaking, and judging to strategic planning, marketing, and collaboration. Every module was designed to challenge us, and no two were the same.

For me, it wasn't about chasing perfection — it was about thinking critically, learning from my experience, and developing the confidence to back myself under pressure.

I came away with a stronger skillset and a deeper belief in my abilities, not just as a competitor, but as a future contributor to this industry.

The World Angus Forum gave me a huge boost in confidence. It helped me realise what I'm capable of and strengthened my resolve to continue working toward a career in the beef industry, particularly within the Angus breed.

'THE PEOPLE WERE THE ABSOLUTE HIGHLIGHT OF THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE. THE LEVEL OF PASSION, ENERGY, AND FORWARD-THINKING AMONG THE YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE FORUM WAS NOTHING SHORT OF IMPRESSIVE.'

I've come away from this experience with fresh motivation to stay involved with Generation Angus and to take on leadership opportunities wherever I can. I want to keep building on the knowledge I've gained, and more importantly, to help create similar. ■



Kirsten Devery in the Handler's Module.



Nic Verry steps out with his Angus at the World Angus Forum.

GENERATION ANGUS: INTENSE ENJOYMENT



NIC VERRY

Early on April 28, the Generation Angus team flew out of Christchurch, headed for Sydney to compete in the youth competition at the World Angus Forum. What followed were some of the most intense, but enjoyable days of my life.

The competition consisted of 12 teams, each of four men and women aged under 25. A total of 11 countries were represented from around the globe. The competition was designed to test our knowledge, skills and teamwork across a range of farming applications, both theory and practical.

The first part of the competition was held in Bathurst, where we were judged on a farm consultancy module, a mock media interview and given the brief for our social media reel.

The competition then moved to Tamworth and the Angus Expo, where we had carcass judging, stock judging, stock handling, show ring preparation, debating, two teamwork challenges and nine modules that required us to work as a team while backing a trailer

through a tough course, palpate model cows, put together a reticulated water system, create a robust weaning plan, put together a bull team and calculate seeding rates and pricing for cropping operations. The competition then rounded up with the stock handling at Bald Blair Angus on our way to Brisbane.

Along the way there were a number of networking and teambuilding events during the evenings. In the days between competitions, when some rest and a decent night's sleep looked more appealing, it was really enjoyable to get to know our competition better and talk to some of the leaders within Angus and agriculture from around the world.

'I WASN'T RAISED ON A FARM SO THE PATHWAY TO OWNERSHIP ISN'T AS CLEAR CUT AS MOST, BUT IT STILL REMAINS THE ULTIMATE GOAL THROUGH WHATEVER OPPORTUNITIES COME MY WAY.'

The games at Coogee beach and the Sydney harbour cruise stand out, along with the Gala dinner in Brisbane for the Forum.

The last couple of days of the trip were at the World Forum in Brisbane where a wide variety of speakers spoke on a number of very interesting and relevant topics, from methane

and its effects to beef cow efficiency, and global beef marketing.

And finally, the prize-giving for the youth competition. While the Kiwi teams might not have done as well as we had hoped leading into the competition, with NZ Legacy placing 7th and NZ Infinity 9th overall, our congratulations goes out to Team USA who placed 1st, Spinifex from Australia 2nd and the British and Irish Lions 3rd.

However, we did take out some places in segments of the competition and individual areas, with Team Legacy placing 1st in the stock handling, 2nd in the modules and 3rd in the farm consultancy and Team Infinity collecting 3rd in the marketing reel and 1st for the best structured debate. Individually, Dougal Gibson and Caitlin Rhodes placed 5th and 6th in their respective handler's heats and I placed 4th overall for the individual stock judging.

This opportunity has given me a massive wealth of knowledge, experience and connections that will only grow into the future and continue to open doors within not just Angus cattle but the wider agricultural landscape.

I was fortunate enough to be selected at just 18 so have a few more years of Generation Angus and the opportunities that they offer to youth as well as being eligible for selection for the next world forum to be hosted in the United States in 2029, so am excited about what the future holds.

I am in my first year of a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at Lincoln University so have some way to go before fully entering the ag sector. Upon finishing university, I hope to build a team of dogs and go shepherding, working my way up the ranks to managing positions, ideally staying connected to Angus stud stock.

‘I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BE SELECTED AT JUST 18 SO HAVE A FEW MORE YEARS OF GENERATION ANGUS AND THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT THEY OFFER TO YOUTH.’

I wasn’t raised on a farm so the pathway to ownership isn’t as clear cut as most, but it still remains the ultimate goal through whatever opportunities come my way.

I would like to thank everybody that made this experience happen. I’ll definitely be missing some but I’ll give it a crack: Roger and Susan Hayward, Lindsay and Maria Johnstone, Dave Bradley, Phil McCallum and Bradley Parkes, for your support at the training



From Left: Kirsten, Dougal, Kate, Nic, Caitlyn, Lindsay, Jess, Thomas, James and Hannah.

weekends; Max Tweedie, Kath McCallum and Marie FitzPatrick Timperley for all the work you put into running Generation Angus; Dan Gardner from Boehringer Ingelheim for your sponsorship and support as well as Shaun and Fiona Fouhy from Glanworth Angus.

My teammates, Caitlin, Kate and Dougal,

Thomas, Bob, James, Hannah, Kirsten and Jess, made the whole experience as enjoyable as it was.

Thanks to my parents, Bridget and Hamish, for your support and belief in me. ■

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BREED IMMERSION AT THE ANGUS FORUM

The 2025 World Angus Forum pushed Kate Campbell out of her comfort zone to develop a deeper understanding of the Angus breed in different production systems and environments as well as network with many like-minded people.



KATE CAMPBELL

Networking, friendships, learning, and epic memories are the first things that come to mind when I reminisce on my time at the 2025 World Angus Forum held in Australia.

We started our trip in Sydney, where we climbed the Harbour Bridge during the day then went on the AngusTrek Cruise in the evening. It was an awesome event to kick off the 2025 World Angus Forum, meeting many people from around the world that were all passionate about the Angus breed.

We then started making our way up to Tamworth with a few stops on the way which included Karoo Angus Stud and

Millah Murrah Angus Stud.

Once in Tamworth, the youth competition really revved up with a yield and quality carcase test, many farm modules, show clipping, debating, handlers' class, stock judging and the mighty stockman's challenge.

After a few big days of competition, we kept heading north towards Brisbane, stopping at Bald Blair Angus Stud, Rangers Valley Feedlot and the University of Queensland.

Every day was jam-packed with fun activities, competition and lots of socialising at the many incredible evening events where we could kick our boots off and put on our dancing shoes. The competition definitely had its ups and downs, but we really pulled together as a team, in the end coming away with first in stock handling, second in the farm modules and third in Agribusiness. I think the result was awesome, we really excelled at the hands-on/practical activities.

The Forum has pushed me out of my comfort zone and allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of the Angus breed in different production systems and environments as well as network with many like-minded people.

The future of the Angus industry in New

Zealand and around the world looks really bright. Overall, I am so proud of what our team accomplished.

I had an absolute blast and have made lifelong friends from all over the world that

'EVERY DAY WAS JAM-PACKED WITH FUN ACTIVITIES, COMPETITION AND LOTS OF SOCIALISING AT THE MANY INCREDIBLE EVENING EVENTS WHERE WE COULD KICK OUR BOOTS OFF AND PUT ON OUR DANCING SHOES.'

I can now call upon in the future. Since the forum, I have got back to reality and into winter mode on the station, but I am really looking forward to developing our herd and being involved in the future of Generation Angus and the Angus community.

I am eternally grateful for being provided the opportunity to attend and compete at the World Angus Forum; I would encourage anyone to give it a crack as you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. ■



The WAF Gala dinner in Brisbane.



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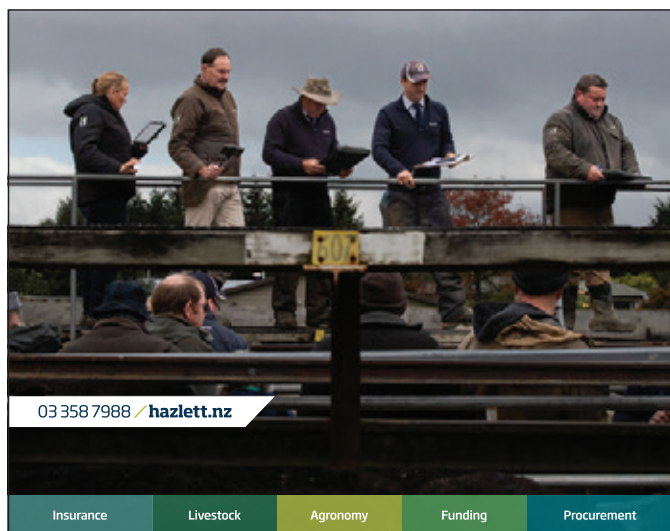


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FUTURE LEADERS

Jake Stokman

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of being selected for the 2025 Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme—an intensive five-day leadership experience hosted in Launceston, Tasmania. Representing New Zealand alongside one other delegate from NZ, we joined eleven emerging leaders from across Australia for a programme designed to challenge, inspire, and equip the next generation of agricultural professionals. This opportunity proved to be one of the most transformative experiences of my personal and professional journey to date.

The Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme brings together a dynamic cohort of young individuals who are passionate about agriculture and committed to shaping its future. Over the course of five days, we engaged in an ambitious agenda featuring a diverse array of speakers, industry experts, and hands-on sessions. The content was thoughtfully curated to address both the technical and human sides of leadership in agriculture, spanning topics such as mindset and resilience, global market trends, financial planning, social media branding, livestock genetics and benchmarking, insurance strategies, and succession planning.

What set the programme apart was not just the width of information shared, but the authenticity and openness of the delivery. Many speakers shared their personal stories, including the highs and lows of their journeys in agriculture. These accounts brought theory to life and underscored the real-world resilience, adaptability, and forward-thinking

leadership required to succeed in our sector.

One of the most impactful stories for myself came from James Knight of The Sisters Pastoral. He offered a raw and deeply personal account of the challenges his family faced during the Australian drought. His reflection on the emotional and operational toll of farming under extreme conditions was both grieving and inspiring. Yet, what stood out most was his attitude in the face of adversity—an unwavering belief in the power of calculated risk-taking and courageous leadership. One of his key messages, “Be courageous and take risks,” struck a chord with me and continues to guide my mindset.

James also challenged us to embrace technology, question conventional thinking, and always plan with the future in mind. His comment, “Ideas are free, talk is cheap, and execution is bloody hard,” was a powerful reminder of the discipline required to move from concept to meaningful action. These insights have reshaped the way I think about leadership—not just as a role, but as a responsibility to be proactive, informed, and strategic.

Another speaker who left a lasting impression was the team behind Mumblebone Merino, Chad and Lou Taylor. Their journey exemplified the courage it takes to innovate and adapt, especially when faced with uncertainty. They openly shared the challenges they encountered while evolving their breeding programme to align with long-term industry needs—an effort that demanded persistence, resilience, and

a strong sense of purpose. Their quote, “It takes courage to create change,” resonated deeply with me and captured the essence of leadership in modern agriculture: a willingness to stay true to your vision, even when the path is not easy.

My own path to this opportunity was not without its setbacks. I initially applied for the Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme and was not selected the first time. Naturally, I felt disappointed. However, I was encouraged by peers and mentors who believed in my potential and urged me to apply again. I am incredibly grateful that I took their advice. Being selected for the 2025 programme has reaffirmed the value of persistence and the importance of surrounding yourself with people who challenge and uplift you.

**‘THIS PROGRAMME DOES
NOT JUST EDUCATE;
IT EMPOWERS’.**

Throughout the programme, I not only gained knowledge but also formed lasting connections with a group of passionate, like-minded individuals from across Australasia. These relationships are among the most valuable outcomes of the experience. We shared ideas, challenged one another’s perspectives, and have built a network grounded in mutual respect and a shared commitment to advancing agriculture. I have

no doubt these connections will continue to grow and evolve, offering support and inspiration for many years to come.

A recurring theme throughout the programme was resilience—not just in the traditional sense of enduring hardship, but in the ability to stay grounded and focused during both challenges and successes. The speakers consistently highlighted that how we show up, both mentally and emotionally, can define the outcome of any situation. This emphasis on mindset and emotional intelligence reminded me that leadership is as much about inner strength as it is about strategy.

The programme also significantly deepened my understanding of the beef

and Angus industries. From breeding and genetics to business strategy and long-term succession planning, each session provided practical insights that will directly influence my approach moving forward. Beyond the technical content, the experience encouraged deep self-reflection. I gained a clearer understanding of what drives me, what I value, and where I want to make an impact within the agricultural sector.

To anyone considering applying for the Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme: I cannot recommend it highly enough. And to those who may not be selected the first time—don't be discouraged. Apply again. The growth, clarity, and connection you'll gain are more than worth

the effort. This programme does not just educate; it empowers.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Achmea Insurance, Angus Australia, Angus New Zealand and Generation Angus for making this opportunity possible through their generous sponsorship and ongoing support. Their investment in the next generation of agricultural leaders is making a tangible impact across the industry. The 2025 Generation Angus Future Leaders Programme has been a milestone moment for me—one that I will carry forward into every facet of my work and leadership journey. ■



The GenAngus Future Leaders Programme was four days long and held in Tasmania.

A TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE

Harriet Laing

Participating in the GenAngus Future Leaders Programme was a truly transformative experience — intensive, thought-provoking, and, above all, invaluable.

Spanning four action-packed days, the course brought together 14 young cattle enthusiasts from across the country. While we began as nervous strangers with different backgrounds, we were united by a shared passion for the beef industry and a desire to

grow as future leaders.

By the end of the week, we had formed meaningful connections, developed a deeper understanding of ourselves and the industry, and left feeling mentally challenged, inspired, and motivated.

Day One began with Pete Clark, who delivered a powerful session on mindset. His presentation encouraged us to consider how we can take active steps to develop

our personal attributes and unlock our full potential.

He broke down how success is largely a product of consistent mindset work — building routines, self-awareness, and resilience. “Growth starts where comfort ends, and that our greatest opportunities often lie just outside our usual boundaries.”

Milly Nolan's session on DISC profiling followed and was equally insightful. She

helped us understand our behavioural tendencies, strengths, and how we interact with others in team settings. It was eye-opening to see how accurately the DISC profile described not only our personalities, but also our stress responses and communication styles.

Simon Quilty's talk on global market trends brought the international beef industry into sharper focus.

His session sparked my interest in how we can better position our operations to respond to and even anticipate these market signals.

BY THE END OF THE FOUR DAYS, WE WERE MENTALLY EXHAUSTED, BUT FILLED WITH A RENEWED SENSE OF DIRECTION.

Tony Hudson's finance session made a lasting impact. He illustrated the financial implications of unproductive land within a farming business and explained how small adjustments to land use can create significant financial benefits.

Nancy Crawshaw facilitated a discussion around breeding precision, EBVs, and where the Angus breed is headed. As someone passionate about stud breeding, this was a highlight.

She challenged us to think critically about how to use objective data in commercial settings, the importance of benchmarking our herds, and the balance between aesthetics and functionality.

Being transparent and consistent in how we present our breeding direction helps build long-term relationships with commercial clients

and ensures our genetics are being used where they can perform to their full potential.

Succession planning with Mark Westcott tackled a topic that's often emotional and complex. His advice was practical and deeply resonant, especially for many of the cohort from family farms.

He encouraged open communication, early planning, and ensuring clarity of roles and expectations. His session reaffirmed the importance of approaching succession as an ongoing conversation, not a one-off event.

Achmea's presentation on farm insurance provided valuable insights into risk management. It reminded us that insurance isn't just about premiums — it's about protecting the legacy of our businesses.

Cheyne Twist's marketing workshop simplified the often intimidating world of branding. She broke marketing down to its essentials — clarity, consistency, and authenticity.

Her message about using social media to genuinely reflect your values and communicate your brand story hit home.

The story of Mumblebone Merino was raw and real. They spoke honestly about the highs and lows of building a successful seedstock operation, touching on the mental, physical, and financial toll it can take.

One quote I'll never forget was: "It takes courage to create change. Find courage, pin your ears back and go for it." It encapsulated the spirit of the programme and reminded us that success in agriculture is often about persistence as much as it is about innovation.

James Jenson, a former SAS member, gave an unforgettable session on performance under pressure. He explained how the brain operates by default and how we can train ourselves to manage stress, lead teams, and make decisions in high-pressure situations.

Scott Wright, CEO of Angus Australia, closed the programme by sharing his journey to success. His story was humbling and inspiring.

He emphasised the importance of finding purpose — both in life and in the workplace — and encouraged us to reflect on what drives us.

We also heard from James Knight of The Sisters Pastoral Co, who shared his personal story with remarkable vulnerability and honesty. One of his quotes summed up the reality of entrepreneurship and leadership better than anything else: "Ideas are free, talk is cheap, and execution is bloody hard."

By the end of the four days, we were mentally exhausted, but filled with a renewed sense of direction.

What began as a group of 14 hesitant individuals ended with a cohort of like-minded, inspired peers — each ready to take the next step, equipped with the tools and networks to do so. The GenAngus Future Leaders Programme didn't just teach us new things — it challenged us, connected us, and helped us grow. GenAngus provided clarity — it not only reaffirmed my passion for genetics and stud breeding, but also helped me identify my passion for people and strengths I can bring moving forward.

Whether it's through more confident leadership, clearer communication with commercial clients, or improved strategic thinking around our breeding programme, I now feel equipped with the tools and mindset needed to grow.

I would like to thank Milly Nolan and Nancy Crawshaw who planned the week for us and pushed us individually to ensure we were gaining the most out of the programme. ■



Spending time with other Future Leaders was invaluable.



Visiting Pleasant Vale Angus stud.



ANGUS THE AUSSIE WAY

From Tasmania to New South Wales, Marshall Stokes took in a wide range of Angus operations with many like-minded people.

Marshall Stokes

What a trip of a lifetime. The Angus trans-Tasman exchange was an amazing experience. Walking into this opportunity, I had one goal – to take in as much information as I could.

Leaving Christchurch and heading for Tasmania I was nervous for what was ahead.

First stop on the trip was Landfall Angus, just out of Launceston. Here, I spent three days among their team working as another staff member, getting to see the ins and outs of their operation. From treating calves for pink eye, to selecting bulls to make the trip to Queensland for their sale, to freeze-branding and semen testing, I got a taste of it all.

The property was magnificently kept with a welcoming team of staff to show me around. They are at the forefront of tech use using Halter collars on their cows and Kiwi Tech strip-grazing for any cattle not using the collars. A wonderfully run operation with

some beautiful cattle.

From there I moved on to Quarterways Angus and the Hall family in Scottsdale, where I saw a big change in what I was doing.

I went from drafting bulls to the back of a harvester sorting spuds. At Quarterways Angus, the cattle aren't the only part of the operation and I was there right in the peak of potato harvest. This gave me a good chance to have a look at a different type of farming.

Moving from Landfall to Quarterways Angus saw the landscape change from flat to hilly. While at Quarterways Angus I also had the chance to visit some other farms in the area, meet some more people and look at different operations.

I travelled back down to Launceston and on to a plane to the mainland.

Arriving in Sydney I was not quite ready for the temperature change. I made my

way over to Olympic Park where I met Matt Cooney from Cann Valley Lowline and Carlie Mackelmann from Glenwyn Redpolls, where I joined their show team for the Sydney Show.

The Sydney Show was on a whole other level compared to shows in New Zealand. So much bigger and so many more cattle. From early starts washing and blow-drying cattle to late nights spent yarning and meeting people. It was a great time. I learnt so much that I can bring home and apply to my show tool box.

After Sydney Show I made my way to meet Tim Lord at K.O. Angus. I was with K.O. for two days and viewed a lot of cattle. From one of their properties being covered with thick grass to the other two hours away that had next to none.

K.O. gave me an awesome opportunity to view some outstanding cattle and get right down deep into the breeding behind them.

From here I moved on to Lane Evans at Holbrook Breeders. Holbrook Breeders is one of the biggest cattle semen and embryo collection centres in New South Wales.

While there, I got the chance to look at some beautiful cattle for collection from all different breeds including Angus, Shorthorn and Wagyu.

Not only did I get to have a look at the collection centres, being with Lane over the weekend, he also took me out freeze branding.

Lane has his own business freeze branding at weekends. Not having done a lot of freeze branding, this experience gave me the chance to learn and improve on what skills I already had. Freeze branding gave me the chance to look at some more cattle and go for a bit of a drive and see some scenery.

The next stop was Spry's Angus and Shorthorns. As I arrived, we hit the ground running with just two days until their bull sale. It was all hands on deck getting the bulls, farm and sale shed ready.

I spent my time cleaning sale bulls and prepping the area. Sprys gave me a good insight into what preparing for a sale is like. When sale day came around, everything was all go.

People were arriving and bulls were looking

good. It gave me a good chance to meet people and talk about the beef industry and compare NZ to Australia. The sale went really well, setting the record price for a Shorthorn bull sold in Australia for \$120,000. This made everyone jump with excitement and was a good way to end my stay with Sprys.

K.O. GAVE ME AN AWESOME OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW SOME OUTSTANDING CATTLE AND GET RIGHT DOWN DEEP INTO THE BREEDING BEHIND THEM

Next stop was Raff's Angus mainland property that they had not long purchased. During this part of the trip I got to have a good look at their future sale bulls and prep cattle for the upcoming Angus expo. Not only did I do this, I also got to meet Charlie Raff the Australian Trans-Tasman scholar. This was really cool as both being young people involved in the beef/Angus industry we had a lot to talk about, including comparing our trips.

Second to last stop was Tattykeel Angus. What an impressive operation. While here I not only got to meet some awesome people and

cattle, I also got the chance to see the home of the Aussie White sheep. Tattykeel know how to breed, with some outstanding cattle and sheep. It was very interesting learning about the creation of the Aussie White and what makes them so special and tasty.

The final stop did not disappoint. The World Angus Expo in Tamworth was an experience and a half. While at the expo, I worked for Currajong Angus prepping and looking after the three yearling heifers they had in attendance.

The expo was amazing to meet and talk to so many Angus-involved people from around the world. I got to create so many new contacts, see a tremendous number of outstanding Angus cattle and watch some awesome talks and events, such as the camp drafting and the Angus youth competitions. What a way to end the trip.

I would like to thank everyone who made this trip possible, from Angus New Zealand for giving me this opportunity, the people who helped me plan my trip and the many amazing studs and people who hosted me. To anyone thinking about applying for 2026, I would highly recommend giving it a crack. It's an amazing opportunity and I know I will never forget this trip. ■

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From the board table: **POSITIONED FOR LONG-TERM IMPACT**

ANGUS NEW ZEALAND IS RIDING A WAVE OF HIGH PRICES AND POSITIONING ITSELF FOR THE FUTURE, BOARD MEMBER KENDALL LANGSTON WRITES.



KENDALL LANGSTON

Spring is always a welcome season—busy on-farm, but full of energy and anticipation. This year's bull sale season has been exceptional, with record prices reflecting strong confidence in Angus genetics.

Across the country, our members have demonstrated their commitment to future-focused breeding programmes, and commercial buyers have clearly recognised the value Angus brings to the beef industry.

Board members and our GM have made a deliberate effort to attend as many sales as possible. These visits are more than symbolic—they're about listening, supporting, and celebrating success. The feedback has been consistent and overwhelmingly positive: the quality of bulls, balanced breeding decisions, strong marketing, and the overall professionalism of our members have generated a real buzz throughout rural communities. It's something we can all be proud of.

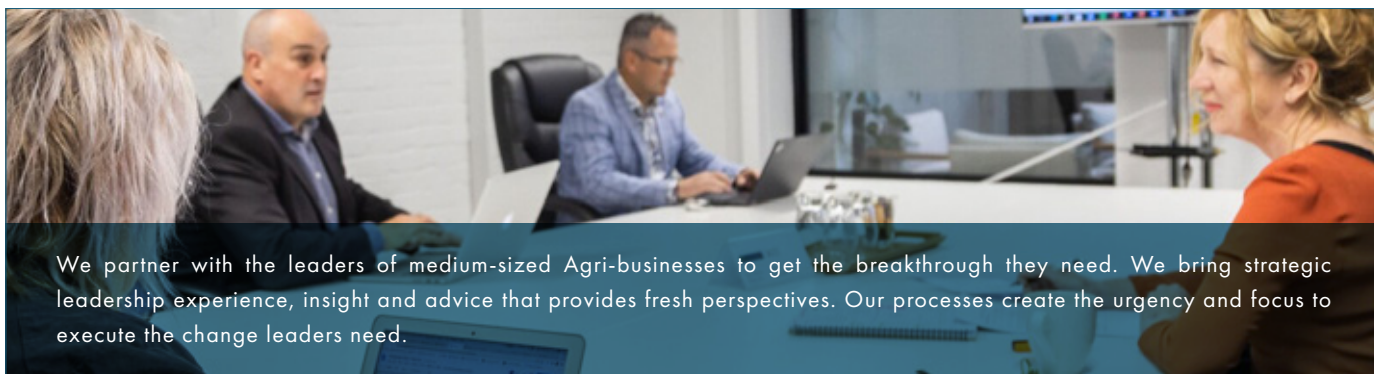
The Board's key role is to anticipate the future. There is no shortage of change and challenge on the horizon—economically and globally—but Angus NZ is well positioned to navigate it. In May, we represented our organisation at the Angus World Forum in Brisbane. The event offered valuable insights and global perspectives, as well as the opportunity to reconnect with the wider Angus community. It also strengthened our relationship with Angus Australia and provided a platform for collaboration.

A particular highlight was seeing our Generation Angus team compete and engage with counterparts from around the world. They did New Zealand proud—both in competition and in the way they represented our values and future leadership.

We are currently advancing 16 strategic initiatives aimed at future-proofing Angus NZ. These include investment in data security and agility, board and leadership succession, commercial opportunities, and learning pathways for our members. These initiatives are designed to ensure the organisation remains relevant, resilient, and positioned for long-term impact. ■

Nga Mihi
Kendall Langston

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



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Dave Swney and his two sons, Walter, 3 and Rex, 19 months.

ANGUS BULLS BRING LIFE BALANCE

A switch back to bulls – Angus bulls – was about lifestyle and practicality for Waikato dairy farmers Dave Swney and Alice Trevelyan.



Angus dairy crossbred calves on the Swney farm, Te Awamutu.

Starting a family of his own led Waikato dairy farmer Dave Swney back to using Angus bulls across his crossbred herd. Dave and his partner Alice Trevelyan are contract milkers and equity partners at Te Awamutu with Dave's parents, Phil and Deb Swney.

When Dave and Alice's first son Walter was born three years ago, they were using all artificial breeding (AB) for nine weeks, which proved too much time out on the farm for Dave.

"We were doing 9–10 weeks of AB, plus recording three weeks of pre-mating heats, using no technology, just tail paint and scratchies.

"That was fine, but when we started having kids, it took its toll on me. I said to Alice: 'it's either technology or we go back to bulls.'"

They opted for bulls. Dave gave Andrew Jolly, from Hingaia Angus Stud, a call.

Angus was an easy choice, Dave says.

"We don't have a Friesian herd and I am not trying to chase the beef market; we are focused on getting cows in calf and what is best for the cow. That's why we love the Angus so much.

"We were using bulls before we went all

AB, so we have gone full circle. I can't say either system is better or worse in terms of reproductive performance – it was about lifestyle and practicality."

ANGUS A CLEAR WINNER

It could be easier to use a different breed as a marker over their crossbred cows, but the Angus wins on every other factor.

"The bulls' temperament, calving ease across the crossbred cows is fantastic, the calves are robust, easy to rear and all the stock hold a good premium," Dave says.

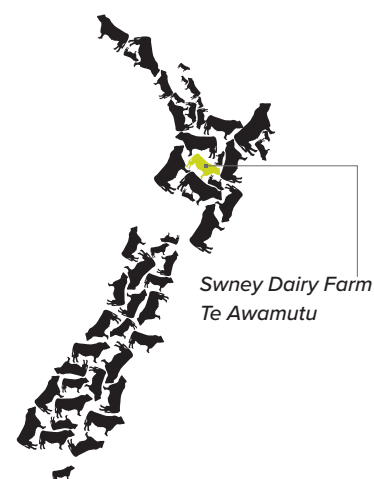
"We enjoy the Angus breed so much. The positive stuff outweighs that challenge of an Angus bull over a black cow," he says.

The Angus calves bring greater value than a white-face calf out of a crossbred cow that can get penalised in the pen, he says.

"We get a much cleaner colour using the Angus."

They use AB for 4–5 weeks and then bulls for 4–5 weeks. They buy 12 yearling bulls, using three bulls at a time in each of the two herds, with a third team of bulls to sub in.

"I remember asking Andrew, 'Are you sure



yearling bulls are going to work? Some of my crossbred cows are big, up to 600kg."

They milk 410 peak crossbred cows on a DairyNZ System 5 operation, feeding predominantly maize silage, palm kernel and straw, averaging about 500kg milk solids/cow.

"Andrew said 'trust me' and we did. They have the experience and they have several clients who use yearling bulls. The bulls have done a fantastic job."

The herd's not-in-calf rate was 11% this

SWENY DAIRY FARM FARM FACTS

- **Owners:** Phil and Deb Swney, and Dave Swney and Alice Trevelyan
- **Contract milker:** Dave Swney
- **Location:** Te Awamutu
- **Area:** 124ha effective, 28ha lease block over winter
- **Farm dairy:** 40-aside herringbone, ACRs, automatic drafting and teat sprayer, Protrack
- **Cows:** 410 peak crossbreds
- **2024/45 production:** 208,000kg MS
- **4–5 weeks AB, 4–5 weeks** Angus yearling bulls

season, with a 78% six-week in-calf rate.

“I’m not a breeder, but from a farmer’s perspective, we look for sound, solid bulls with nice length in the back leg to be able to get over our bigger crossbred cows.

“It suits us as we don’t have to pay more for two-year-old bulls and the yearlings have a better temperament.”

Hingaia Genetics, owned by Richard and Andrew Jolly, has been breeding Angus cattle at Te Awamutu since 1934. They put an emphasis on fertility, structural soundness, bone and growth rates, constitution and temperament.

Temperament is the most important trait when it comes to selecting bulls for use on the dairy farm, Dave says. They have a team of two full-time staff and they want to ensure a safe work site.

“That was our biggest worry going back to bulls. But the Jollys’ stock have squashed that concern. Dad and I were walking around a pen of about 40 bulls at the Jollys’ and patting them on the bum – they were that quiet.”

DAIRY BEEF MARKET

They start mating on October 1 every year, giving them an early calving date of July 10, which works in their favour when it comes to

selling the dairy beef calves.

Dave would like to market their dairy beef calves and sell directly to a buyer in future rather than taking them to sales.

‘TEMPERAMENT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TRAIT WHEN IT COMES TO SELECTING BULLS FOR USE ON THE DAIRY FARM’

“We do pretty well because we calve early, so our Angus calves get a good premium before the market is flooded, and because we finish mating early we can sell our yearling bulls early for another premium.

“But I would like to get to a point of dealing with one or two buyers who pay us a decent average price and take all our calves.

“We might not get the top price like at the sales, but everyone does well out of the deal.”

Dave and Alice are also rearing some dairy beef calves on Alice’s parents’ land as another income revenue; the Angus hit the mark there too.

“They grow really well. On the land we have, it suits us to rear them to yearlings and sell them on the store market rather than trying to finish them.” ■



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INFORMING NZ BEEF AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS DRIVE PROGRESS

A free, easy-to-use online genetics tool is a key component of a programme designed to help farmers select the best bulls for their farm business.

The Informing New Zealand Beef (INZB) programme continues to make strong progress in 2025, delivering key initiatives aimed at increasing profitability and driving the adoption of genetics in the beef sector.

A major highlight this year was the successful Beef Breeders' Forum, held in Christchurch in March and attended by more than 150 people.

The event focused on the importance of driving genetic gain in New Zealand's beef industry. Speakers covered a range of topics, including innovation in beef genetics, the development of new selection indexes designed for New Zealand farming systems, the use of AI and precision farming, and cutting-edge technologies in artificial breeding.

Beef farmers now have a powerful tool at their fingertips with the launch of nProve Beef, a free, easy-to-use online genetics tool. Unveiled at the forum, nProve Beef is

a key component of the INZB programme, designed to help farmers select the best bulls for their farm business.

The development of nProve Beef and the selection indexes has been a collaborative effort with industry partners, including Angus NZ, NZ Herefords, Simmental NZ, the NZ Beef Shorthorn Association and PBBnz, ensuring the tool is practical, effective, and meets the needs of farmers. In June, it was nominated for the Team and Collaboration Award at the Primary Industry Awards.

Since its launch, the on-line tool has proved popular, with 517 user sessions per week between March and June.

B+LNZ's Genetics Extension and Operations Manager, Sarah Powdrell, says the organisation has been very pleased with the response to nProve Beef, and its launch also helped raise awareness of nProve Sheep, with the number of users of the tool increasing compared to the same time last year.

"Between March and June last year we

recorded 5069 sessions of nProve Sheep. This year, there were 8902 sessions over the same time period, 41% of which were using nProve Beef."

What was most pleasing was the level of engagement with both tools, and on average, users spent over six minutes per session, she says.

Beef Progeny Test (BPT) activities continue, with a record 70% conception rate via artificial insemination at the Kepler Farm site in Southland – a record for the programme.

Ten more farmers were selected as part of the 2025 intake for the Next Generation Commercial Herds initiative, bringing the total to 47 participants. A Commercial Herds Day in Napier featured a demonstration of nProve Beef, a workshop on body condition scoring, and a visit to Silver Fern Farms' meat processing plant. ■

MASSEY UNIVERSITY ADDS DEPTH TO DAIRY BEEF PROGENY TEST

Beef + Lamb New Zealand's Dairy Beef Progeny Test has entered the second year of its new phase, which involves more farms and a new approach to identifying opportunities offered by superior dairy beef genetics.

Last spring, the Dairy Beef Progeny Test (DBPT) moved from Pāmu's Renown farm to five new host farms across three regions.

Jim Inglis, Beef + Lamb New Zealand's (B+LNZ) Strategy and Operations Manager, says this phase reinforces the programme's objectives to identify top-performing beef genetics and to demonstrate their value across the dairy and beef supply chains.

The shift to multiple host farms allows for a broader representation of dairy farm systems, cow breeds, and geographic diversity.

"Across the five farms, we are seeing a good representation of the types of cows we see on dairy farms across the country."

These are predominantly Kiwi-cross and Friesian-cross cows along with a Jersey herd.

Massey University is bringing both its dairy farms – Dairy One and Dairy Four – into the DBPT fold, offering the opportunity to integrate progeny test animals into a range of research programmes, including regenerative agriculture.

Dairy One runs 260 cows on a once-a-day milking system. The cows are wintered on the dairy platform. Dairy Four is a more-intensive operation running 600 cows on a traditional twice-a-day milking regime.

Striving to minimise the number of non-replacement calves sent to slaughter, the university is taking advantage of tools such

as sexed semen as well as beef genetics to produce an animal for a different value chain.

The aim is to get all beef cross animals sold as prime before their second winter, but usually a few are carried through for finishing in spring.

Last year, Angus bulls with low birthweight EBVs were used across the farms' Jersey cows and smaller crossbred cows to reduce the risk of calving problems. Calves are reared in cohorts and finished at Massey's drystock farm "Keebles", with detailed data collected to ensure robust genetic comparisons.

Their 200, 400 and 600-day weights are recorded and B+LNZ will organise a

contractor to eye-muscle-scan the cattle prior to slaughter.

The farm also hosts the Whenua Haumanu programme; a partnership between Massey University and the Ministry for Primary Industries that carries out comprehensive research into regenerative agriculture.

The DBPT began in 2015 at Limestone Downs, later moving to Pāmu's Renown farm. While the final cohort at Renown is still being followed, the programme now spans five farms. Bulls of all breeds are eligible for selection. Sire lists can be viewed at blnzgenetics.com. ■

Young calf.



'ACROSS THE FIVE FARMS, WE ARE SEEING A GOOD REPRESENTATION OF THE TYPES OF COWS WE SEE ON DAIRY FARMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.'

Jim Inglis



TICKING BOXES ON BULLS



CATERINA POLETTI

Here's a scenario for you: You're buying a few tail-up bulls from your trusted breeder to cover your R2 heifers and possibly any third-cycle cows. Last year's scanning results weren't great, so you're thinking it's time to dig a bit deeper. Could it be a bull issue? Or perhaps a herd immunity problem? There are many pieces to this puzzle, but one factor you can manage is reliable bull performance. Knowing what you're buying is crucial.

HERE ARE SOME KEY BOXES TO TICK WHEN SELECTING BULLS:

- **Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs):** Focus on traits like calving ease and gestation length.
- **Jump tested and/or semen tested:** Ensure your bulls are up to the task.
- **Vaccination history:** Ask what disease protection is already in place.

Two diseases that can impact reproductive performance are BVD and IBR.

BOVINE VIRAL DIARRHOEA (BVD)

BVD is a widespread disease across New Zealand. Ensuring bulls are BVD-free is critical, especially when stock are moved onto dairy farms or run-off blocks.

Being BVD-free involves:

- Antigen (Ag) testing
- Good property biosecurity
- Receiving both primary and booster BVD vaccinations before entering the property.

This helps protect the bull from infection on the property and prevents it from introducing the virus into your herd. Controlling BVD is a game-changer when it comes to avoiding persistently infected calves and poor in-calf rates.

INFECTIOUS BOVINE RHINOTRACHEITIS (IBR)

IBR is a herpes virus (BoHV-1), and it's more common than you might think — about eight out of 10 dairy herds in NZ are IBR-positive. Introducing a naïve bull into an IBR-positive herd can trigger infection and temporary infertility, increase the workload on your remaining bull

team, and delay conception.

The virus can lie dormant in the animal's immune system, reactivating under stress and presenting in various forms:

- Respiratory symptoms: Think snotty weaners.
- Eye infections: Conjunctivitis.
- Reproductive effects: Bulls may experience increased internal temperatures during infection, affecting sperm quality for several months.

Venereal forms of IBR also occur. Cows may develop infectious pustular vulvovaginitis (IPV), while bulls can suffer from infectious balanoposthitis (IBP) — both painful conditions that can disrupt mating behaviour and reproductive performance.

THE CHALLENGE?

Both IBR and BVD are considered “silent” or “blind” diseases — they can circulate unnoticed until the damage is done. While ignorance may seem bliss, poor reproductive performance costs. Knowing your herd and bull health status is vital. So, what does an ideal bull-buying protocol look like?

- BVD antigen negative test
- Two BVD vaccinations (primary and booster)
- Semen quality tested or enough bulls in rotation to allow for bull breakdown
- TB-free status
- +/- IBR vaccination (especially if the disease has been diagnosed)
- Up-to-date Leptospirosis and clostridial vaccinations
- Quarantine drench; particularly if bulls are heading to a youngstock run-off block. ■

Caterina Poletti is a veterinarian BVSc, working for Vet Services Hawke's Bay. Her work areas of interest include cattle repro and equine medicine and in her spare time she plays rugby for Hawke's Bay Tui.

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