



**PROVEN UNDER
PRESSURE!**

SPRING 2014

Follow the Leader...

Genetics through our herd come out on top Ceri Lewis

A bull that we have used heavily at Mount Linton in our AI programme over the last five years, Rennyalea C511, has come out on top in a National Progeny and Benchmarking test run by Angus Australia. It is a large scale progeny test designed to improve the accuracy of EBV's and to ensure the Angus breed continues its programme of ongoing genetic improvement. The project started in 2010 and included 37 bulls mated to 1360 females.

Calves were born in 2011, weaned in 2012 and steers were grown out for the high quality Asian market and heifers for mating as yearlings. The long fed programme was used as it maximises the expression of differences in growth and marbling.

In late 2013 the steers were slaughtered and underwent full carcase assessment using Meat Standard Australia grading and a sample from each carcase was sent for meat quality analysis. Large differences in the average performance of progeny from different sires were observed, with even greater differences among the progeny of each sire.

Calves were weighed at birth, weaning, yearling, heifer mating, steer feedlot entry and final weight from the feedlot. All heifers and steers were scanned for carcase traits. The results indicated that there were large variations within the group, highlighted by two steers born on the same day on the same property maintained in the same contemporary group. One steer tipped the scales at 806kgs (450kg cwt) while the other weighed 890kgs (502kg cwt). The study identified the difference was \$325 due to the increased carcase weight. For markets where carcase weight and carcase quality is important, these factors greatly influence the value of steers. Other traits that were measured that have significant influence on the profitability of commercial herds included, calving ease, live calves, docility and female fertility.

C511 has set the benchmark very high in the Angus industry and we are thrilled that we have so much of his genetics through our herd.

From the GM

It has been a pretty sobering six months with our TB reactor in the Autumn and all the work involved with getting 6500 cattle through the yards twice followed by the wettest winter in 65 years and now we have another TB suspect when we were about to embark on our second clear herd test. It has been very humbling the support we have received from our bull clients, thank you all for your encouragement. If we get a clear test again this spring we will be targeting a June sale for our 18 month bulls.

TB aside, there is much to look forward to; the last two weeks sunny weather has been a breath of fresh air after the winter and with all the projects we have on the go both on the sheep and cattle front. Whilst some progress with industry consolidation would be great, with the current outlook for sheep and beef looking brighter I suspect that will fade into the background in the short term. There is still a huge amount we can do as an industry to improve performance behind the farm gate and we are firmly committed to doing that by breeding sheep and cattle and developing systems that add value. Here's hoping for a better run over the next six months.

Ceri Lewis
Mount Linton General Manager

LONG FED/CAAB LEADERBOARD

Sire ID	Sire Name	LF Index
NORC511	Rennyalea C511 (EPR)(AI)(ET)	152
NMMD78	Millah Murrah Equator D78 (AI)	138
NLRE17	Reiland Everitt E17 (AI)(ET)	137
VSNE11	Strathewen Timeout E11 (AI)(ET)	134
NAQA241	Androssan Equator A241 (AI)(ET)	133
WLHD19	Cherylton Stewie D19 (AI)(ET)	132
VLYB1155	Lawsons Tank B1 155 (AI)	132
HKFE128	Paringa Red New Man E128 (APR)(AI)(ET)	131
NAQD196	Androssan Direction D196 (AI)(ET)	128
NMME78	Millah Mullah Neutron E78 (AI)	128

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Suftex, Texel, Mainstay



Baptism of Fire

Dave Warburton

Well I must say it has been a baptism of fire for me since arriving in mid May. Very high rainfalls for us in May, July and August has made for a trying winter and unhappy sheep, especially while on the crops where most of them went backwards due to the knee deep conditions.

I keep telling myself if it was too easy in the first season complacency would set in. Well that definitely won't be happening!!!

You may have heard that we have conducted an embryo transfer programme with our Suftex flock and the odd Mainstay ewe. 40 of our best ewes were flushed to the best rams to increase the number of progeny available for sale to meet the demand we were struggling to supply. A much better option for clients than just retaining poorer females normally culled to breed from. While the recipient ewes lambbed in horrific weather in early August, there are still a few lambs around and so we hope to fill everyone's orders and some in 2015. Lease ram lambs may also be available in 2015 if necessary.

It has been great to get around the North and South Island visiting clients. Unfortunately we have run out of time to see everyone.

A few consistent themes did develop from these visits

1. Most farmers want dark faced Suftex rams for marking the progeny for ease of management. I know this makes things easy and we are working on it, but our pale face rams tend to have higher indexes and this means they will make you more money, so don't dismiss them too quickly. Is it such a pain that the odd ewe lamb might sneak into the replacement mob or just inconvenient?
2. A lot of farmers are aware of drench resistance, and appreciated the fact that we don't drench our ewes, (Mainstay and Suftex) and we rarely need to crutch them. We take faecal egg counts and dag scores off all lambs in the autumn. The benefits we see on the Station are no crutching at shearing this winter, and minimal tail ends of mobs developing due to worm burden. This trait does take a long time to

build up in a flock so don't expect overnight improvement. However dag score is highly heritable and culling daggy ewes and daggy lambs out of the replacement programmes and using dag free rams will achieve startling results.

3. Staff – everyone needs a good shepherd or two (including ourselves) and they are just not out there. I am not sure what we can do because the situation won't improve overnight. If there are any initiatives working in this area we would love to know and could even support them.

I recently attended a presentation from Alliance regarding their new payment system for meat yield. We think this system will really financially reward farmers using both our breeds of sheep. The use of the Texel combined with our long term use of CT scanning our top ram lambs means our rams have meat in the right places to tick the boxes.

We commend Alliance for providing an incentive for growing out great lambs.

Mount Linton Suftex featured again at the Sheep Industry Awards. Our ram 4/10 took out the top terminal sire award across all breeds for meat and growth based on the SIL ACE evaluation. We have used many sons of his and he was used in our ET programme. We even have some semen available for those that may want to use him directly.

For those I haven't caught up with yet I look forward to seeing you in the ram selling season. If anyone wishes to significantly change their previous orders in terms of quantity or breed please let me know asap. I have my fingers crossed that spring is kinder than the winter, but performance under pressure is our motto so I look forward to seeing how the ram lambs grow out in this challenging environment.

Cheers
Dave



PHOTO: Hamish Bielski together with the Premier Genetics team doing the embryo transfer programme.

Angus



BREEDING OBJECTIVE:

"To maximise returns to clients through high fertility, above average indexes with increased carcase attributes."

New AI Sires for Mount Linton

Ceri Lewis

In April this year I made my annual trip across the Tasman to find the next best thing for our herd. Our steers are in an 18 month finishing system and we are going to be really pushing the envelope with this in the future and trying to kill them even earlier so we need as much growth as we can but at the same time we are very conscious about maintaining our calving ease and keeping a lid on the mature cow weights. I found a couple of bulls at Rennylea that are real curve benders in that respect and plan on using them heavily in our spring AI programme. The bulls are full brothers by Tuwharetoa Regent out of the highest marbling cow in the Angus Industry, the younger bull

H840 is being collected at the AI centre at the moment and has passed all the quarantine regulations for New Zealand. His sibling G255 is already collected for New Zealand, has been used at Rennylea and has yearling progeny that are due to be scanned next week which they are very pleased with. I have a great deal of confidence in their pedigree. H 840 is the highest marbling bull on Breedplan and probably in the Angus industry and gives nothing away on the maternal side. We have some outstanding yearling bulls this year that are top 1% on Index which will back up the AI programme.

September 2014 Angus Australia BREEDPLAN																				
	Calving Ease Dir (%)	Calving Ease Dtrs (%)	Gestation Length (days)	Birth Wt. (kg)	200 Day Wt. (kg)	400 Day Wt. (kg)	600 Day Wt. (kg)	Mat. Cow Wt. (kg)	Milk (kg)	Scro-tal Size (cm)	Days to Calving (days)	Car-case Wt. (kg)	Eye Muscle Area (sq. cm)	Rib Fat (mm)	Rump Fat (mm)	Retail Beef Yield (%)	IMF (%)	NFI-P (kg/day)	NFI-F (kg/day)	Docility (Trial)
EBV	-3.7	-2.3	-1.9	+3.8	+46	+90	+116	+96	+17	+1.2	-2.9	+75	+5.9	+0.1	-1.0	-0.6	+4.3	+0.38	+0.78	-8
Acc	73%	57%	93%	94%	88%	85%	82%	77%	65%	76%	49%	74%	72%	75%	75%	69%	71%	55%	54%	84%
Breed Avg. EBVs for 2012 Born Calves																				
EBV	-0.4	+0.0	-3.1	+4.4	+39	+72	+94	+84	+13	+1.6	-3.2	+51	+4.1	-0.1	-0.2	+0.4	+1.3	+0.04	+0.12	+3

Rennylea G255 EBV's



PHOTO: Rennylea G255

September 2014 Angus Australia BREEDPLAN																								
Name/ID	Calving Ease Dir (%)	Calving Ease Dtrs (%)	Gestation Length (days)	Birth vWt. (kg)	Birth Wt. (kg)	400 Day Wt. (kg)	600 Day Wt. (kg)	Mat. Cow Wt. (kg)	Milk (kg)	Scro-tal Size (cm)	Days to Calving (days)	Car-case Wt. (kg)	Eye Muscle Area (sq.cm)	Rib Fat (mm)	Rump Fat (mm)	Retail Beef Yield (%)	IMF (%)	NFI-P (kg/day)	NFI-F (kg/day)	Do-cility (Trial)	Long Fed/ CAAB Index	Heavy Grass Fed Steer Index	Short Fed Domes-tic Index	Termi-nal Index
RENNYLEA H840(APR) (ET)	-0.6	-0.9	-2.8	+2.5	+41	+76	+94	+74	+16	+1.4	-4.4	+66	+5.1	+2.0	+1.4	-2.3	+5.2	+0.67	+1.09	-9	+\$ 140	+\$ 74	+\$ 70	+\$ 62
	62%	54%	65%	77%	74%	74%	75%	71%	61%	75%	48%	67%	65%	65%	67%	62%	63%	51%	52%	67%				
Breed Avg. EBVs for 2012 Born Calves	-0.4	+0.0	-3.1	+4.4	+39	+72	+94	+84	+13	+1.6	-3.2	+51	+4.1	-0.1	-0.2	+0.4	+1.3	+0.04	+0.12	+3	+104	+82	+73	+71

Rennylea H840 EBV's

Meaningful data to be collected from Beef Cow Efficiency Trial

In the autumn we were asked by Agresearch to participate in a beef cow efficiency trial that involves weighing and condition scoring the stud cows four times a year and the effect this has on the cow's fertility (ability to get back in calf) and her longevity in the herd. This

spring we will be including the commercial cows and heifers in the trial which will give us over 3500 females to the bull under very similar management groups which should give the industry some pretty meaningful data. We will keep you posted on developments.

Impressive growth rates on Fodder Beet

We grew 20ha of Fodder Beet last year and grazed it off during the winter with some carry over steers that were not finished prior to the second winter. We made an average job of growing it and then made some mistakes during the transition period from grass to fully fed on Beet. Irrespective of that and the fact that we had the wettest winter since 1949, we finished 280 steers into the Silver Fern Farm Beef EQ programme and they grew at 2.2 kgs a day for 26 days. They certainly wouldn't have averaged that over the full period and we are confident there was an element of compensatory growth in there but once they hit their straps the growth rates were very impressive. The first line of steers we processed were the highest marbled line of cattle that had been put through the programme since its inception according to Jason

Graham the Livestock programme manager at SFF, which we were very pleased about considering they were the tail end of our 2012 calf drop. The carcase quality data we receive on these animals is outstanding and very powerful information. One of the consistent themes is the Fodder Beet cattle are yielding 57-58% carcase weight to liveweight. This spring we are confident we have learnt from our mistakes and intend to plant 55ha with the aim of weaning our calves onto the Beet next autumn. If we can replicate the results achieved in trials this winter in Canterbury we should be killing those steers from 14 months onward at close to 300kgs carcase weight. The opportunities with Fodder Beet are endless and we are currently working on several value add projects that we will share with you in due course once we have a few more runs on the board.

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Mount Linton Dog Trial

Friday, 28th November
Saturday, 29th November
Held at Rock Hut, signposted from the Station

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