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EDITORIAL

Here we are, 2016, time flies!

Volume 22, how can that be? But, be assured, the newsletter may look the same, but things are changing! We have been writing this newsletter since 1994 at a time when digital communication did not exist!

Firstly, you will note that we are mailing the newsletter with the autumn sale catalogue, and will do the same for the spring. Some subscribers receive the newsletter only and hopefully our systems reflect your wishes. Distribution will become electronic in the next couple of years, maybe through an App or other targeted mode. As a trial, we emailed the PDF of the catalogue lots to you through our electronic newsletter the Bull's Roar in the first week of February. If you would like to receive the Bull's Roar please subscribe on the front page of the Rennylea website www.rennylea.com.au

Secondly, Australia Post has doubled the cost of postage on January 1st for publications of this size. One suspects that the natural response will be to lower demand, which will lead to even higher postage costs. It will be a self fulfilling prophecy!

We are very proud to offer the first full cohort of bulls (406 spring K bulls) in Australia measured with the imputed 50K DNA test. This test has been released with new prediction equations and offers improved accuracy for some of the hard to measure traits. After attending the Beef Improvement Federation conference in Mississippi last year (see the Winter Rennylea newsletter on the website), we decided it was time to 'press the go button'.

The results are insightful. In selecting the back up bulls for the spring joining, we had a larger cohort to select from, in terms of pedigree, performance and phenotype.



See the article in this newsletter about the research we are doing with Zoetis.

Bryan and I congratulate Sue Govan and Lynton Smith on their near-perfect recording effort. There was only 1 error in parentage in the 406 bulls. Both the Angus Society and Zoetis commented that they have never seen this level of accuracy before, which is substantially better than any research herd.

We asked you about what you would like to see more of and a constant theme is more access to our breeding goals and cowherd. Hence we have produced a video which captures Bryan's thinking and the goals of the breeding programme, over nearly 50 years. The video is available on the Rennylea Angus home page.

You can go online to view the catalogue of bulls for the autumn sale, at www.rennylea.com.au if you would like a physical catalogue please email rennylea@bigpond.com The bulls represent the breeding goal in the Rennylea herd, with high fertility and calving ease and meat quality in spades.

Give us a ring if you would like to inspect the bulls prior to sale day, Bryan (0429 038993), Ruth (0400 302629) or Peter (0427 038993).

The Rennylea Team

Bryan & Lucinda Corrigan

What's on :

Tuesday March 8th:

Rennylea Autumn on Property Sale @ Ellerslie Park, Culcairn. 82 high performance bulls, 18 months old, measured for their phenotypes and genotypes. Available for inspection anytime.
Contact:
Bryan 0427 038993, Ruth 0400 302629 or Peter 0427 038993.

Late July: Winter Beef Week, watch the Rennylea website for the date, featuring 150 18 month and 2 year old bulls for the spring sale.

Thursday 25th August: Rennylea Spring On property sale. 150 K and L bulls.

THE MSA INDEX TO MAXIMISE YOUR VALUE

The MSA beef is a grading model that provides a tool to predict the eating quality of individual cuts in the beef carcass from commercial inputs available at grading. The output from the MSA model is a predicted eating quality score (MQ4) generally in the range of 30 to 80 for a total of 40 cuts with up to 8 cooking options for each cut. Compared to other grading systems around the world, the MSA model can appear complex, but this complexity is rewarded by the improved accuracy of the MSA model to describe eating quality in individual muscles across the carcass for Australian bred cattle. However the difficulty of this complex model with the large output of eating quality scores is how to integrate it into a commercial supply chain.

Ultimately new developments called MSA optimisation, will lead to the segregation of higher quality cuts and carcasses, 4 and 5 star, reducing time of ageing and variation within a product line.

The MSA index has been developed as a single score to combine the measures from a carcass that effect eating quality. The index is modelled from these measures to produce a score between 30 and 80.

They include:

Bos indicus content

Gender

HGP treated?

Saleyard marketed?

Hot standard carcass weight kg

Hang method, archilles or tender stretch

Ossification, 100 to 590

Marbling score 100 to 1100

Ultimate pH

Loin temperature

Days Aged – model uses 5 days

The evidence shows that across the industry, the mean MSA index has increased by 1 point over 5 years, that the animals at the top end have increased more, and those at the bottom end, with a score of less than 50 are decreasing. The most significant effects are caused by the HGP implants (none), saleyards (no), milk fed vealer (yes), ossification (lower is better) and MSA marbling (more is better).

The MSA index is a useful indicator of changes in eating quality over time, at a farm, supply chain or industry level. Producers can make changes to improve eating quality. Being rewarded for this is the challenge

NEW BUSINESS, NEW OPPORTUNITY

The incoming chairman of the CSIRO Mr David Thodey addressed the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering in November. He opened with an observation that in Australia we have a strong track record in invention and academic achievement, but are lowly ranked internationally in commercialisation.

The key is our culture and values, he said the the leading countries are the USA and Israel. "It is a shame that we know more about football and rugby players than our leading scientists" he said.

"We have a brilliant, future, the following points are my view of what we need to do."

The first is the coming disruption in business and personal life. This is to do with connectivity, computational power and new software.

"Can you believe that Amazon makes more money providing Cloud computing storage than other products, similar to the AIRBNB and Uber business models. Worldwide 4bn people don't have connection to the internet, there are 8bn mobile phones, and 15bn

connected devices. It is projected that there will be 30bn connected devices by 2020."

"Computational power is increasing dramatically, to enable BIG DATA platforms, in different spheres of life, health for example."

He mentioned a recent meeting in Oxford, convened by international consulting firm, McKinseys, to discuss the ethical issues associated with artificial intelligence, the way we learn and interact, robotics and automation.

"Lean in and participate and make a difference" said Mr. Thodey. "Science can make rural industry profitable if it has a vision."

"What are the qualities that set people apart? Great leaders have a great purpose. Don't accept the status quo, reinvent yourself. Lift your sights and have self belief, work hard and be resilient when you fail. It is part of success."

"The right policy settings are not about government funding, but structures to enable innovation."

PADDOCK TALK by Bryan



2016 has started on a positive note, some relief in the north following rain, however patchy, while western Victoria and South Australia are struggling and most of NSW is faring quite well. The cattle market has been variable, weaner sales very strong, pregnant females probably very good buying on the present market.

It looks to me because we have seasonable variability and so much of our product is exported, the market is going to fluctuate. But overall, the market for beef looks very positive.

One of our in our breeding objectives is to be below breed average for birth weight. We have always been about .7 or .8kg below the angus breed average for BW which is currently +4.4. Angus traditionally have been good calving cattle, and some of this is because they have had shorter gestation than some other breeds. Our herd certainly has a very good calving record, however in our breeding objective we do not consciously selection for shorter gestation. I think a sensible approach is not to go overboard on this trait.

Since the updated analyses on Breedplan last year, the heritability of gestation length moved from 25% to 60% and is highly correlated with calving ease direct, which in turn changed significantly.

I would like to make a couple of points:

- i. GL can only be recorded on calves born to artificial insemination. This has, I think,

distorted the analysis because naturally sired calves cannot be included. My experience, over my whole working life, is that as birthweight increases, so does dystocia.

- ii. I am reluctantly making comment on this because we are committed performance testers, however Peter and I are faced with a paradox, heifer bulls with birthweights well below breed average, but with negative calving ease EBVs. Historically, looking at the Rennylea herd and our clients' herds, we are assured that the actual birth weight EBV should be the main driver for calving ease. This is based on many years of experience, and I trust this explanation assists clients when looking at our bulls.

Our long term commitment to moving our genetic pool in a direction that ensures that the pedigrees have consistent low birth weights is a positive for clients. With this in mind we will continue to gradually increase 200 and 400 growth with an emphasis on capping mature cow weight and retaining some fat.

The video we have put on our website was produced to emphasise the importance we put on the cow herd in terms of practical function, high performing, fast growing, high quality carcase and exceptional fertility. The same direction in clients' herds is going to give market flexibility and lower cost of production.

RESEARCH TO ADD VALUE WITH DNA TECHNOLOGY

After attending the Beef Improvement Federation conference in Mississippi last year (see the Winter Rennylea newsletter on the website), we decided it was time to 'press the go button' with DNA technology across the herd. When we implement a new piece of technology, we prefer to measure whole drops of animals, and then evaluate the information across the herd.

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had a larger cohort to select from, in terms of pedigree, performance and phenotype

Bryan and I congratulate Sue Govan and Lynton Smith on their near-perfect recording effort. There was only 1 error in parentage in the 406 bulls. Both the Angus Society and Zoetis commented that they have never seen this level of accuracy before, which is substantially better than any research herd.

We have signed a confidentiality agreement with Zoetis and they are analysing the pre- and post- i50K enhanced EBVs. The goal is to evaluate the increase in accuracy at a young age for both bulls and heifers to assist selection. Each group of animals will be followed through for a number of years.

**2016 AUTUMN
SALE BULLS**



LOT 1



LOT 3



LOT 5



LOT 6



LOT 14



LOT 15



LOT 19



LOT 27



LOT 28



LOT 30



LOT 40



LOT 43



LOT 48



LOT 58



LOT 59



LOT 60

2016 AUTUMN SALE BULLS



LOT 74



LOT 79

RENNYLEA SPRING SALE REPORT

In a week that delivered 30mms of rain, a large and optimistic crowd turned out for the Rennylea Spring On Property sale.

The offering of 147 bulls were in two age lots, 18 months and two years old and the sale commenced with two pens of two year old bulls. These included some very good bulls that Rennylea had used during the previous 2 joinings. The first 50 bulls averaged \$8,310 as hot competition fuelled the prices.

Lot 32, NOR K171 is a son of Rennylea H106 (by Regent), topped the sale at \$15,000. He was purchased by JD and CA Braddock from Cooma. K171 has terrific birth to final growth spread of figures and excellent structure. Rennylea has kept his full brother and both are exceptionally quiet. All his indicies are in the top 5% of the breed. The Braddocks return to Rennylea every couple of years to pick a sire to breed their own bulls.

The second priced bull was lot 27, K30 by US sire Connealy Earnan. With fantastic birth to 400 day growth figures, from +5 to +100, his performance is also in the top 5% of the Angus breed for all breeding indicies. K30 was purchased by Glendaloch Pastoral Company from Alexandra in Victoria, and will be used in their bull breeding herd.

Sixteen bulls made \$10,000 or over, including the final two sons of Rennylea W449, the legendary performance cow, who died earlier this year. Lots 14 and 15, went to Bonnylea at Tumbarumba and the Sinclair family at Greenethorpe for \$11,500 and \$10,500 respectively.

Long term supporter from Esperance in WA, David and Dale Johnson bid on a number of the leading bulls and secured Lot 74, K258 by Rennylea H108. This is a very well muscled bull with a moderate frame, and top 5% indicies.

Lot 72, K239, another Earnan son, was purchased by the Friedrich family from

Gerogery, for \$13,000 who have been wonderful Rennylea supporters in recent years.

Other local buyers included the three Greenhill families from Talmalmo, Simon Greenhill purchased 4 bulls, Greenhill and Sons purchased 4 bulls and Donald Greenhill PL purchased 1 bull. The Parker Family from Henty, Three Creeks from Culcairn, Bibbaringa PL from Bowna, JG & RM Maconochie at Wymah, Kywanna Pastoral Company from Table Top, the Wearn family and Peter Murchoch from Holbrook also supported the sale.

Volume buyers included Clear Springs Pastoral Company from Holbrook. Manager Chris Burton and owner Rick Heathcote purchased 10 bulls between \$7,000 and \$9,000 and averaging \$7,850. These were split between heifer and cow bulls with excellent carcase and growth.

Rennylea G255's 10 progeny had the highest average at \$9,000, followed by Connealy Earnan's 21 progeny at \$8,261, BNA D145 at \$8,214 and the 12 Rennylea H106 sons averaged \$7,909.

Bryan Corrigan opened the sale and noted that with the very good cattle prices, it was an opportune time to trade in old bulls and replace them with new genetics. "Bulls you purchase this year, will have daughters in your herd in the 2020s" he said.

Lucinda Corrigan made the final comments and thanked everyone who supported the sale and were now able to take advantage of the good conditions. "We greatly appreciate our long term clients who have given us such wonderful support through the last couple of ordinary years and hope the current season and prices deliver for you", she said.

The 147 lots sold for a complete clearance to gross \$1,046,000 and average \$7,115. The auctioneers were Andrew Wishart and Peter Godbolt from Landmark.

FINDING NEW EMPLOYEES ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

You've seen this heading and thought.... WHAT, WHAT are they talking about? We have filled two positions since the winter and both successful employees were found through social media.

"How can that be?" you ask.

You only have to look at the print media to see what is changing, as the world, and the customers of the print media vote with their pockets. Papers are shrinking, less local content, which in turn engenders less appeal to the wider public, classified typesetting offshore, such as in the Philippines, is now common for the major national papers.

The period we are now experiencing is a transition, from totally relying on print media and wireless broadcasts, to digital delivery of news and current affairs (not to mention commerce and trade).

When we were looking for a new employee to join the Govans at Culcairn properties last winter, Peter found an ad on the website Gumtree, from a couple looking to move south. Initial interviews on the telephone,

followed by a trip down south led to their engagement.

Both parties couldn't be happier! The Uletts spent the last few years working with cane and cattle at Prosperine, previously for Xstrata on their country around mines at Eastern Creek. Dirk and Wendy had also run their own Droughtmaster stud. Wendy is studying agronomy at Charles Sturt University and also operates an online business marketing called SHOW PREP HQ supplying goods and sharing information for horse enthusiasts.

When we decided to employ a young person to join Peter's team at Culcairn, I wrote a piece on the Rennylea Angus Facebook page and promoted it with a \$20 advertisement. We received 25 applicants and Dylan Porquet commenced in mid January. Dylan comes from Lake Cargellico and we welcome him to the team.

From our experience, the digital age is here when it comes to job seeking and employment.



Dirk & Wendy Ulett –spring sale 2015

the meat quality b^Rand

BEEF WEEK WORKSHOP

When times are good, it is easy to let costs increase, and the challenge is to stay focussed on the fundamentals. At our recent Beef Week workshop with Associate Professor Bruce Allworth, his topic was "Making the Most of the Good Times". Bruce commented that producers are relaxed, more so than since prior to the start of the poor seasons in 2002.

What do you do during these times? With stock at high prices, it is the most expensive time to improve pastures, the most efficient time to sow new pastures is when prices are poor as the opportunity cost is lowest. There are 2 sorts of producers, says Bruce, some are very good at growing grass and some are very good at using it. If you are in the first camp and fantastic at producing grass,

then there is an opportunity to improve grazing systems and utilisation. If you have utilisation under control, the opportunity is to improve your grass production, whether it be nutrition, grazing systems and rest periods, management of native and improved perennial systems.

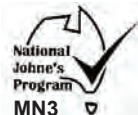
Genetic improvement is always there in the background, if your source of genetics has a clear breeding goal, and uses the tools to measure and improve the stock they are supplying, then the gains are cumulative and permanent. A breeding goal differs to the popular practice of corrective mating, and single trait selection. If the breeding program focusses on a single trait, then it is likely that the next lot of bulls may need to correct some other trait that was not included in the goal.



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