

FOSSIL CREEK GENETICS IN ESTONIA

This fine 4 year old boy (named Usain Bolt!) is now residing in Estonia after being exported via the team at Yxskafkälens Angus in Sweden - a result of an export group of Fossil Creek embryos from the Fossil Creek Greta family.
A stunning bull, and a great Fossil Creek Angus breeding result with Saareõue Aberdeen Angus and Yxskafkälens Angus.



CLIENT PROFILE - THE HECTORS

'The Hectors' is a 2200 hectare run property nestled at the coastal end of the Kakanui ranges. Typically steep and dry, this challenging North Otago property is farmed by Martin and Janene Parsons. Predominantly tussock with 400 ha of paddock country at the front, with not a lot of strong fattening ground due to the nature of this environment. They run a mob of 130 predominantly Hereford cows which they have been topping up with replacement heifers from Rees Valley Station near Queenstown. The cows are all mated to higher growth rate Angus bulls which have been sourced from Fossil Creek Angus since 2000.

All the steer calves are sold off mum to the same finisher in Southland who is having great results - with the aim to have steers reaching the 320 kg carcase target before the next years calves arrive on the farm. These steers fit well into the ANZCO Premium Angus programme and are actively sought after. A small handful of black baldy heifer calves are kept for replacements with the balance going to Omarama to fatten under a pivot at Richard and Wendy Parson's Twinburn station, another Fossil Creek client. Martin commented that with steady genetic improvement, their calves are weaning at least 50 kg heavier than the past, resulting in much higher returns to their bottom line. This, combined with the high fertility regularly delivers scanning over 95%, and makes their beef cow operation a valuable addition to 'The Hectors' predominately sheep farming system.



WELLINGTON STRIKES AGAIN

MPI are being misleading about the whole M.Bovis picture. There is yet to be confirmation on the method of entry, following the initial flurry of threats of 'dealing to the perpetrators'. M.Bovis appears to have come in through a legitimate pathway enabled by MPI lack of adequate oversight of its own regulations, hence the continued code of silence around this. Bizarrely, even without an inch of confirmation on actual entry mode, the beef industry have now happily said they would pay for what is essentially a dairy industry incursion through poor MPI biosecurity. Beef + Lamb have done an abysmal job of advocating for the beef industry - all of the so called 'beef' farms are dairybeef rearing or finishing farms and not beef breeding farms. Blaming NAIT and the continual rhetoric about traceability will not prevent another incursion of Bovis, Foot and Mouth disease or similar if the root cause is not addressed. Microchipping all dogs was supposed to stop kids from being savaged by rogue canines and buying back a few guns won't stop deranged idiots from going on shooting sprees. We will continue to advocate for a higher level of biosecurity and a lower level of bureaucratic bollocks.

We wish you all the very best for a kind and productive Spring to allow those good scanning rates and tight calving patterns to come to fruition. Please contact us any time with feedback, questions or simply to chew the fat. We urge anyone that hasn't visited our Fossil Creek breeding herd home in the hills of Five Forks to contact Blair and Jane, they will be delighted to show you the cows and the young stock up in an environment that mirrors the conditions that your genetics need to perform in.

Neil & Rose and Blair & Jane



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SPRING NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2019



A huge thank you for your support to make our 19th Annual Fossil Creek Angus Bull on June 13th a resounding success. Our focus on commercial clients and our no-nonsense approach to our sales is something that we are very proud to stand by. Your loyalty and interest in our balanced-trait programme certainly makes the hours that we put in worthwhile. We were delighted to present an even line of over 60 bulls to the industry and we are tremendously proud of where our herd of hard-working, honest Angus breeding cows have taken us. They grind away year in year out up at Blair and Jane's hill block – surviving both the challenges of the environment at 650 metres a.s.l and our stringent culling on biotype, temperament and fertility to produce replacement daughters and saleable sons. That is no mean feat under the watchful eyes of our 4 studmasters. This year we provided more seating at the sale, better pens for viewing and more car parking options, not quite Forsyth Barr stadium but also came at no cost to the rate payer! Please take us up on the offer to come and visit you on farm and go through your breeding objectives to prioritise the traits that will make the biggest difference to your bottom line – no strings or obligations attached. We live and breathe this type of analysis and if anything, it will make your bull buying season a lot easier and streamline your genetic focus by simplifying the process.



BEEFED UP

Beef demand continues to climb to levels even higher than the 2014/15 peak. Exports of NZ Beef in the October – May period were 83% higher than previous records, underpinned by China's insatiable demand for protein. This demand comes with an inherent risk of putting our beef in one basket and it would be preferable to see Trade Minister David Parker



spending more time focusing on gaining strong trade deals throughout other economies to spread our risk. China only cares about China when it comes to trading and we can't afford to allow it to hold any more influence than it does now. Back at farm gate level, we are fortunate to gain an increasing level of feedback from beef finishers on the performance of Fossil Creek bloodlines. The power of information that large scale finishers can collate on genetics is impressive and something that we relish receiving data on. Your role as breeders of course first and foremost is to run an efficient maternal herd with a short calving window, live calves on the ground with high growth rates to weaning. Next cab off the rank is producing a product that you (or the calf sale purchaser) can grow efficiently to a product that captures the highest value for retail beef. We are really excited about this clearer 'line of sight' working back from the finisher to the genetic engine room, and demonstrates to us the increasingly crucial role that the stud breeder plays in influencing profitability along all **steps of the supply chain**.

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Find us on Facebook
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FOSSIL CREEK IN THE FIELD



Mother Nature challenged us again this Autumn, with North Otago mirroring similar weather patterns along the entire East Coast – we had a grand total of 125 mls fall in the first 6 calendar months of the year, but were fortunate to pick up 40 mls in late July (the first rain for 3 months). Snow is trying to fall at Blair and Jane's hill block as this goes to print, although it will be good to have snow back on the Kakanui ranges and the 320 stud cows seem happy chewing their way through the back tussock blocks leading up to calving in September.

We continue to host as many school groups and work experience students as possible in order to encourage young people into the myriad of career options in the primary sector. It is particularly important that they hear this message from the grass roots, given the current challenges that we face with attractiveness of the industry. We have been impressed by the level of detail that our local secondary schools are covering in their animal genetics modules and are always keen to support these students, along with Fraser Farm at Waitaki Boys' High School.

2020 MILESTONE

We are excited about our 2020 sale to be held on 11th June 2020. This will be the 20th Anniversary of our Fossil Creek Angus on-farm bull sale. It is amazing where the industry has progressed in 20 years, especially in the impressive adoption of performance recording and genetic development to improve profitability in the sector. DNA was discovered in the year Neil was born, and now circa 60 (+!) years later the technology stemming from those discoveries drives our planets insatiable need for efficient food production.

We have over 100 stunning bulls in a nice even group, including sons of Everest, Fossil Creek Malik, Marlo, Mateo and Martin, Capitalist, Regulator, Stunner, Tussock and Heatherdale Spotlight and we look forward to presenting these boys to you next June.

Please remember that the full profiles of all of our herdsires are on www.fossilcreekangus.co.nz



POWERFUL GENETICS

In Spring 2017 we did a large A.I programme up at the tussock block along with a substantial Embryo programme on a number of our top Donor cows. The A.I success was very high and we have a large number of rising yearling bulls and heifers sired by LD Capitalist 316 and GDAR Regulator, we will present these boys at our June 2020 sale. Both these USA sourced sires are true multitrait specialists in both maternal and eating quality attributes. We will give a lot more detail on both these sires in our next newsletter, as well as further information on another sire we used on embryos, Musgrave Stunner.



LD Capitalist 316



GDAR Regulator



Musgrave Stunner.

Check out our updates on our Fossil Creek Website
www.fossilcreekangus.co.nz or Facebook

NEW RECRUITS TO THE FOSSIL CREEK 1st XV

Fossil Creek Angus purchased a new Herdsire this season from Grampians Angus, near Culverden ' Granite N123'. This herd is heavily influenced with Fossil Creek Angus genetics, and Grampians Granite N123 traces back to a cow the Reeds purchased from a number of years ago from our potent Jean family. This bull is really powerful in his makeup with strong bone, but moderate mature cow weight to complement our daughters of Everest and Tussock. Granite has solid fats with exceptional fertility traits.



Fossil Creek N228

We kept an outstanding son of our Tussock herdsire, FCA N228 because we felt he had such a good combination of muscle power, body depth, and skeletal strength as well as a great set of EBVs. The pedigree on N228 represents the very best of Fossil Creek bloodlines, and includes nearly every sire that has performed well in our herd. These include Chisum, Reagan, Prince, Pinebank 41-97, Hingaia Tex, FC Hero along with Quest damline. Similar to the Grampians bull, FCA N228 is above average on growth yet moderate cow weight, and top 10% for fertility and fat traits. He ticks all the boxes for our ongoing programme.

SACRIFICIAL LAMB

You can't help but wonder whether historians of the future will have a hard time figuring out how so many ill-informed ignorant fringe groups are currently holding our primary industries to ransom and influencing wacky Wellington policy. The impact of socialistic climate change legislation on rural communities is so significant that it has estimated to be the equivalent of a major outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease. It seems abhorrent that in a period of high product prices, record low interest rates, increasing productivity and efficiency that we have been blindsided. It is disappointing to hear that despite Federated Farmer's best efforts, the primary industry did not go to the climate change panel on an united front- with Beef + Lamb supporting higher emissions targets and inclusion of Agriculture into the ETS.



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

The Autumn pregnancy scanning results over the whole South Island seem to have been exceptional. Many of our clients are reporting scanning in the mixed age cows in the high 90's. This has to be tremendous and represents a great opportunity for improved profitability on several fronts. Not only do you have more calves to rear and sell, but when you have such a high pregnancy rate you have more scope to cull the poorer types, lates or underperformers. If you combine scanning and fetal aging at the same time, this is a great tool for sorting cows and managing feed resources just before and after calving.

Most of our clients have adopted our strict two cycle yearling heifer matings, and the ongoing effects of this means overall improvements in whole herd fertility. More calves = Higher Profit.



INDEX INNOVATION

We continue to receive great feedback from clients relating to our catalogue format with the inclusion of the simple 'Hill Country Index' that has been designed and implemented by Dunedin's AbacusBio. While other Angus breeders continue to work solely with an outdated and inaccurate index system (which was supposed to be updated at least 5 years ago), we put this index alongside the standard values, to assist you to make sensible up to date economic decisions using real-time weightings on what you are actually being paid for out in the industry.

If we needed any further confirmation that we are on the right track, AbacusBio have recently created a new index system for USA Angus, the biggest Angus performance system anywhere. They have moved to a similar trait grouping system as ours with both maternal and terminal traits being separated more for economic analysis. This is a huge coup and shows the immense respect this small kiwi company has attracted for its international index expertise. AbacusBio are now assisting Canadian Angus to update their economic indexes.

20th ANGUS GROUP BREEDPLAN EBVs											
CALVING EASE						MATERIAL			GROWTH		
EBV	STB	DC	SS	DC	AS50	EMA	Rib	Rump	REY	ME	
112	1.1	0.8	0.3	0.1	123	12.3	12.3	12.3	12.3	12.3	12.3
STB	2/2										
COMMENTS: USEFUL FOR BREEDING AND EATING QUALITY. SEE ALSO FOR MORE DETAILS ON THE WEBSITE.											