

## ALLIANCE NZ HAND PICKED BEEF PROGRAMME.

It is really great to see that Alliance Meats have stepped up to the plate with a Branded Beef portfolio that really rewards finishers with achievable premiums. Animals that meet the specs have been making another \$300 per carcass over their contemporaries. If nothing else this should encourage finishers and breeders to focus more on the low hanging fruit in the form of simple genetics which contribute to achieving these great freebies. We already have a large number of clients that are taking advantage of premium programmes with other meat companies and so this is a good move for the industry as a whole.



Don't forget the basics like calving ease and maternal attributes, temperament and function, but you will need to especially focus on growth and carcass weights at breed average or better. Beware that there are way too many Angus animals in NZ with extremely high Fats but very low carcass weights and very low Retail beef yields, both which reduce your income significantly.

## FOSSIL CREEK – IN THE FIELD

It's been an action-packed year so far up on the hill block and the usual climatic challenges that you have all experienced during 2020/2021. Going from a wet Summer to one of the driest Autumns on record and then into a strangely wet winter. We still have a month of winter to go, with grass growth on the hill block not due to kick in until early October. The R2 first calving heifers calve in late August, followed by the mixed age cows out on the hill block. More snow will no doubt arrive as it tends to in the midst of calving, but our tussock blocks offer plenty of natural shelter for the cows.

Ben Paton has been part of the team for 18 months now and Jack Price has come full circle after a stint at Lincoln and ended up back with us as well. We are enjoying having the young team on board and Jane is attempting to get them house-trained! They both had good rugby seasons, with Jack's Union team taking out the 'Burns Shield' and Ben's Valley team going down to a very strong Kurow team in the 'Citizen Shield' final. Congratulations to mighty Kurow for the win.

Our Fossil Creek political beasts have been focusing on keeping our industry 'leaders' accountable for decisions. Neil has been heavily involved in ensuring Angus NZ remains focused on the betterment of the entire beef industry and Jane has been spending a bit of time in Wellington again lately trying to nail down a better way forward for a number of industry 'issues' - her most pressing issue at present being fighting for a fairer

Methane model that doesn't unfairly throw sheep and beef farming under the bus. Please feel free to pick up the phone and talk to these two on the issues they are fighting for on behalf of the industry – but set aside at least an hour to do so!

Neil and Rose were delighted to have youngest daughter Georgia, eldest daughter Amelia and husband Alocs back from Australia for the bull sale in June, and very cool for Neil and Rose to spend time with their delightful wee granddaughter Rebeka. This was a pretty special window of opportunity, given what has happened both over the Tasman and here with Covid lockdowns since then. Their daughter Ella is busy balancing study with working in Dunedin.

The three Smith children Charlotte, Henry and George earned their keep during the recent lockdown #2, with a lot of farm work undertaken and not a lot of home schooling with their home school teacher more focused on life skills and work ethic!



We wish you a kind and fruitful Spring and once again we stress the importance of coming to view the breeding herd up on Blair and Jane's hill block and the Fossil Creek replacements and pending sale bull crop at any time – to see that we really are practicing what we preach – genuine commercial conditions for all stud stock. We really enjoy hosting discussion groups or any groups of farmers so let us know if you feel like going on tour at any stage. Kind regards,

*Blair, Jane, Rose, Neil*



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# FOSSIL CREEK ANGUS

ROCK SOLID ANGUS GENETICS

## SPRING NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2021

**2021 SALE** – A huge thank you for your support for our 21st Annual R2 on farm bull sale. We appreciate the EBV 'homework' and focus that our clients put into selecting the right bull for their breeding herd and this, coupled with your enquiries throughout the year and our Bull Open Days leading up to the sale hopefully gave you a good chance to make the best bull buying decisions possible.



As you know, our focus sits squarely with our commercial clients that farm in all types of climatic and physical challenges around the country – we do not chase headlines with overpriced bulls to other studs or 'underpin' our sale with sneaky behind the scenes bull credits from other years. We believe that this practice is unjust and unfair for genuine bidders and we are shocked with the extent of this practice in areas further north. We have always had the policy of a full prorata cash refund on any bull that becomes unsound within 3 years of sale. This is transparent, consistent and fair to everyone as (unlike a 'credit') it does not tie you into coming back to our sale! We back our bulls and are proud of our very low breakdown rate and attribute this to our unrelenting attention to ensuring only the most robust bulls make the cut for the sale lineup – underpinned by our structural assessment and semen testing regime.

The 2021 sale was consistent throughout the catalogue and the almost full clearance of bulls at very reasonable prices (with our average price sitting at \$7637). This indicated that there was a good offering and value for all buyers. Lot 7 'Fossil Creek Quidproquo' sold for \$19,000 to a top notch commercial herd in Tutira, Hawkes Bay.

Each year our phenotype throughout the 70 bulls becomes more and more even – and our performance data demonstrates the genuine multi-trait evenness of our Fossil Creek programme in a balanced, docile package.

# FOSSIL CREEK ANGUS



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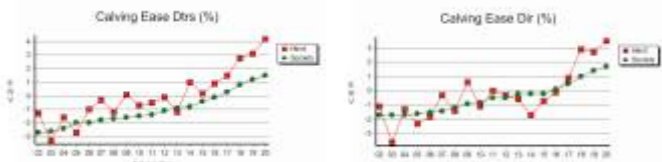
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# FOSSIL CREEK ANGUS

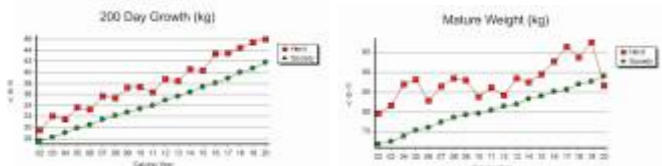
## EBVS

Leading up to sale time we had some great discussions with many clients, mostly around the subject of EBVs and indexes. We really pride ourselves in having a programme with breeding objectives to balance both female fertility traits and finishing traits. We constantly benchmark ourselves within the industry so from that viewpoint we will share our herds genetic progress report with you to see where we fit.

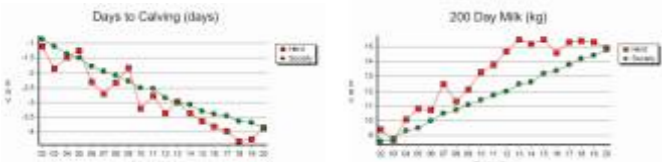
Here are the Fossil Creek Angus herd trend graphs for our Calving ease traits which show that we are heavily focused on presenting bulls to the industry with Ease of Calving and which have daughters which will calve easily. The green lines are the year on year trends of the whole Angus NZ herd, while Fossil Creek animal trends are in red.



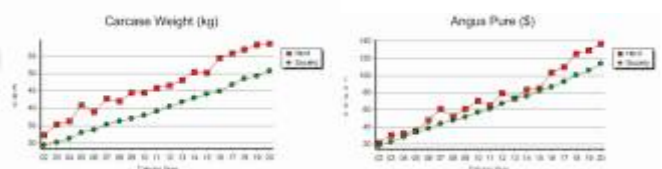
It is easy to see that in addition to the strong Calving Ease traits, we have been able to maintain a very acceptable set of Growth attributes from weaning weight through to 600 day final weight. So the calves come easily but then grow like heck. You will also see below that we have made massive progress in addressing what we identified as less than desirable cow size in our herd. It is incredibly hard to get the genetics right to maintain growth rates but while reducing mature cow size. We are immensely proud of our resulting genotypic trends in these traits.



Fertility traits as measured by Days to Calving and Scrotal size are better than the National trend, and the milk in the cow herd well higher than national herd trends.



Finally we examine where we have got to with the critical Carcass weight herd trend which we have really excelled at and have kept ahead of the country trend in Rib and Rump fat. We are now focusing further on Marbling but we know from our client feedback that a very high majority of our bulls finished progeny are hitting market specs for Branded Beef programmes. Even though we don't agree with or use the Angus Association Indexes, Our herd is still at the forefront of the NZ Herd trends, a true balanced breeding Angus herd.



## 21st SALE CELEBRATION

At our sale in June, Neil and Rose were proud to present a unique knife (made in South America from recycled farm implement steel and bone) to long term clients for their dedicated support and loyalty each and every year to the Fossil Creek breeding programme. Neil and Rose had these knives hand-made while on a trip to South America and somehow managed to get them through the border without being detained. They then kept them for the 21st Sale Celebration. A pretty special moment to share after our Bull Auction. Fossil Creek is proud to partner with our clients to produce strong, profitable beef genetics throughout the country.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Love it or loathe it, this is a great way for us to keep you up to date with what we are up to with the stud – with lots of action shots including updates on each year's crop of sale bulls.

Make sure you find us on Facebook (@fossilcreekangus) and push 'Like' or 'Follow' to keep in touch with what we are up to. A reminder that our website has loads of information including our current Herdsire Pedigrees and our latest facebook posts for those that aren't on social media.

facebook @fossilcreekangus

## 'BRANDED BBQ' SHOWCASE OF RED MEAT

We were delighted to have industry identity Doug Brand at our 2021 sale, armed with his renown BBQ ensemble. Totally dedicated to the cause, Doug was at the sale venue @ 6am sharp to light the BBQ and was armed with the best BBQ skills, highest quality meat and epic slow-cooking BBQ setup.

With succulent beef ribeye, slow-smoked beef brisket, pulled smoked lamb, and 55 Day aged beef ribeye - reverse seared 2" steak with chimichurri sauce on offer, this was a fitting celebration for the 21st on-farm annual Fossil Creek Bull Auction. It certainly was a test to see if Doug really was as good with the BBQ tongs as he is on the rugby field or Ironman circuit, and he passed with flying colors.

doug@brandedbbq.co.nz



## BALANCING FEED AND FUNCTION IN YOUNG BULLS

It is a fine line and balancing act to present bulls for sale. We pride ourselves in having one of the lowest bull breakdown rates in the country. It seems that the more you push the bulls with high levels of feed at a young age, the higher the chance of joint and mobility problems later on.

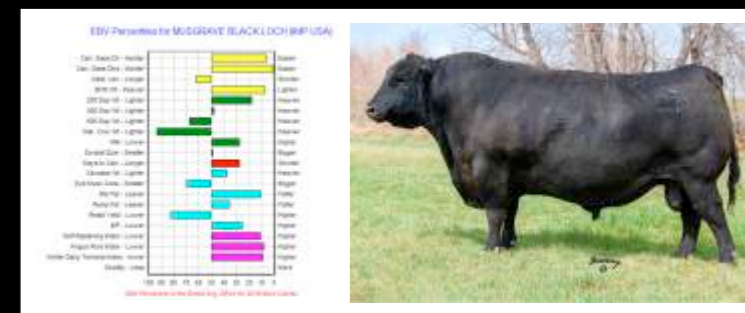


We don't use Fodder Beet because we are pretty worried about the long term detrimental effects on gut lining and nutrient absorption in young breeding stock. Sure it is great for fattening but the jury is out on the effects on Rumen function and joints in young breeding bulls and possible long term effects. It doesn't take much of a miscalculation at transition time to result in long term gut damage. It seems that the pressure to get bulls to higher weights for yearling bull sales in particular has led to high use of Fodder Beet in some Studs throughout the country.

## NEW AI SIRES FOR BULL SALE IN 2022

We have just got all our 2021 sale bulls away to their new homes and are immensely proud of how these guys behaved themselves on sale day and were freighted off around the country with ease.

There is anticipation and a bit of excitement at Fossil Creek with our big numbers of R1 bulls we have by new multitrait AI sires. We had great success with our use of Musgrave Stunner, and now have a good number of progeny from a very successful AI programme with Musgrave Black Loch from the same stable. Check out this heavily muscled powerhouse and his great set of really stunning performance package.



We also used Paintrock Trapper as part of our A.I programme - demonstrating a really top maternal package. He has three all-time maternal great bulls in his pedigree and matches up well to our herd profile. Calving Ease, growth, lower cow weight, carcass weight and fertility.



## ANGUS NZ

Most of you may be aware of the movement of a group of Angus NZ breeders with a large number of pedigree cows to use registration and performance recording at Angus Australia.

Fossil Creek Angus will continue to monitor the situation but we are very concerned about some of the policies being implemented by the NZ Angus Board and especially how these may potentially impact on our commercial clients. However we want to assure our commercial clients that we will continue our unwavering commitment to deliver beef genetics to you all which are absolutely and passionately bred to suit the environments and objectives of the whole industry. You all know that what you see is what you get with us...no smoke and mirrors, no bullshit and with your best interests at the forefront of our breeding programme.