

2022 DEVELOPMENTS

Many of you may have seen Neil and Roses property, Craigevar - advertised for sale recently. This has been in the pipeline for some time as a move to a smaller and flatter piece of land will be safer for Neil's health situation.

The Sandersons will move to Weston on the outskirts of Oamaru and the migration of ownership of Fossil Creek Angus will continue with Blair and Jane until completed in 2023. The transfer of herd ownership on a stepped basis has been really beneficial in that one of New Zealand's best multitrait Angus herds has not only remained in-tact but has in fact doubled in size over the last 5 years while the transfer has been ongoing.

This move for Neil and Rose means that they can focus on sharing their genetic expertise further and will be able to free up more time for visiting beef herds around the country.

Jane and Blair will be hosting the Fossil Creek Angus bull sales from this June onwards, at their Newhaven block (Dunrobin road, Five Forks - only 6 km away from their hill block, where they run the Fossil Creek breeding cow herd and young stock). They are starting to build the bull sale shed this month and hope to have it fully functional by June 16th!



ANNUAL FOSSIL CREEK BULL SALE – THURSDAY 16TH JUNE 2022

We are looking forward to hosting you at this year's 22nd Annual R2 bull sale on June 16th. We certainly hope that all the covid hype is a forgotten memory by then. We are delighted with the lineup of bulls that we have to offer you.

We will be hosting two open days again in May (at the new venue at Newhaven) – however if you can't make these dates please remember that every day is an open day here and to just get in contact with us to view the bulls, the young stock and the cow herd in action.

Seeing our breeding herd and the country that we run our girls on, is probably the best way to see whether we are practicing what we preach!



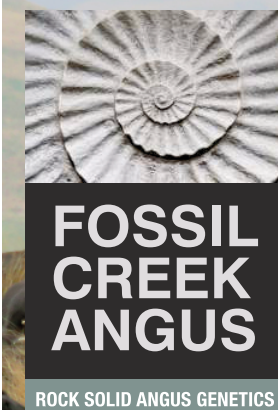
Cornerstone Herdsires for our sale on June 16th with a number of sons for sale include 'Fossil Creek Navigator', 'Musgrave Black Loch', 'Fossil Creek Promo P061', 'Paint Rock Trapper', 'Fossil Creek Peso P077', 'Heather Dell Spotlite', 'Fossil Creek Peron P076' and 'Fossil Creek Patriot P145'.

www.fossilcreekangus.co.nz

Our catalogue will be sent to you in mid-May, and you will also be able to view all the bull EBV details online (on our Fossil Creek Angus website and on the NZ Angus website) at least a week before your catalogue arrives in the mail, if you simply can't wait!

Blair and Jane: newhavenfarms@netspeed.net.nz (03) 4324154 / (027) 4324154

Neil and Rose: neilandrose@fossilcreekangus.co.nz (03) 4324093 / (021) 332919



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2022

It is hard to believe that Autumn has arrived again, and our thoughts go out to those areas that have been hard hit by extremes in weather – drought in many places and devastating flooding in others. As we travel the backroads and catch up with many of you we are constantly reminded how sustainable our NZ pasture-raised sheep and beef systems are, if only our government would acknowledge this.

The central South Island has seen the best seasonal conditions for years, including here in the hills of North Otago. We are pleased to finally be getting some Autumn growth – after many years without, and we sympathise with those that are going to have to tackle Autumn and Winter head on with bugger all feed – this is usually our perennial challenge and it is bloody hard – but this has made us appreciate the value of having robust, resilient stock that have the ability to just 'soldier on' when the going gets tough.

On our travels we have seen tremendous calves and great fattening stock but most of all is the renewed passion and enthusiasm for production systems involving beef cows. We get to see some of the most stunning landscapes and efficient farming systems on the planet while passing through pristine environments. Any of you who have travelled to the developing world will attest to how lucky we are to be doing what we do.

Many of you are trying to increase your cow numbers but most of all, have a breeding programme that allows you to improve your output by capturing the financial gains on offer. A lot of this is being achieved on land which is marginal for other production but the bureaucrats would prefer you planted in Pine Trees.....(best not to bring that subject up with Jane!). Be very aware that there is pressure on our levy organisations to help the dairy industry solve their bobby calf and surplus heifer problem by integrating dairy beef into every beef herd around the country. These people simply do not understand the cost and opportunity cost of having stock that are not bred for these conditions – they would barely survive a week of winter, let alone perform.

In a strange way, the COVID pandemic has led to a much wider understanding of genetics by everyone, as words like genotype and spike proteins become part of everyday life.

We really appreciate the time and effort that Fossil Creek clients are putting into understanding the importance of "nailing the basics" first and foremost, before getting caught up in the hype of the finer details. Many studs have placed too much focus and fancy marketing on the 'icing' and not enough focus on the traits that actually drive a beef breeding and finishing system. Icing on a cake is no use unless there is a cake to place it upon, hence our focus on maternal traits, form and function before anything else. Common sense really.

BULL OPEN DAYS

Thursday 19th May
Saturday 21st May
1 - 4pm

Newhaven Cattle Yards
Dunrobin Road
Five Forks

A GENUINE BALANCE

At Fossil Creek Angus we are not about extremes in anything that can tip the balance of other traits. We really are about balance across the board, which makes sourcing our stud sires very difficult but worthwhile.

The sale group for our June 2022 sale come from 156 bull calves born in 2020.

80% of these boys are above breed average for Calving Ease in Daughters, 200, 400 and 600 day weights and Carcase weight.

Between 60- 80% of those bulls were over breed average for Calving Ease Direct, Birth Weight, Milk and Scrotal Circumference.

Over half the bulls were over average for Rib and Rump fat and IMF - EMA continues to be a focus for us (as farmers are not paid for this trait as yet) so while it is part of our trait assessment suite, it has not been strongly weighted in our selection to date.

It certainly makes your choices of bulls at sale time much wider and easier.

What is really exciting is that in 2021, (last years calving) we had 180 Bull calves born, from all those that were above breed average for Mature cow weight, only ONE had a MCWt above his 600 Day Wt. This shows that our commitment to maintain strong growth and Carcase weights while moderating Mature Weight in our cows is paying dividends.

86% of these are above breed average for Carcase Weight – these genetic trends will directly influence your bottom line.



BULL SALE – THURSDAY 16TH JUNE 2022
Newhaven Cattle Yards, Dunrobin Road, Five Forks

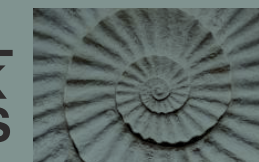


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THE POWER OF DOCILITY

We all know the importance of a good temperament in cattle especially in respect of handling them in the yards and loading onto trucks etc. Those of you supplying finished cattle to the processors are well aware of the effects on meat colour and meat pH due to stress prior to and during loading out on trucks.

Fossil Creek Angus have a top reputation for great temperament in our herd and especially our bulls. This shows up very well when we are working in the yards with children alongside us, and travelling out to client's farms when we get to view large mobs of cows and calves and mated heifers in the Autumn. It really is great when these groups come over to the vehicle for a look at us and don't run off to the other end of the paddock. Each year as part of our Independent structural assessment we get Bill Austin to score every bull's docility alongside the other traits like sheath, hoof and leg structure. Bill does this by walking with the bull in a pen and scoring them on a 1-5 scale where a score 1 is extremely quiet and the bull can be scratched with a stick. Score 2 the bull is settled & allows the assessor to come quite close but not touch him, 3 scores are categorized by more restless activity and 4 would be very agitated and looking for an exit or to get away from the assessor. We are very proud of the average temperament score of 1, when Bill recently assessed 81 bulls. This independent evaluation (alongside sheath and structural assessment) is a good investment on behalf of our clients.



Incidentally, we might mention that the bull in the photo at Moutere Station is 10 years old, still sound as a bell, really mobile and looks great after just finishing his 8th mating season. We consider this guy to have been a great investment as he has sired between 30-40 calves per year, equating to about \$10-15 per calf weaned!

FOSSIL CREEK – FROM THE FIELD

After challenging spring conditions, mother nature has given us possibly the most growthy summer on record, and what looks like it might shape up as a decent Autumn.

The 350 stud cows were weaned in early April, and are now out the back where they will be for Autumn, right through Winter and brought into the nearer tussock blocks for calving. Date pregnancy scanning makes this task really easy, we only bring cows back over the creek a week or so before calving. This way we aren't eating into any decent spring feed (not that we grown much by then!) and we are making the most of the wintering blocks. Its been a busy 3 months with the sale bulls, with semen testing, structural assessment, muscle scanning (of both bulls and heifers), docility scoring and scrotal assessment – its been pretty satisfying to see the team of bulls that have come through this process and will be put up for sale in mid June. Ben Paton and Jack Price have managed to tolerate us for another year and are really enjoying the stud work in both the cattle and sheep studs, and we have taken on our annual high school student for work experience, a local lad Will Plunket from Waitaki Boys' High School. We continue to host as many school groups as possible throughout the year, including 'Growing Future Farmers' where a number of high school careers advisors and teachers were exposed to this wonderful on the job training initiative and the myriad of opportunities in the farming sector.

TOOLS IN THE TOOLBOX

Along with independent structural assessment, scrotal assessment and temperament scores, another tool that we invest in is Semen evaluation. Although not our favourite job of the year, it is an essential one. These are tested on site by 2 Vets, with samples then sent away for a full morphology report. This coupled with the Fossil Creek 'Rock Solid Guarantee' for 3 years post sale for structure and fertility, gives you further assurance that we are presenting bulls that will be a safe purchasing decision for you at auction time. Remember that we give your money back (on a pro-rata basis) and so you aren't forced into sneaky behind the scenes 'credits' for the following year. We believe this practice of 'sales credits' is pretty unethical as it ties people into buying decisions that may not be the right ones for their herd.



Bill Austin in action at Fossil Creek

CARCASE CONUNDRUM

On our travels a regular conversation piece revolves around carcase traits. There are no simple answers or guidelines relating to carcase traits because they are full of contradictions and antagonisms. Too much marbling may be associated with reduced fertility because of genetic antagonisms. We find that most of our customers who supply steers to premium beef programmes with specific IMF specs seem to get a high proportion through the selection criteria for marbling. We try and select and produce bulls with breed average or above for IMF.

Carcase weight is critical and we suggest should be above breed average as payment is based on this trait. Eye Muscle Area is a different story as even though it is suggested to be an indicator of general muscle mass we are not paid any premiums in NZ for this trait. Rib and Rump fats are totally independent of Intramuscular fats and are important to keep an eye on in your selection processes, but there are antagonisms between excessive fats on the carcase needing trimming and having penalties due to reduced yields versus a potential negative fertility effect in yearling heifers from low subcutaneous fats. Very high Fats do NOT associate with very high fertility outcomes. This is a myth.



FOCUS ON FORM AND FUNCTION AT HILL SPRINGS

Curtis Pannett has taken over the reins on the family farm at Millers Flat near Roxburgh. The Pannetts are longstanding clients of Fossil Creek Angus. After many years of infusion of these genetics, the resultant large herd of quiet cows are very well adapted to the country they run in, often with dry & challenging conditions thrown at them.



A big part of their bull selection has focused on form and function as they realise the economic value of longevity in the cowherd as it needs to be low maintenance and reproductively strong.

Hill Springs is made up of several blocks running from River flats at the Clutha river to 1000 metres above sea level above Lake Onslow in the Pinelheugh Range. Average annual rainfall is about 750 mm

The herd consists of 350 mixed age mainly whiteface cows which are mated to Angus and Charolais bulls separately, with replacements coming from the Angus bull. The Charolais progeny are taken through the first winter on crop and then all sold at the local yearling sale. 60, fifteen month heifers are mated annually to calving ease yearling bulls.

The breeding objectives and bull selection criteria for Hill Springs have remained quite consistent for 20 years with emphasis on strong maternal traits and temperament being critical. The result is a herd of strong, growthy well adapted resilient cows which can now have some meat quality genetics added to the selection mix to capture the procurement premiums.

All calves are wintered for one year and the top steers of both Charolais and Angus x are sold at the sale yards mainly to repeat buyers both locally including an Anzco finisher, for direct Japanese supermarket trade and an Alliance finisher in the Maniototo. Pannetts finish about 100-120 R2's a year themselves which go in the Alliance Hand Picked beef program.

BULL OPEN DAYS – THURSDAY 19TH MAY AND SATURDAY 21ST MAY 1 – 4pm
Newhaven Cattle Yards, Dunrobin Road, Five Forks