

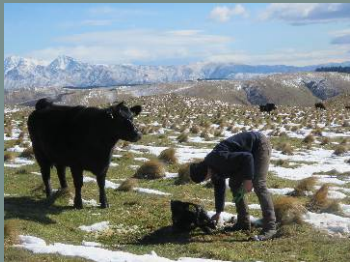
YEARLING BULLS FOR YEARLING HEIFER MATINGS.

Each year we have a small number of Yearling bulls for sale, we do this via private sale so that we can carefully match these young bulls with the client herd's requirements and overall breeding objectives, coupled with 'E-Star' Indexes.



Unlike coastal stud operations with plenty of year-round grass, these boys are literally on the hillblock in the snow/dust/mud at 600 metres above sea level until late September and to hold an auction would be a tricky task. We do not lease bulls out due to the biosecurity risk and we find it hard to fathom that there are some studs still doing this, especially when some are leasing out to the dairy industry before bringing them back into the beef bull herd to sell as R2s. Give Blair a call on (027) 4324154 to discuss your yearling bull requirements, orders need to be in before the end of September if possible.

GENOMICS



All Fossil Creek calves are genotyped and have had their EBV accuracy strengthened by the addition of genomic data. This '50K' DNA testing comes at a considerable cost (as we test all calves born) but not only are all our young

cattle given more accurate EBVs - they can be verified to both parents, which backs up our single-sire mating system and tagging at birth programme. This is a valuable double-check for our system. It potentially speeds up genetic gain (as it is vastly more accurate than generically assuming that progeny inherit 50% of genes from their Dam and 50% of genes from their Sire, which is seldom the case in practice. However that was all that genetic systems could assume before we had the ability to utilise genomics). While a large investment, we believe that every stud has the responsibility of utilising this technology to assist with greater NZ-wide genetic gains.



PROTECTING YOUR INVESTMENT

Your bull team are a valuable genetic asset and we don't need to remind you that they need to be well looked after when they arrive on-farm. Bulls and rams used to be locked up and forgotten about in a paddock behind the yards but this is a thing of the past. They don't need mollycoddling but remember that as they are not over-fed while here at Fossil Creek they will still be growing out and need to be fed at a moderate level that allows them to grow without becoming too overdone, ideally on a hill that ensures that they are kept fit. The insurance industry have recently stated that they are astounded by the low uptake of bull insurance in NZ – you wouldn't buy a new ute or side-by-side and not insure it, so please take advantage of the good insurance deal available on Auction day and take the chance to insure them for the first 12 months.

We wish you a productive Spring and should you get the chance, we would love you to visit the Fossil Creek breeding herd and young stock any time to check that we really are practicing what we preach.

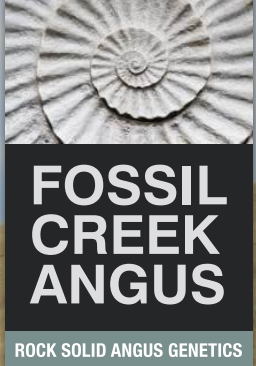
Kind regards, Blair and Jane & Neil and Rose



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

Neil and Rose Sanderson:
neilandrose@fossilcreekangus.co.nz
(021) 332919

www.FossilCreekAngus.co.nz



Winter/Spring August 2023 NEWSLETTER

THANK YOU

We really appreciate your attendance and support on the 15th June and we thank all bidders and underbidders for your enthusiasm for our breeding programme and what we can offer your herd on both a breeding and finishing front. We feel humbled by the great distances that people traveled in order to get to our sale and honored to host you for the day, particularly those from the cyclone-ravished East Coast that came to our bull viewing days and sale day. The rural community really value time spent together and the ability to chew the fat on issues of the day, all while ticking an important job off your list – purchasing bulls that best suit your unique herd requirements and your budget.

We are really excited about the opportunities in the beef industry going forward and we don't take the responsibility of your genetic gains lightly. It is essential that we remain focused on producing well-balanced, multi-trait, robust genetics in order for you to keep gaining traction in both productivity and profitability. New DNA technology coupled with smarter EBV assessment through new indexes are exciting - and when coupled with good old fashioned stockmanship, will be a gamechanger for beef genetics.



The date for our 2024 sale is Tuesday 11th June. A decision was made this week with other breeders to change the order of bull sales in the North Otago/ Canterbury area to flow in a better geographical manner, so hence we move to a Tuesday from now on, a couple of days earlier than our traditional sale date.

We were pleased to be able to offer more bulls into our 2023 sale from the cohort of 180 bull calves that were born. We believe that we are now settled into a balanced number of bulls going forward - offering up to 80 R2 bulls for sale at auction every year. This keeps our quality at a high level yet allows for a good number of bulls to be up for sale, with something for everyone.



www.FossilCreekAngus.co.nz

Blair and Jane: newhavenfarms@netspeed.net.nz (03) 4324154 / (027) 4324154
Neil and Rose: neilandrose@fossilcreekangus.co.nz (021) 332919

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NEW HERDSIRES

We are really enjoying watching the next cohort of bulls (and their heifer sisters) grow out over Winter up on the hill block and will have a strong offering of a number of promising new bloodlines for our 2024 sale. These include Musgrave Avenger, Millah Murrah Paratrooper, Fossil Creek Rainier R003, Fossil Creek Ripcurl R018, Fossil Creek Robson R115, Earnsclough PisaRange,



Fossil Creek Rome R141, Te Mania Powerman and Fossil Creek Prophet. We have 'Te Mania Rustler R300' waiting in the wings with his progeny for the 2025 sale. We purchased Rustler in 2022 in conjunction with Stokman Angus (Rotorua) and Ardrossan Angus (NSW, Australia). We are impressed by his docility and overall genetic package. His first crop of calves are due to hit the ground here later this month. A new Herdsire that we brought into the Fossil Creek programme in June is Martin Farming Aswan 2991. It took a lot of searching around the country to find a sire that ticked all our boxes both in phenotype and genotype, with excellent IMF and EMA. We are looking forward to him arriving at Fossil Creek shortly, ready for 2023 mating.



Fossil Creek Angus is proud to sponsor Dog Trials at Omarama, Danseys Pass and Macraes Flat along with Sport at Waitaki Boys' High School and Kurow Rugby Club along with Young Farmers.



E- STAR – MAKING THE BULL SELECTION PROCESS MORE STREAMLINE

The Bull buying process can be a complex one. EBV tables can look more confusing than an ACC invoice and this isn't helped by accompanying stud marketing hype and the pressure of an auction situation. For those of you that have been on the Fossil Creek journey for a few years, you will know that following genuine concern that generic industry indexes are not fit-for-purpose and often lead to poor bull buying decisions, Neil took the bull by the horns in an effort to come up with a far more accurate suite of indexes than what was currently being touted by the industry. The existing Angus NZ 'Self-Replacing' Index is too focused on the 'days to calving' trait and doesn't give separate weighting to important maternal traits verses terminal traits - meaning two bulls could have the exact same SRI figure but could be chalk and cheese in their data. It is concerning how many bull buyers only compare bulls and studs on their Self-Replacing Index figure. So for the past 6 years, Fossil Creek has engaged the genetic gurus at Abacus Bio to run all our sale bulls through a more comprehensive sub-index system termed 'The Hill Country Index'. Due to interest from other studs in our indexes, the decision was made during 2022 to improve and expand this concept even further.



In early 2023, five other studs from around NZ joined us in a collaboration to invest even more time and money into expanding the original Fossil Creek subindex system and developed the 'E-Star' index system. This would allow buyers to use a platform that didn't overly simplify EBVs into a generic index, but instead separated out the crucial traits for each herd goal and put them into a rationally-weighted index. We were delighted to have the E-Star system ready just in time for the 2023 bull sale season, and we will continue to work and expand this further to ensure that it remains fit-for-purpose, accurate and achieves better outcome for bull buyers. Thank you to Neil for his continued pioneering in this space – it is often said that genuine leaders take most of the arrows in their back and Neil indeed was threatened by industry protectionism but carried on anyway.

While this has been a pretty major investment in terms of time and money, the six studs involved are doing this to assist their clients to make bull buying decisions that best suit their herd's requirements. Everyone involved understands that this will be for the benefit of the entire N.Z. Beef Industry in the long run.

EXPLANING 'E-STAR'

The Five E Star Indexes:

- ✧ MATERNAL INDEX: This is a grouping of traits specifically related to the beef cow/calf operation, with a small component of weaning weight.Desired outcomes include improving fertility and moderating cow size.
- ✧ TERMINAL INDEX: An index that highlights those animals which are going to grow fast to suitable carcass weights with high yields and good eating through Intramuscular Fats.
- ✧ EFFICIENCY INDEX: This index can be used on its own to identify animals which are superior for efficiency, which gives the beef industry further strength when it comes to environmental sustainability conversations around efficiency including methane.
- ✧ HEIFER DIRECT: Designed to be a standalone selection tool for ranking bulls as suitable for mating yearling heifers.
- ✧ DAIRY INDEX: Focuses predominantly on calving ease with some gestation length. Additional merit for carcass weight and IMF to cater for Dairy Beef systems.



The E-Star studs at work in Christchurch

This is a massive step forward for the N.Z. commercial beef industry. The feedback from anyone that has read our bull catalogue is how easy it is now to draft off the bulls on paper that are best suited to your own bull buying requirements - simply by looking at the E-Star chart and then drilling down further into individual traits.

There are two really interesting papers on finding opportunity through balancing productivity and environmental traits in cattle 'Defining breeding objectives for sustainability in cattle: challenges and opportunities' authored by CM. Richardson, JJ. Crowley and PR. Amer and 'Precision Breeding Opportunities in an Evolving Breeding Objective Landscape' Dr.Peter Amer, Abacus Bio – you can find these online at <https://www.publish.csiro.au/AN/AN23021> or we have a summarised version that Neil has put together with permission from one of the authors, Peter Amer on our website fossilcreekangus.co.nz

FOSSIL CREEK 'IN THE FIELD'



Even though it is August, there is still a lot of Winter to go yet with most of our snow tending to fall during late August and September.

The 72 Fossil Creek stud R2 heifers have been making their way around the hill blocks keeping fit over Winter and are due to start calving at the end of the month. The 280 mixed aged stud cows remain out the back of the hill block until calving. Date-accurate pregnancy scanning allows us to keep them right out the back of the hill block and only bring them into medium tussock blocks for tagging at birth just before their due date.

Neil arrived back home in late July from an 8-week stint in Dunedin hospital and the stroke rehabilitation unit and is doing really well on all fronts. Neil and Blair are working very closely with other studs to continue to fine-tune the E-Star Index system, and this will of course be an on-going stream of work in order for the indexes to remain accurate and up to date.

Neil and Rose have enjoyed spending time with their two wee granddaughters along with Amelia and husband Aleks when they were here from Australia over Winter. Ella and Georgia are working and studying in Dunedin with Ella looking at opportunities in Australia in the near future.

Back at the farm, the Smith offspring (Charlotte, Henry and George) are busy fitting in school work around their main focuses of sport, hunting, farming and possuming.

Our work experience student Jess Lake from Waitaki Girls' High School has been accepted for a Central Otago high country farm cadet programme in 2024 and we have welcomed Jonty Jennings from Tokanui to our farm team, alongside Ben Paton who has been with us for just over 3 years. Jack Price had become part of the furniture here for the past 5 years but has moved on in a great new role as stock manager in Canterbury, working for Mike Bolton who was with us here prior to Jack. Pretty cool to see these young guys moving forward in their careers.