



angus **Raff**

2013 - February Newsletter
angus 

BREEDING ANGUS IN QUEENSLAND SINCE 1965

On Monday 18th March we will be offering a quality draft of 100 Registered Raff Angus females at Mundibulanga Drillham Queensland.

The catalogue represents the best of 47 years in breeding by the Raff family. On offer will be proven and potential donors including the 2010 Sydney Royal Show Grand Champion Angus Female Raff Burnette B126. Twenty five cows will sell as a '3 in 1' package with 7 month old calves at foot and PTIC back in calf - 17 of these lots have bull calves by their side with some of these sired by Raff Empire E269. Also selling will be PTIC cows and heifers and some outstanding unjoined heifers.

Another feature this year will be a draft of commercial heifers on account of one of Queensland's longest serving Angus Seedstock breeders and long-time Raff client Mrs Joyce Hodgkinson, Wallangra Angus, who bought their first Raff bull in 1976. Wallangra Angus will be offering several pens of 15 month old un-joined heifers. The star attraction of this year's sale will be a 'Pick of the Flush'. This is the entire heifer portion of five sisters from what we consider to be the flush of 2012. They are sired by the new Raff AI sire O'Neill's Prime Star 80 making them grand-daughters of the world's leading marbling sire Gardens Prime Star. These



Female Sale - Monday 18th March

genetics are the first ever to be offered in Australia and are carcass genetics without any New Design or Precision blood. They are from one of our highest marbling cows and elite Raff donor Raff Doris E12. "We consider this flush to be one of our best ever, the five heifers are the entire heifer drop and all show great potential. While these heifers will only be six months old at sale time they will have a full set of MVP's (Molecular Value Predictions) for 16 traits. This is a real plus for HD50K, being able to get comprehensive data on an animal at such a young age." Andrew Raff said. All Raff sale females will have a full set of MVP's including feed efficiency, feedlot daily gain and tenderness along

with the standard performance information. The sale lots raw data information and pregnancy status will be available just prior to sale day. For further information go to www.raffangus.com.au or to the Angus Australia web site - sale catalogues - where pedigree and performance information will also be available. Sale catalogues will only be posted on request. For a catalogue simply email andrew@raffangus.com.au or phone 0429 691 975. Sale starts at 12 midday and will be interfaced with auctions plus. If you will need accommodation please contact us early as rooms locally are sometimes limited.

\$40,000 Queensland record for Raff Angus bull

A large crowd of 250 buyers and spectators attended Raff Angus at last year's annual bull sale to witness a new Qld & Raff auction record top price sale of \$40,000 selling to regular buyers the Wilkinson family of 'Messines' Guyra New South Wales. The lot 82 bull, Raff Explosive G174, was a fifteen month old frame 7.6 son of Raff Explosive E108 who weighed 794kg with a whole of life daily gain of 1.63 kg. At scanning when just 14 months he recorded an EMA of 108cm², a 46.5cm scrotal with even fat. Andrew Raff described Explosive G174 as "One of the most outstanding bulls ever offered that stands proud with outstanding feet, tremendous bone and excellent smoothness - his pedigree and performance are as good as we have to offer." Guest auctioneers Michael Glasser and Brian Leslie operating for GTSM sold the record draft of 150 bulls in an action packed 120 minutes with spirited bidding from buyers operating from all areas of Queensland, New South Wales & Victoria as well as South Australia and Tasmania. Many also operated by phone and on Auctions Plus. The majority of bulls were purchased by repeat



buyers. Twenty one bulls sold for over \$10,000 of which 15 going to repeat buyers with 20% of the offering selling for \$3,000 to \$3,500 which ensured that there were bulls for everyone. The average age of sale bulls was 16 1/2 months with an average weight of 705 kg, daily gain of 1.34 kg/day whole of life and sold for an average sale price of \$6,606.

Female Sale Open Day Sunday 17th March

We will again be holding an OPEN DAY the day prior to sale day. On display will be all sale females and about twenty of our 'walking working stud sires' for your informal inspection. Refreshments will be available. Everyone is most welcome.

Raff Angus Bull Sale - Monday 23rd September 2013



Our annual bull sale will be held on Monday 23rd September when we will be offering 150 lots. Without doubt the sale will be featured by the first progeny of Raff Empire E269 - the bull that dominated the 2011 and 2012 show circuits including Supreme Angus exhibit at Sydney and Beef Australia and Interbreed Champion Exhibit at Melbourne. A first for Raff Angus will be the opening lot where on offer will be 100% semen and marketing rights with 25% ownership on a young sire that the Raff family believes to be one of their best yet. Raff Governor G426 will feature as this lot. He is sired by Raff

Empire E269 whose dam Raff Blackbird D349 was the Interbreed Champion Cow at the 2012 Brisbane Royal Show - Governor G426 was the calf at foot when she took out that award. This young bull combines two proven Champions on phenotype and has impeccable pedigree lineage and outstanding individual performance. Also featured will be the first progeny of our new high marbling sire O'Neill's Prime Star 80 along with a big draft of 2012 sale topping Raff Explosive E108 sons. In total twenty different sires will have sons sell. For further information go to www.raffangus.com.au

Bull Sale Open Day - Sunday 22nd September

From the success of last year's open day we will again display all sale bulls and some of our breeding cows and sires on the Sunday just prior to sale day. This allows for an informal opportunity to view the sale bulls and gives us a little more time to discuss selections with you. You are all most welcome with refreshments available throughout the day.

DNA - 1120 animals and 3 years of HD50K for AngusThat's the real DNA advantage of Raff Angus

Raff Angus continues to lead the world in utilising DNA technology. While others are only still talking about it we are now in our fourth year of testing our herd using HD50K for Angus with 1,120 animals now reported for 16 traits. This is the largest number for any Angus stud in Australia. We are excited about its potential in giving us valuable information on hard to

measure traits such as tenderness, feedlot daily gain and feed efficiency. These are now beginning to be utilised in our breeding programme. HD50K is all about the individual animal, not an estimate based on assumptions. It cannot be manipulated by humans or influenced by the environment. We have chosen to use HD50K as a standalone product.

Raff Angus + HD50k = 100% parent verified.

Not only has working closely with Pfizer Animal Genetics allowed us a head start in using DNA technology but it has given us the opportunity to have our breeding herd for all animals born from 2005 on to be parent verified - another first for Australia.

Successful 3 year show campaign ends



2012 Brisbane Royal Show Interbreed Champion Cow Raff Blackbird D349 with Calf Raff Governor G426 - his semen marketing rights sell as LOT 1 at Bull Sale Monday September 23

In 2010 we embarked on a three year 'take our cattle to the people' showing campaign which took our cattle to four states of Australia - Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. Our major wins included supreme beef animal at Melbourne Royal, supreme beef female Brisbane Royal and supreme beef exhibit at 13 country shows; grand champion Angus bull at Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and

Beef Australia; grand champion Angus female at Sydney and Brisbane. Our five Royal show grand championships were won by four different animals. There are many who criticise the show ring however we believe it is still the only place where you can bench mark your cattle against others, not only of your own breed but against all breeds. We were humbled to know that at every show our cattle had

comparable growth rate, weight and EMA to any breed which reinforced our view that Raff Angus had comparable growth and yield to any breed - combined with the traditional quality carcase attributes of the Angus breed (more finish plus marbling). Sticking with our original intentions of the three year showing campaign Raff Angus will not be showing cattle at regional and royal shows for the foreseeable future.

Raff Angus continues to achieve high marbling?!

Because of our genetic difference to the mainstream Angus breeders, the lack of significant variance within the raw data from within our large contemporary groups and our refusal to use highly used 'modern' AI sires for linkage {because of their continual pedigree saturation of certain 'high carcass' sires} we continue to struggle with accepting that EBV's are reporting our herd accurately for marbling. Over the past decade our raw data for IMF on bulls has gone up from an average of 3.6% in 2002 to 6.1% in 2012. This has been achieved without any significant increase on P8 or rump fat or a change in management practises. We regularly kill our home bred animals for meat and on two recent occasions have had killers with marble scores of 6 and an 8+ - he was a Hoff

Moriah 822 x Leachman Prompter 6611 steer Scientifically reported [EBV's] as having no marbling. It is unfortunate for us that most of our bulls sold go into a cross breeding environment therefore it is hard to truly gauge how the progeny marble. However it is timely to remind the industry how easy it is to suddenly improve marbling. **We can simply use Australia's highest EBV marbling bull at +5.4 over our entire herd. Suddenly the progeny will go from below breed average to rank in the TOP 10% for marbling.** We choose not to do this because: we do not believe our cattle don't marble, we believe that in one generation marbling {or any trait} cannot be improved that much and we simply refuse to use the genetics that most high marbling sires contain.

SUNCORP



MOORE STEPHENS
ACCOUNTANTS & ADVISORS

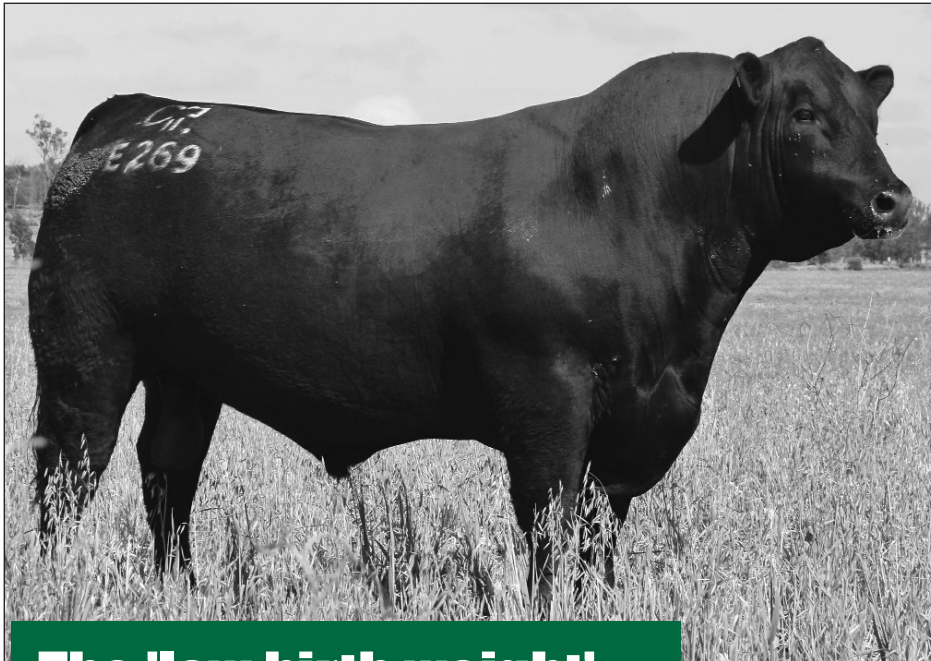


Animal Health
Animal Genetics

A new team at Raff Angus

Scott York and his family have moved on to pursue their own career after working with us for the past three years. We are pleased to welcome two new people to the Raff Angus team - Diane Janssens and Jamie Hollis. Both come from a rural background having grown up on family properties.

Raff Empire E269 progeny exceptional



It is one thing to breed a bull that can dominate the Australian show scene but an even bigger challenge is for that bull to go on and become a good breeder - Raff Empire E269 has proved to be just that. Both his male and female progeny are outstanding showing exceptional docility, softness and weight. His first daughter that we sold topped our 2012 female sale at \$17,000 when just 7 months. Some progeny sell as calves at side to females selling March 18th with his first sons featuring in this year bull sale on Monday 23rd September.

The 'low birth weight' obsession - Why?

By David G Raff

Cattle breeders throughout the world have become obsessed with the use of low birth weight bulls for mating to maiden heifers. I think it is time for the industry to ask itself why?

- * Why are beef cattle the only livestock bred in the world where this is the practice?
- * Why are cattle breeders still having calving problems with their maiden heifers in spite of the continual use of low birth weight bulls?
- * Why don't merino sheep breeders, horse breeders, or any other animal breeder, select low birth weight sires to join to their maiden animals? And why don't they have extreme birthing problems with their maiden animals?

I have spent the past 48 years breeding stud Angus cattle and prior to that was involved with my family breeding commercial cattle and sheep with some horses, pigs, and the usual dogs and chooks. During that time the practice of selecting low birth weight sires for mating to maiden animals had never ever been a consideration - why?

From my experience it is simple. You select sires that have the right confirmation (body shape, composition and structure) to breed you females that are capable of physically producing a live offspring naturally.

We as livestock breeders are all aiming to reach maximum production in all areas that drive profitability. We do this by striving to go as far as we can in any one trait until it affects other traits of importance - that is when we accept that that is as far as we can go. In birth weight we all know that the heavier calves at birth are those that will in most cases be the heavier and higher growth animals at all stages of production. We should strive for a maximum weight and size in a new born animal that can be born naturally - we then maintain it at that level - not decrease it.

Has any consideration ever been made of the size and weight of the cow that delivered the newborn calf? Birth weight of the calf is one thing but birth weight of a calf relative to the size of the cow it came out of is another. 6% bodyweight of a 500kg cow = 30kg's whilst 6% bodyweight of a 750kg cow = 45kg's. Without considering the cow

size people instantly assume that the calf that weighed 45 kilograms is too heavy, most likely to be hard calving and by industry mindset unacceptable. Yet relative to the body weight of the cow the 45kg calf is exactly the same as the 30kg calf delivered from the smaller cow. By decreasing the birth weight generation after generation we are creating our own problems - not solving them. This will have a diminishing effect on each generation until we reach the point of no return.

"A young pullet produces small eggs not because she was mated to a low egg weight rooster but because it is nature's way of dealing with early reproduction." Think about it!

What is the solution?

- * The industry must become more focused on 'calving ease' not actual 'birth weight' and on the 'calf shape' not 'calf weight'.
- * We must become more focused on breeding a cow that is physically capable of producing a live calf naturally. Start talking more about how our cows are made, their confirmation - their pelvic area, shoulder setting, neck extension etc.
- * People must take into consideration the size of the cow which the newborn calf came out of.
- * Study the animals of the wild and understand how they are made, how they function and how they survive and reproduce.

Animal breeding is not a science, it is all about understanding how nature works and working with it, not against it.

It is time to get back to these basics, for cattle breeders to take control of their industry and use science as a tool to assist it - not be driven by it.