

# the BULLETIN

## NEW YEAR 2016



Welcome to the latest edition of the Bulletin. We try to get this out in the spring and the autumn but somehow spring became summer pretty quickly. The weather has been challenging as most that work outdoors will testify. It hasn't been an easy year with little let up. Its hard to believe that now in late January in the thick of the much talked about El Nino the weather gods have finally given us respite. While it has not been great here, we have had nothing like the hammering dealt to our North Canterbury neighbours.

It's certainly been a while since our bull sale last June and we sincerely thank those that made it a great success. We trust that the bulls are doing or have done the business again this year. A couple of weeks after our bull sale we found ourselves jetting off to Darwin for the Platinum Primary Producers conference. It was a wonderful few days with excellent speakers and some great field trips. The Northern Territory wouldn't suit those of us that are a little precious about our stock. Apart from the obvious constraints of climate and distance you can expect at least 2% of your herd will be lost annually to crocodiles. Darwin was a nice place with great weather. We would have loved to go swimming at the beach but with the crocodiles, snakes, jellyfish and sharks all swimming around out there, the likelihood of death was too great and far to terrifying for us to even dip our toes in the water.

This spring we calved 300 stud cows and heifers. The cows calved in good order and seem to be doing a great job on their calves. This year we noted how much earlier the cows cycled and credit much of this to the early weaning practice we have adopted in recent years.

The weaner calves came off the fodder beet in great order. The spring was challenging after a cold but dry winter. Having cattle so forward is a tremendous advantage and we were able to get rid of a lot of these young cattle early and prime. The steers were in the 280-290kg carcass weight range while the heifers were around 250kgs. While we haven't broken records, getting rid of so many early has enabled us to carry the rest on and the weights are lifting every draft. We have had a lot of success with our genetics over the last few months internationally. Anna has dedicated a page in the newsletter to this. While our primary purpose has always been about producing good commercial bulls, it is nice when breeders from other countries recognise our cattle.

In early November we had Paul Plante from France join us for the summer. Paul worked as a genetic advisor in France and wanted to come to New Zealand to learn about our breeding and pasture management. He has been a valuable addition to our team and we have enjoyed his company. He arrived just in time for the Christchurch Show and he was lucky enough to join our success when we won the Meat and Wool Cup with a beautiful Evolution 2 year old heifer. In late November I attended the funeral of Ted Phipps of the Lakes Station. Ted had purchased bulls off us for a number of years and we always enjoyed his humour. The day was a fitting tribute to a man that had given so much to the high country and the young men who worked over the years at Lakes Station. They could not help but benefit from the experience. There was a lesson for us too. We had intended on getting up to visit Ted back in the spring and write a client profile but we did not make it in time. A book could be written about Ted as there were plenty of great stories at his send off and the way he had developed Lakes Station was a real credit to the man.

Anna's parents, Jill and Pete have sold their farm in Northern Hawkes Bay which we visited recently. We had a terrific time in the Hawkes bay and attended Sarah and Jono Reed's wedding and also Katy's (Anna's best friend) engagement party. We also thoroughly enjoyed our visit to Peter Tod's property in Otane and The Yule family farm in Otamauri. We also visited Shannon Station and Greg and Charlie McKinnon up in behind Wairoa. They are both clients that Pete and Jill had for years. You will be able to read about Shannon Station in our next newsletter in April. The country up there looked amazing and they have really benefited from the El Nino weather. There was feed everywhere and the stock looked excellent. Let's hope the weather continues to be kind for a while yet. Hope you enjoy your read. Till next time,

Kind regards,  
Brent, Anna, Bruce and Maureen

### Canterbury A & P Show 'Meat and Wool Cup' winner



Silverstream Ocelot 1100 was supreme champion beef exhibit at the recent Canterbury A & P Show. Ocelot 1100 is a stunning polled 2 year old heifer sired by Silverstream Evolution.



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# LUPA OF LONDON

*-A life nothing like we know.*

By Anna Fisher

Over the Christmas period Brent and I travelled to Sydney to spend Christmas with my extended family but the main purpose was to go and watch the beginning of the Sydney to Hobart yacht race. My sister Stef was part of the crew on the British 78 foot yacht 'Lupa of London' and her husband Dan is the Captain. The Yacht was involved in a collision in the first few minutes of the race and the damage meant it could not continue on to Hobart. Brent and I joined my family and family of some of Lupa's crew members on a spectator boat earlier that morning. There was much excitement and festivities on board as we watched Lupa sailing in amongst the madness of yachts and boats in the Sydney harbour. You couldn't help but feel a sense of pride watching your own sister lined up on the side of this yacht with the rest of her crew about to embark on one of the world's most challenging yacht races. This was quickly followed by bitter disappointment and sadness for her and the crew when their race was brought to an abrupt end when a Tasmanian yacht Cougar II attempted to cross their bow when Lupa had the right of way. Lupa was pinned between two other yachts and had no way to avoid the collision. While Lupa won the formal protest against this yacht it could never make up for the hard work, long hours, money spent and over a year in planning that had occurred to make this all happen. To have made it further on into the race and been forced to retire from weather or equipment failure/damage would have been less disappointing than have it all taken away by another yachts stupid mistake.

In the short time Brent and I were in Sydney and during a brief visit to Auckland (where the yacht was berthed before the race) we got a real appreciation for the world that Stef was involved in. It is so far removed from what we do ourselves which is what made it so interesting to us. The exercise of this yacht being in the Sydney to Hobart race started well over a year ago when Lupa left the Mediterranean where it is based in St Tropez. It set sail to the Caribbean participating in the Trans-Atlantic race which it won line honours & overall in. Lupa is a dual purpose yacht and is primarily a luxury yacht used for charters. There is very little or in fact no money made in racing yachts but chartering the yacht does help towards paying some bills. Once Lupa left the Caribbean it travelled through the Panama canal last April and then continued on down through the Pacific visiting places such as the Galapagos Islands and Tahiti. The boat was in Tahiti for a longer stint as it was chartered there for cruising. During its stay in Tahiti Stef flew back to New Zealand to have a baby which came at the end of August. The trip from Tahiti to New Zealand took about 10 days

and had a crew of 6 including the chef who was used during the charters. The Yacht can only carry so much fuel so it must sail a large chunk of the trip. Dan arrived with Lupa in Auckland with only 4 days to spare before my nephew was born. Once the yacht was in Auckland it was transformed from a luxury yacht to a race yacht. When Brent and I saw it, many parts of the interior had been removed and completely duct taped up to hopefully stop it from being damaged. The sails, tender and other gear all arrived in 3 containers that had pretty much followed Lupa around the world.

Six weeks after the boat arrived in New Zealand Brent and I flew to Auckland and while we were there we were given the grand tour of Lupa and met a few of the crew who had flown in from all around the world to train for the Sydney to Hobart race. Stef did a phenomenal amount of organising when it came to the crew and their flights, accommodation and food. The crew on board Lupa were not made up of a few boaties wanting to bum around but a very professional crew handpicked by Captain Dan. They were sourced from Germany, France, USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand Some of them already had famous races under their belt including the Volvo Round the World, the America's Cup and the Sydney to Hobart. The Crew also included the boat's owner Jeremy Pilkington. Stef and Dan have been very fortunate to be involved with a great boat and wonderful owners. Brent and I have met the owners and attended a party they threw for the crew and family in Sydney. We think very highly of them and it was great to see them have such an involvement with their crew and families. For them they would have suffered the biggest disappointment. The boat is due to be shipped back to the Mediterranean in April and will not likely ever come back down these ways again.

The following day after Lupa's collision their tactician spent the morning in front of a Jury, Stef and Dan and some of the crew unpacked the boat of all its food and other gear, the French Navigator collected up all the freeze dried food (the only silver lining- he didn't have to eat it), crew flew back to over six different countries, some family members continued their travels to Hobart where they would see American yacht 'Comanche' win line honours and Brent and I sat at an airport for 6 hours only to have our flight cancelled. It was such a terrific event to be involved in and we will always look at my sister's life with more admiration than I had before. Brent and I really hope the boat owners will change their mind and give it one more shot. We really want to see Lupa complete the Sydney to Hobart yacht race.



# INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS WITH OUR GENETICS

You can breed cattle for a lifetime and not ever produce a breeding bull of such quality as Evolution. We feel extremely lucky to have this bull in our herd. Not only has he been a game changer for us but he has also impressed breeders in Australia and Canada.

Nearly four years ago we had the pleasure of showing David and Prue Bondfield (Palgrove Charolais) and Ian and Del Price (Moongool Charolais) around our herd. These breeders from Queensland in Australia were so impressed by him they bought the Australian semen rights in the bull. Last year both herds sold their first sons of Evolution in their annual bull sales. There was a big demand for the Evolution sons and the results were exciting.

At the Palgrove sale back in August a Silverstream Evolution son made \$31,000. The 12 sons sold by Evolution grossed \$150,000 and averaged \$12,500. The Palgrove sale averaged nearly \$8,000 for 112 bulls with a complete clearance.

The Moongool Annual bull sale was held in September. Evolution sons sold extremely well with 15 sons sold at an average of \$12,066. Evolution sired the top two priced bulls (Lot 1 & 2) which both made \$22,000. We believe just under 100 bulls sold for around a \$7800 average.



**SILVERSTREAM EVOLUTION E168 AT 6 YEARS OLD.**

Just over two years ago after travelling around Canada we decided to sell half the semen rights of Evolution at the Charolais sale at Canadian Western Agribition giving the purchaser the right to take the other half share for half the price then, 3/4 of the price a year later or the full price two years after that. The rights sold at Auction for CAN\$22,500 and was purchased by 2 herds, HTA Charolais from Manitoba and Wilgenbusch Charolais from Saskatchewan. This was a huge punt for us but even a bigger one for them making this commitment with the bull sight unseen to them. We are extremely grateful to these excellent herds for the faith they had in our bull. The first sons will be for sale in their upcoming annual bull sales held over the next couple of months. The first females were put up for auction though just before Christmas. Wilgenbusch held their first ever biennial female sale where they offered three Evolution daughters. The first heifers in the ring were a couple of stunning 11 month old Evolution daughters. They were auctioned in the ring together with the purchaser taking their pick at the fall of the hammer or taking both at the same price again. It was knocked down at \$17,500 and then the purchaser took both heifers! The third Evolution daughter then went on to make a whopping \$18,000. This is huge money for such young heifers. Brent and I were able to watch this sale on line and we thought the heifers looked exceptional in the sale ring.

Evolution is a bull that never ceases to amaze us. We drive past him most days and he is truly a magnificent animal. His structure, balance, presence and the way he moves is impeccable. He puts a stamp on all his progeny and whilst his bulls are quite outstanding we are extremely excited about his daughters. We have a large number in our herd now and they are real stand outs. They make great cows with plenty of milk, lovely udders and look like they are going to be around for a while. We want to thank the Bondfield's, Price's, Wilgenbusch's and the Airey's for having confidence in Evolution and our breeding program we have here in little ole New Zealand and we wish them a heap more success with their Evolution progeny in the future.



**LOT 1 IN THE MOONGOOL CHAROLAIS SALE. THIS BULL SHARED THE TOP PRICE OF \$22,000 WITH ANOTHER EVOLUTION SON.**



**LOT 3 IN THE PALGROVE CHAROLAIS SALE- PALGROVE JUNCTION. THIS BULL MADE \$31,000.**



**LOT 1 IN THE WILGENBUSCH RST BIENNIAL FEMALE SALE- JWXC CAMEO. SHE SOLD TO ELDERS CHAROLAIS FOR \$17,500.**

At the same time as selling Evolution's semen rights into Canada we also leased the global semen rights of another bull Silverstream Geddes to Canadian semen company Semex. The Geddes progeny in Canada are having a great success in the show ring as well as in the sale ring. At the recent Canadian Western Agribition a Geddes son, High Bluff Casanova 13C was the Reserve Grand Champion at the Presidents Classic (an all breeds class). Another Geddes son SOS Chuckwagon 54C was the Reserve Champion Futurity Bull. This same bull was the peoples choice at the Alberta Select Charolais sale and then went on to sell for \$60,000.



**SOS CHUCKWAGON 54C WAS THE RESERVE CHAMPION FUTURITY BULL AT CANDIAN WESTERN AGRIBITION. HE WAS WENT ON TO SELL AT THE ALBERTA SELECT SALE FOR \$60,000.**



**HBSF CASANOVA 13C WAS SLAPPED THE RESERVE CHAMPION AT THE PRESIDENTS CLASSIC AT THE CANADIAN WESTERN AGRIBITION.**

## TIM &amp; SARA COOP



Tim Coop is a great believer in hybrid vigour so crossbreeding is key in his cattle and sheep breeding programmes.

Out on the picturesque Banks Peninsula in a small bay called Port Levy is the 1050ha home property of Tim and Sara Coop. This property has been in the family for over 100 years. An additional 650ha neighbouring block was purchased in 2005 and back around towards Christchurch at Teddington they also lease Loudon, a 900ha block they have had since 2014. Tim's great-grandfather (EW Coop) bought the home block 'Fernlea' in Port Levy back in the early 1900's after he moved away from his home farm near Gisborne. The Coop family originated from England but first came out to Melbourne. They owned the shot tower in which they manufactured lead shot, now the centrepiece for Melbourne Central shopping centre. When it became obvious the lead was slowly poisoning them they left and moved to Little River and started a sawmilling business where Cooptown now exists. The family moved to Gisborne and still some Coops remain up those ways. After Tim's great grandfather bought Fernlea his sons ran it for him. One son was Tim's grandfather Chappy and the other was Professor Coop who is better known in New Zealand for the breed of sheep he developed, the Coopworth. Tim's father Richard then took over in the 1960's.

Tim has always loved farming and finds it hard to get away from the place. He says that Sara's biggest claim is clocking up over 330,000 km on her VW Golf while visiting Tim when she lived in Dunedin because getting him off the farm was like getting a limpet off a rock. Tim did try a career as an accountant but gave that away early in the piece and ended up at Lincoln University where he did a Diploma in Agriculture. He worked briefly for a year in North Canterbury then went on to do two years at Wairere under the guidance of Derek Daniel. After that he travelled to the United Kingdom for two years working here and there including two seasons doing an intensive indoor lambing. Tim came back to the farm in 1998 where he worked alongside his father until Richard retired in 2005. He only moved just around the corner to Diamond Harbour and was still actively farming until he passed away in 2011. Sara and Tim married in 2004. She came from a farming background at Rangitata Island and has degrees in commerce and law. When Sara isn't looking after their 4 year old twins Daisy and Sam she is working part time at Comrad Medical Systems in Christchurch.

Tim's breeding strategy in both his sheep and cattle is to optimise production by using crossbreeding. The cow herd is predominantly Angus/Hereford cross with all the poorer cows

going to a Charolais bull. The sheep are a North Island Romney crossed with a Longdowns composite. The properties run over 300 cows and 6500 ewes. He calves two year olds, and lambs hoggets. The lambing percentage ranges between 140-153% to the ram & calving from 83-90% to the bull. This is a full time job for Tim and his two staff members Barry Thompson and Tim Bryce.

The two year heifers calve at the home block where Tim records birth date and he tags the calf with the dam's number. At weaning he weighs the calves and is able to identify the bottom 20% performing females. The poorer performing cows then go to Loudon where they join the terminal mob. The key point being a two year olds calf is a very good prediction of lifetime performance. It was one of the key findings from a beef efficiency programme he was part of run by Craig Thomas. At around the same time he started using John Chapman's Inverary Station Angus bulls, John's father had used exactly the same selection method since the mid 1900's. It is a simplistic but effective way of ensuring the best producing females are going into the herd. At the time of leasing Loudon Tim was offered the herd of Angus cows that were already there. There were 110 big bold females that he decided to take on as they were familiar with the block which proves handy when negotiating the Mt Herbert terrain. The number of cows at Loudon has remained the same. Loudon at the bottom starts at sea level and at the very top is Mt Herbert which is at 1000 meters. The cows here spend most of their lives up round Mt Herbert and Mt Bradley. They have a lot of scope and seem to thrive up there. They come in twice a year for calf marking and weaning and come down to some easier country when the bull goes out which is for two cycles. Tim likes to keep that calving interval pretty short so he can get the cows back up the mountain again and isn't too worried if there is the odd dry cow at scanning. Tim has only started using a terminal sire since having the Loudon herd so this year is Tim's first crop of Charolais calves and he is really thrilled with them so far. These calves will be sold as weaners and will go into our fodder beet program here at Silverstream. These calves were always going to be sold at weaning so getting the hybrid vigour from crossbreeding plus the extra growth from a Charolais makes the most sense to Tim if he wants heavier calves at weaning. Tim had tossed up as to whether to use an Angus or Hereford as his terminal sire as had been the case at Loudon but decided against it. He doesn't need maternal traits in the females, he needs growth, and this is where the Charolais comes into its own. Tim feels this is often an area



*The cows & calves with Lyttelton Harbour in the backdrop.*

where some of the Angus and Hereford breeders get lost. The most profitable female on any property is one that calves as a two year old and goes on to produce a good 1st cycle calf every year for 12 years or more. If we keep focussing on attributes that may put that at risk then the breeder will go backwards.

At the home block Tim runs 220 cows. The black cows are run with a Horned Hereford bull whilst the white face cows go back to an Angus bull. After weaning, steer calves are kept and are used on country which is too steep for cows. The following May these steers are brought down onto improved Ryegrass paddocks and are then sold from July through to October to 5-Star Beef at weights of around 480-500kg. All the heifer calves are kept through, any dry or not up to weight are taken to Loudon and sold to Silver Fern Farms (SFF) on the spring schedule. He ends up calving around 60 two year olds. Tim chooses to use a Horned Hereford bull over his Angus cows because he believes that they are tougher, stronger in the bone, have more thickness and are easier doing. While some might criticise the horns Tim finds there are very few progeny with horns as they are going over an Angus and he believes the benefits of using a Horned Hereford far outweigh the work involved in dehorning the odd calf.

Tim bought his first lot of Charolais bulls from Silverstream a couple of years ago and he purchased his first Hereford last year. His Angus bulls come from John Chapman at Inverary Station in the Ashburton gorge. When Tim first went out onto the bull buying scene 20 years ago he was very 'green' and was extremely influenced by EBV's. Tim remembers his first bull buying experience. He jumped in a car with some peninsula farmers and headed off to a sale all eager. He had already been through the catalogue and marked out from studying the EBVs only 12 bulls he thought were worth looking at. They laughed at his selection strategy. Upon arriving at the sale and looking at the bulls he discovered that only two of those bulls were actually any good. Those two bulls sold for much more than Tim could afford and he ended up buying the only bull in the catalogue with no EBVs at all. He took this bull home; he fired blanks and then went off to the works. Tim laughs as he relays this story to us and realises how much he has learnt since then. He says 'You have to be careful who you take advice from and who you listen to'.

John Chapman doesn't have EBVs for his bulls but this does not



*Tim with Barry Thompson and Tim Bryce.*

worry Tim. He says the cattle have moderate growth, good fertility and perform in an environment harsher than his. Tim knows that getting a cow in calf is more valuable than any other trait. He always buys a bull out of an old cow. Longevity and fertility is more important to him than an extreme value in any other trait. Tim trusts John's breeding program and the fact that he is selecting the right type of cattle when choosing his sire bulls. Tim likes the selection philosophy adopted by John which has remained consistent over generations of breeding. Tim says that over his brief career as a bull buyer he has seen plenty of fads but thinks doing the basics well, often gets lost in the fog of chasing the latest trend by those in the stud industry. Tim also doesn't specifically select a heifer bull but instead just runs his heifers in with one of his main Angus sires. As long as the bull is a suitable type with a good shoulder he has no trouble calving and never has. He has learnt a lot about bull selection over the years and in many cases has had to learn the hard way but has also had a bit



*The cows & Charolais calves heading up around Mt Bradley.*

of help from friends. He has learnt about the basics like feet, legs and conformation but above all the bulls have got to last and suit his country. When selecting any bulls he likes them to be medium framed with plenty of thickness, bone and barrel. The type of cattle he breeds and crossbreeding are important in maximising production from the properties.

One area Tim is currently looking to address is cow weaning dates. He says he has been guilty of leaving the calf on mum well in to April to wait for some calf weaning feed, however this is detrimental to cow condition and calf weaning weights. The cow is then going into the winter in moderate condition and this is compromising calving condition score. He is in the process of getting a hard feed mix and some baleage to yard wean the calves and carry on feeding them until feed covers recover from the summer.

His name may also be familiar to some as a member of MIE (Meat Industry Excellence) which was formed over two years ago by farmers frustrated by poor returns. Tim stood up because it became very obvious what the problem was and if it wasn't fixed nothing was going to change. The industry had not made any changes to procurement, processing or marketing for years. Basically because we couldn't afford to, all the capital that should have been used for closing plants & marketing was being used in poor procurement practises.

Tim believed farmers were also losing relevance because those they sold to were becoming bigger and more powerful, pitting NZ exporters against each other which was suiting them very well but costing NZ farmers a lot of profit. MIE got pretty close to forcing change by endorsing directors onto the boards of SFF and Alliance Group, with the aim of bringing them together. It was the only option but they got scuttled by the SFF capital raise. The group produced the 'Pathways' report which showed that 450 million a year could drop out the bottom if farmers addressed best practice. Tim says it's an opportunity lost, and farmers will pay for it as long as the current practices continue.

# AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE WAY OF FEEDING THE WORLD

## The opportunities- What's New Zealand doing about it?

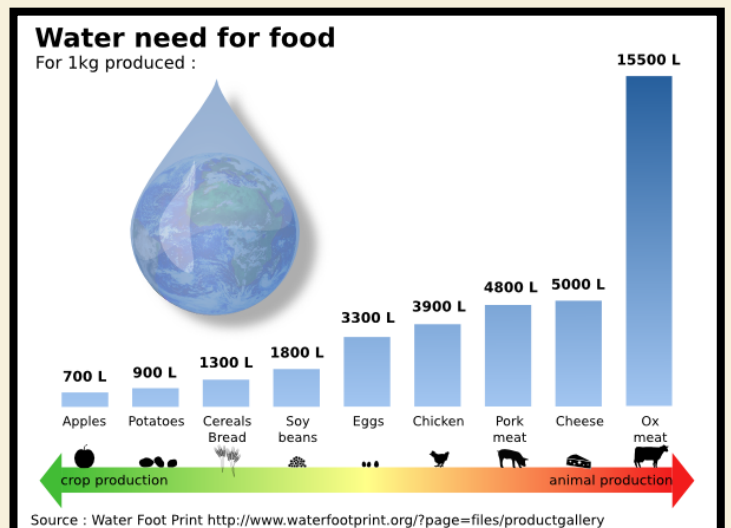
By Anna Fisher

Back in June Brent and I were fortunate enough to be invited along to the Allflex sponsored Platinum Primary Producers conference in Darwin. The conference was held over three days and included field trips and many interesting speakers. One speaker that took a particular interest to me was Julian Cribb. Mr Cribb is an author and science commentator and he argues that the overpopulation of the world will lead to famine. He spoke on the fate of the planet whose resources have in the last 200 years been ruthlessly exploited for the benefit of the minority. While some topics he touched on seemed quite farfetched he did quote some interesting facts. By the 2060's the world's population will exceed 10 billion people which is not only due to more children being born but also people living longer. He quoted that over 200,000 extra people sit down for dinner every night. By 2050 he believes 7-8 billion people will live in the cities. This is the current world population and the total land mass these urban areas will cover will be the size of China, while the areas where a family has a horse or there is a golf course will cover the land mass of the USA. This is a huge amount of land that will not be able to be used for food production. Mr Cribb quoted that the total 'food land' per person has declined from 8ha per person in 1900 to 2ha today and will be 1.5ha per person in 50 years time. Mr Cribb believes that water is acutely scarce. 90% of useable fresh water is underground and we are using it faster than it is replenishing itself. He says that by 2050 cities will need twice as much water than what they use today so therefore we need to improve our water use efficiency by 300%. Most important in Mr Cribb's puzzle is what he calls "the two elephants in the kitchen": population growth and overconsumption. A projected 33% growth in the population in the next 20 years, combined with increased consumption of meat as the middle class grows larger, means that food production must grow by at least 50% in the same period. He believes livestock is a major problem as the grain fed to American animals alone is enough to feed a billion hungry people. Grain stock piles in America have shrunk in the last decade and the amount of available water for each human is declining. Yet to produce more food we need more water.

So where do we go from here? While some of this information seems frightening we need to be looking at how as farmers we can change our ways of farming to be more sustainable and more efficient and how we can capitalise on this growing problem. Let's take a look at how much water it takes to traditionally produce a steer or heifer in America. Meat has a much higher water footprint than vegetables, grains or beans. For instance a single

kilogram of beef takes, on average, 15,500 litres of water. This huge footprint is primarily due to the large amount of water needed to grow the grass and forage that a beef steer eats over a lifetime plus the water used for drinking, cleaning and processing. In the USA at least 80% of its beef are "conventionally" raised which means that they eat pasture for 12 to 14 months and then they go into a feedlot for 3 to 6 months, where they eat feed made from corn and soy. It takes about 1200 litres of water to produce one kilogram of corn, and a steer or heifer can eat 450kgs or more feed in just over a few months. All that grain and water adds up.

Traditionally as beef producers we have aimed to produce a product that is tender, has the right amount of fat and marbling and is an attractive colour. We have strived to produce this because this is what the consumer wants. How long will it be until the world's food and water scarcity change the consumer's priorities? What if in time some of these above qualities are not as important as knowing that the product was produced by taking the most care on the environment and its resources as possible. We already know there has been a big swing to grass fed beef in the USA as it is perceived to have more health benefits. The New Zealand meat industry needs to be one step ahead on this and should be using its initiative to market a product that is produced with the least amount of impact on the environment as possible. How long will it be until it is socially unacceptable to eat a piece of highly marbled long fed beef because everyone knows how much water and resources have been used to produce it? The older the animal is when it is slaughtered the more resources it has taken to get it there. We are currently working with Jim Gibbs of Lincoln University to work out the resources used to produce beef in a fast finishing system in comparison to a traditional system.



The world's growing population and its declining resources is a real thing and instead of ignoring it we need to accept it and instead of waiting for the consumer to change its priorities when purchasing beef we need to be proactive and be thinking towards the future.

So much emphasis is placed on such a small part of the carcass which we are paid a premium on if we hit the grading targets. But the rest of the carcass is sold around the world as a commodity product. Perhaps there is more money to be made off this part of the carcass. If we could tell a story about our product that explains the care on the environment we take in our country and how we produce our product as quickly and efficiently as possible then maybe we could increase the value of those secondary cuts. We are too smaller country to be selling our produce as a commodity product.

As daunting as the challenge may seem we have tremendous opportunities in New Zealand. We have seen for ourselves the production advantages that can be achieved through fodder beet. Last winter we ran over 1000 cattle on 20ha of fodder beet for 130 days. Not only that they also gained close to a kilogram a day which is an excess of 2600kgs of live weight gain per ha. As of the 5th January we have killed 360 of these yearling cattle despite it being a challenging dry cold windy spring. The average age at slaughter in New Zealand is 26 months with only around 10% of cattle processed before the second winter. Every day a beef animal is alive it is using resources. From our own economic perspective it makes sense to increase our outputs while reducing our inputs. The bigger prize is that the consumers of the future will expect us to utilise resources we have in the most environmentally sustainable ways.

This year we installed a lysimeter in one of our paddocks to measure the actual nutrient loss under one of our fodder beet crops and Jim Gibbs has also installed moisture probes to measure the amount of water used to grow the crop. Instinctively we know that it is a very efficient crop in terms of water usage but we are looking to put some measurements around this.



*Installing our lysimeter with Jim Gibbs from Lincoln University in one of our fodder beet paddocks*

New Zealand is woefully lacking in any science or research behind this topic. We have seen many a trial carried out on beef cow efficiency on hill country but nothing on efficient grass fed finishing systems but New Zealand should not be the only ones embarrassed by this. According to Mr Cribb \$50 billion is spent a year on agricultural research and development. This has been the same since the worlds population sat at 3.5 billion so really you could consider this halved over time. He also quoted over \$1500 billion used annually on military spending so basically we are spending 30 times more on figuring out ways of killing each other rather than feeding everyone.

We do not want to lose sight on how important it is to produce beef in the most efficient way. Already there are a small percentage of people choosing a vegan diet because they know the amount of resources taken to traditionally produce red meat. We do not want there to become a point where beef is shamefully eaten. Only 20 years ago you could smoke cigarettes in restaurants, pubs and planes. As an avid beef fan I do not want to find myself in 20 years eating my steak in a designated area outdoors watching all the 'responsible' people eating their kale and tofu inside. On a more realistic note there are huge opportunities for beef producers and our 'marketing men'. Our red meat industry has always been reactionary rather than proactive. It would be great to see some more science and market research on this matter as we are currently in an industry at a time of many opportunities.

**WE WANTED TO CONGRATULATE  
OUR GOOD FRIENDS FROM AUSSIE-  
DAVID AND PRUE BONDFIELD  
(PALGROVE CHAROLAIS) WHO  
WERE RECENTLY NAMED THE 2015  
KONDININ ABC AUSTRALIAN RURAL  
LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS OF THE  
YEAR! THIS IS A REALLY EXCITING  
AND HUGE ACHIEVEMENT. THE  
AWARD CELEBRATES INNOVATIVE,  
PROFESSIONAL AND SUSTAINABLE  
APPROACHES TO FARMING.**



*Brent & Anna with David & Prue at the PPP conference in Darwin*

# 28TH ANNUAL BULL SALE:

WEDNESDAY  
15TH JUNE 2PM



## OFFERING OUR 3RD LINE OF HEREFORD BULLS

This line of bulls are our best yet. They are sired by Gay Olympus who we purchased from the Maungahina stud 3 years ago. We love the volume, width and strength of bone in this sire. He is an exceptionally well structured bull with good feet and a great temperament. He is breeding these great traits through to his progeny. This bull is a really exciting sire.

## HIS SONS



*Congratulations to Bruce & Maureen who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary back in October.*

Bruce and Maureen threw a small party at their house in Lincoln for close friends and family. This picture is the entire wedding party from 50 years ago including the flower girl.



**SILVERSTREAM**  
CHAROLAIS . HEREFORDS  
[www.silverstreamcharolais.co.nz](http://www.silverstreamcharolais.co.nz)

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