

Violet Hills Newsletter summer 2021



Happy New Year from all of us at Violet Hills. During the last year we have been fortunate being in agriculture and living in a rural area which has insulated us from some of the problems of city living.

The extreme variability of the Australian climate was starkly demonstrated over the last few years. In our area we have gone from extreme drought to the best winter-spring-early summer period that I have ever experienced. The massive autumn strike of clovers, both introduced and naturalised, that thrived throughout a mild, moist winter and spring have provided a huge body of feed that has remained green right up until December. This has been complimented by a tremendous growth of grasses in the spring. Unfortunately, the drought did result in a loss of some of the improved grasses on the more marginal parts of the property.

Another positive was the excellent prices in the cattle market. Just before Christmas we sold cull cows and heifers. The good season was reflected in the cows dressing between 400 and 500 kg and having up to 30mm of fat. Who said that Charolais will not fatten!!! In a breed that sometimes gets bad press for being hard to finish, it is pleasing to see the results of our programme of breeding good doing, easy finishing Charolais that still have excellent carcasses.



The drought had a big impact on our cow numbers so it will take a couple of years to get back to our normal numbers in our pedigree herd.

2021 ON FARM SALE THURSDAY 13th MAY 2021

To avoid clashing with the Rockhampton Beef Expo we have moved the sale date back 1 week to the **13th May 2021**. We are aiming at presenting **50 bulls and 20 commercial Charolais heifers** PTIC to a low birth weight Red Angus bull.

Multi-breed EBV's

At the present moment EBV's (Estimated Breeding Values) are breed specific. In other words the EBV's for one breed cannot be compared to the EBV's of a different breed. While EBV's are not the be all and end all of animal selection, they can help in identifying the relative merits of animals of the same breed and in the same herd. Comparing animals of the same breed from different herds is a bit more problematic due to low accuracy of the figures. There is now research work being undertaken by Universities and Ag. Departments to develop Multi Breed EBV's which will help in identifying the genetic difference that occurs between animals of different breeds for the measured traits. Hopefully, this will go some way in exposing the **BS** that occurs when breeding for coat colour. Breeding for coat colour may be ok if you are breeding cows to produce mats and floor rugs or just want a pretty cow in the paddock. I cannot see any other value. This is especially so as more and more cattle are sold on a weight and grade basis.

Luckily there are still cattlemen amongst the breeding and processing community who are not blindsided by this coat colour crap and are able to assess cattle on their beef producing ability.

At the end of the day nothing replaces good "stockmanship" when selecting cattle for your enterprise.

2020 Sale Report

The 2020 on farm sale was a learning experience for us and our clients. Being early in the pandemic and just starting



to emerge from the drought created a lot of uncertainty for everyone. With so much more emphasis on electronic presentation, remote and phone bidding as well as the physical auction there was some confusion and hesitancy at times. Any way we got through the day with an 80% clearance and a top of \$10,000.00 for Violet Hills Plantagenet who was purchased by long time clients Bryden and Maree Perry, from Bylong Valley. Plantagenet was sired by Violet Hills Jolly Joker. Overall the average price was a little over \$6000.00 with bulls going to Qld, NSW, Vic and Tas. Since the sale there has been a steady demand that has cleaned us out of bulls.

Grand Champion junior carcass award to Sophie Inder

At the recent Colin Say & Co Beef Extravaganza a young lady, Sophie Inder, (Rockwell Charolais) achieved some excellent results with her unled Charolais X Angus steer. The steer was awarded Champion unled steer and went on to win Grand Champion junior carcass, with a score of 91.6, and Reserve Grand Champion carcass overall. The steer weighed 540kg and dressed out at 315kg for a 58% dressing percentage. He had an EMA of 115 sq. cms. and a calculated yield of 73%. He was sired by Violet Hills Marcello.



It is great to see young Charolais breeders having their efforts rewarded with such success.

We would like to extend a special thank you to all of our clients and supporters. Your friendship and honest feedback is very much appreciated. *The Jenkins Family*

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