

# 2011 Beef Breeders

## Colly Creek crosses new ground

By: CARLA WIESE-SMITH

**W**HAT beef producer would knock back an extra \$100 a head on the sale of their weaners and maintain the same marbling as Angus?

And, even better, what if that could be achieved with no extra feed down their mouths?

These are the kind of results being achieved by Colly Creek Pastoral Company at Willow Tree by using Wombramurra Black Simmental bulls from Nundle.

Colly Creek manager, Richard Noble, said in a group of 411 eight-month-old mixed sex weaners, weaned in April, the 57 crossbred calves by purebred black Simmental bulls from Angus cows weighed 315 kilograms (42kg heavier than contemporary pure Angus weaners), and the market value at the time had seen a return of \$103.39/hd more than the 298 pure Angus calves.

The 56 calves by first-cross black Simmental/Angus bulls averaged an extra \$37.24/hd more than the straight Angus, showing hybrid vigour can still be achieved in that second-cross.

"We can get the hybrids to target weights quicker than a purebred," he said.

"By getting them there in shorter periods of time, we're turning them off faster which means we can bring more through."

The April weaners also achieved a whole of life average daily gain of 1.31kg - compared to 1.13kg for the straight Angus.

"There's a misconception that bigger animals need more feed," Mr Noble said.

"That's not the case - take a 500kg Angus and a 500kg Simmental-cross, they each eat about three per cent of their bodyweight to maintain growth.

"The hybrid animal converts the feed better to gain more weight - and that's what it's all about."

Colly Creek run about 1000 breeding cows, of

which about 30 per cent are crossbred.

Mr Noble, who has been involved with crossbreeding British and European breeds for the past 25 years, said Colly Creek had been crossing about 30pc of the herd with black Simmental bulls for the past four years or so.

"There's the old saying that hybrid vigour is free gain," he said.

"We're getting that in our weaners, but also in the retained females - the first-cross females are quick to return for joining, they've got the hybrid vigour advantage."

He said they had selected the Wombramurra Black Simmental to increase their herd's gene pool.

"The Angus gene pool is getting particularly small, so we needed to expand that.

"At the end of the day, we are producing a superior animal that not only has added weight gain for its whole life and greater carcase yield, but also maintains those good Angus carcase traits - everything you need for a good eating experience."

By keeping a straight black herd, Mr Noble said they were not seeing any discounts when marketing their cattle.

"Because the cross is consistently all black, there's no discount for the black Simmental-cross whether its through the feedlot, abattoir or saleyard.

"That's why we went down this track - we're maintaining that premium for black cattle."

The larger percentage of Colly Creek steers are grown to 500kg to 550kg and sold direct to abattoirs, or grown out to 450kg to 500kg to sell to feedlots.

"The additional weight gain enables us to get to the optimum market weight at least three to four months earlier," he said.

Most recently cattle have gone to Killara



Feedlot, but there's also a market for them at Jindalee and Carroona Feedlots.

Last year, during a dry season, Colly Creek sent a pen of 140 steers to Killara Feedlot for 151 days.

The Colly Creek steers - 96 Angus, 24 composite Angus containing about 25pc European blood, and 19 first-cross black Simmental/Angus - performed in the top one per cent of the feedlot for feed conversion.

They averaged 5.63kg of feed per kilogram gained, and there were no deaths or hospital costs.

"The cost of health in feedlots today is quite high," Mr Noble said.

"We put a lot of time into bunk training and handling calves (which involves keeping them in mobs of pen sizes for at least two to three months prior to feedlot entry) which minimizes health problems and induces faster weight gain for more efficient feeding.

"Our cattle have few health problems, and we don't vaccinate for BRD (bovine respiratory disease) prior to entry - when the market is

paying for that, we'll consider it."

He said the number one result was the fact that feedback they had received from the feedlots also showed they were maintaining the marbling and eating quality of their cattle in the black Simmental-cross.

But he stressed that the key to a good crossbred herd was to retain good straight-bred herds in both breeds.

"Every different genetic line we have is identified accordingly with ear tags and electronic ID.

"The matings here are planned each year. The first-cross or purebred black Simmental bulls go to Angus cows, the first-cross heifers go back to Angus bulls."

He said they used first-cross bulls with a minimum of 25pc black Simmental genetics, and maintained a 25pc to 50pc black Simmental influence in the crossbred herd. And there was still a large base of Angus females which were mated to Angus bulls each year to maintain that good straight-bred herd.

### 140 "Black Colly Creek Steers" Fed for 151 Day Killara F/Lot (June 10)

| Killara Feedlot Trial Steers      | % 4 Tooth | Ave Age Ex CC                    | Whole of Life Per day Gain Ex CC     | Ave Start Wt | Ave Carcase Wt        | Ave P8 Fat | % Marble Score 2+ | At \$2.10 per Kg Lwt Ave Sale Value Per Head | Additional Return Per Head |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 96 Pure Angus                     | 16%       | 80 @ 22 months<br>16 @ 27 months | 0.61 kgs per day<br>0.50 kgs per day | 408kgs       | 382.24kgs             | 22.3mm     | 74%               | \$856.80 per Head                            | \$0.00 per head            |
| 24 Comp x Angus (Approx 25% Euro) | 0%        | 24 @ 22 months                   | 0.62 kgs per day                     | 410kgs       | 370.33kgs             | 21.6mm     | 92%               | \$861.00 per Head                            | \$4.20 per head            |
| 19 Black Simmental x Angus (F1's) | 0%        | 19 @ 22 months                   | 0.64 kgs per day                     | 425kgs       | 384.18kgs             | 18.2mm     | 90%               | \$892.50 per head                            | \$35.70 per head           |
| <b>Dry Season</b>                 |           |                                  |                                      |              | 54.76% dressing yield |            |                   |  |                            |

One head lost EID tag

Feed conversion (dry matter) 5.63kgs of feed / kg gained (Top 1% of Killara Cattle) Winter feeding CCPC Cattle, No Deaths, Nil Hospital costs, best in Feedlot

### 411 "Black Colly Creek" Weaners (Weaned April 11) Mixed Sex

| Colly Creek Mixed Sex Weaners                              | Ave Weight | Ave Age  | Whole of Life Gain | Mixed Sex Auction Plus Market Value at \$2.45 / kgs Lwt at Weaning | Additional Value Per Head |
|--|------------|----------|--------------------|--|---------------------------|
| 298 Pure Angus   | 273.3 kgs  | 8 months | 1.13 kgs / day     | \$669.58 per head  | \$0.00 per Head           |
| 56 Angus x Black Simmental x Angus (by F1 Bulls)           | 288.5 kgs  | 8 months | 1.20 kgs / day     | \$706.82 per head  | \$37.24 per Head          |
| 57 Black Simmental x Angus (by Pure Black Simmental Bulls) | 315.5 kgs  | 8 months | 1.31 kgs / day     | \$772.97 per head  | \$103.39 per Head         |
| <b>Good Season</b>   |            |          |                    |  |                           |

# WOMBRAMURRA BLACK SIMMENTALS

## ANNUAL BULL SALE

"Profit Driven Genetics"

Wednesday, 17th August, 2011 - Wombramurra Sale Complex

Nundle NSW — 1.00pm

53 Black Simmental Bulls

41 x Two year-old

12 x Eighteen months-old

www.blacksimentals.com.au



For catalogues and information  
call: Andrew Chapman - 02 6769 3286  
email: andrew@blacksimentals.com.au  
Peter Howarth - 02 4784 2022  
Elders Tamworth - 02 6765 3900



Lot 1



Lot 10