

Outside the Square

With Compliments

A publication produced by The Square Meaters Cattle Association of Australia Ltd

**Square Meaters
distinct identity**

**Satisfying the
US demand**

Breeding for the best traits

Square Meaters Cattle - "No Ifs, Just Butts"

Growing through the tough times



By Peter Brown

Welcome to the 2008 edition, the fifth in the series, of the annual magazine of the Square Meaters Cattle Association of Australia Ltd.

In many parts of Australia the drought continues; some areas have had some relief, some have even had good rains. It's safe to say that wherever you are conditions have been difficult. Some hard decisions have had to be made, even for those of us with Square Meaters which seem to hang on in tough conditions and blossom with the first bit of green feed in front of them.

Despite these difficult conditions the Association continues its steady growth, with both membership and cattle numbers up on last year. Our members in the

USA, though few in number are certainly filled with enthusiasm and are working hard to gain recognition for the breed.

The beef production industry as a whole faces many new challenges. The reality of global warming, whatever the cause, is generally accepted. With it comes a change in weather patterns. A side effect of global warming is the drive for non fossil fuels – ethanol for example – using grain as feedstock. This has introduced a new dynamic into the feed grain market, leading to higher prices. These new prices have already had a negative impact on the feed lot sector and caused a reduction in the number of animals on long fed regimes. Another reaction to global warming has been an increase in environmental awareness and, particularly in developed countries, a move towards organics. The belief is that “we are what we eat” and what we eat should be as natural as can be. Beef can be a part of this but will need to be of good quality, of moderate portion size and produced in the most natural way possible. This



The Square Meaters Cattle Association of Australia Ltd is continuing to grow in both membership and cattle numbers.

sounds to me to be a job description for Square Meaters – efficient, medium framed, early maturing animals able to finish at a young age on grass, or with the minimum of extra feed in poor conditions, to produce prime grade beef. We have tomorrow's animal today. The successes Square Meaters are having in the show ring and increasingly in carcass competitions are making these attributes known to a wider range of beef producers.

Our herd book has been open to registered Murray Grey females for a little while to give access to a greater number of females. The herd book will be closed from 1st July 2008, with no plans to reconsider this decision.

Those who read last year's magazine will be aware that we had intended to hold a Sale at Camden in September 2007 and may be wondering what happened. Given the uncertainties of the season the Board decided to cancel the event. A range of options are being considered for the next sale, including internet based technologies rather than a physical Sale, so watch out for announcements about this.

I'd like to take the

opportunity to thank a number of people who have supported the production of this magazine;

- Ausure Insurance, who are the major commercial sponsor of the Association. They have an advertisement in the magazine so, if you are thinking about insurance, check their details and give them a call. You might well get a pleasant surprise and if you mention SMCAA we will receive a contribution from them if you proceed.

- Those who have advertised in the magazine. The revenue from advertising covers the majority of the cost of the magazine. Without this we would not be able to publish.

- Cheryl Mott, the Secretary of the Association who makes the magazine, along with just about everything else in The Association, happen.

There are lots of articles, covering a range of topics, which I hope you enjoy. If you need more information about Square Meaters contact Cheryl in the Office. Alternatively, using the members list in the centre of the magazine, give your nearest breeder a call; I'm sure they will be happy to help and show you what fine cattle Square Meaters are. ■

WARRILL CREEK
SQUARE MEATERS

Bevin and Dawn Voight
 Greens Road
 Purga Qld 4306
 07 5467 3447
 0407 034 634

Quality Blue Ribbon Beef



Squares beat the climate change

By Peter Horne

The ability of Square Meaters cattle to hang on to their condition during prolonged drought conditions has been one of the features of the breed that has really stood out for us at the Chipililo stud. The Darling Downs where our Square Meaters are located, has been at the centre of the big dry now for more years than anyone would care to remember. No doubt, this is a sentiment shared by many breeders right across the country, however, it was also during this last year that we saw feed prices go through the roof with the quality of feed going through the floor.

It is with a degree of amazement that we noticed what the Square Meaters were prepared to eat and still able to maintain condition. This is especially true of the Square Meaters in the middle range of the frame score. The majority of our Chipililo cattle have proven adept at foraging widely and efficiently and there are very few weeds that they won't include in their diet. It was one of our friends who has seen involvement with numerous breeds over many years; who remarked with some surprise on the foraging ability of the Square Meaters.

The climate change debate has certainly brought to bear a wide range of issues facing the cattle industry which the Square Meaters are able to face head on. A reduction in feedlot capacities with the increase in grain prices has put the feed lot industry at risk

while raising the importance of feeding pasture and the all too predictable failed crop.

The increased price of beef at the supermarket is gradually turning beef into a luxury item. The consumer is now looking for an efficient beef product that will allow for the optimum eating experience. The future requirement for protein at close proximity to population centres also places the Square Meaters in an ideal position with the small farms sector often located close to populated areas.

Due to their early maturing nature, the Square Meaters can be turned off at an earlier age. This enables breeders to market their cattle sooner, when conditions go bad.

Through Genestar testing, we have found that the breed has the necessary genetics for feed efficiency, marbling and tenderness. This has been proven correct in the paddock and on the plate. The poor condition of cattle passing through local saleyards during the recent severe drought only causes us to believe that the Square Meaters are headed for a bright future.

The inherent characteristics of the Square Meaters Cattle, easily allows them to compete in this future market.

The nature of our changing climate could ultimately change the direction that breeding takes in this country.

It is the Chipililo belief that Square Meaters are well placed to handle the challenges that climate change brings. ■

Contents

Chairman's Report	PAGE 2
Beating climate change	PAGE 3
Breeding for the best traits	PAGE 4
Breed characteristics	PAGE 5
Cross breeding Square Meaters	PAGE 6
Squares now in far North Qld	PAGE 12
Breeder resisted large frame	PAGE 13
Genestar testing for tenderness	PAGE 14
Distinct identity for Squares	PAGE 16
Square Meaters regulations	PAGE 18
Membership form	PAGE 19
Member's listing	PAGE 20
Satisfying the USA demand	PAGE 24
Handling cattle	PAGE 30
Maintaining facts and figures	PAGE 34

Outside the Square Advertisers Index

Warrill Creek Square Meaters	page 2
Rosellinos	page 4
Raewood Stud	page 5
Graphical Constructions.....	page 6
Muurabay Square Meaters	page 7
Southern Cross Square Meaters	page 8
Jembella Park	page 9
Elendee Square Meaters.....	page 9
Woolaringa Square Meaters Stud.....	page 10
Windridge Square Meaters	page 10
Rainbow Square Meaters Stud.....	page 11
Rilpall Square Meaters	page 11
Queensland Square Meaters Breeders Group	page 12
Kilayr Square Meaters	page 12
Kelkette Square Meaters Stud	page 13
Bella Vista Stud	page 14
Gleannholme Square Meaters	page 14
Highbury Square Meaters Stud	page 15
Oakvale Square Meaters	page 16
Maryvale Farm Stud.....	page 17
Silver Gully Estate.....	page 23
Misty Meadows Square Meaters Stud	page 24
Wyralla Lodge	page 24
Vaca Roja Ranch	page 25
Damview Square Meaters	page 26
Chevy Farm Square Meaters.....	page 27
Brinsley Square Meaters	page 28
Malolo Square Meaters	page 29
Earles Square Meaters	page 30
Akuna Farm Square Meaters	page 31
Marruce Square Meater	page 32
Vesco Square Meaters.....	page 32
Hain Rural Enterprises.....	page 33
Robene Square Meaters	page 34
Wyralla Lodge	page 34
Meta Park Square Meaters Stud	page 35
Misty Gully Square Meaters	page 36
Chipililo Square Meaters	page 37
Small Farms magazine	page 38
Mabelie Square Meaters	page 39
Bamre Stud	page 39
Ausure Insurance & Finance.....	page 40

Breeding for the best cattle traits

Another year - and Rosellinos enthusiasm for Square Meaters is undiminished.

A highlight of the year at Rosellinos was our decision to strengthen our breeding program with the introduction of 4 new animals.

Heading Rosollinos Square Meaters Stud herd improvers was Earles Winter, by the prepotent Liath Atholl Galashiels. Winter is the dam of Damview Zues Lad, who sold at the Camden Sale in 2006 for \$2,500. Zues Lad rated Elite, in the Falkirk test and weighed 680 kilogram at 23 months. Winter has now been mated to Mandalong

Rambo, SM R10A.

Rosellinos also purchased 3 daughters of Earles Winter, - Damview Aurora who was shown at the 2007 Brisbane RNA and the 4 month Damview Cool Winter. Both are by the AI Sire Caloona Trouble, LES T6A. Aurora is in calf to Mandalong Rambo. Both these heifers are very good specimens of the breed.

The other acquisition is Damview Brindabella who was the Reserve Champion Heifer at the 2007 Brisbane RNA, and in calf to Caloona Trouble.

All of these new animals will fit in well with Rosellinos present breeding program which includes AI Sires Mandalong Rambo



Marlene Ross with a new addition to the Rosellinos Square Meaters Stud at Carbrook Qld.

and Vesco Yes Man.

The plan at Rosellinos Square Meaters is to breed animals that are early maturing with good temperament which

maximises the profit and easy management of the Stud.

These are the traits that are synonymous with the Square Meaters breed. ■

Rosellinos



Enquiries
Welcome

Eric & Marlene Ross
Ph: (07) 3808 5863
Mob: 0409 068 222

1962 Mt Cotton Rd, Carbrook, Qld, 4130

Characteristics of the breed

Square Meaters are derived from the "original" grey cattle of medium, compact frame and increased fleshing similar to those of the pre-1975 era. In that respect they should demonstrate the following type and characteristics:

1. Early maturing development pattern
2. Medium compact frame no less than Frame Score one, and no greater than Frame Score five as set down in the Association's Articles (preferable in the range three to four)
3. Low birth weight calves, typically 25-30kgs
4. Increased, smooth muscling of reasonable

degree in both male and female cattle

5. Typically, relatively short leg to overall height ratio

6. Dark pigmentation of nose, eyes, ears, teats etc.

7. Colour consistent with those prescribed by the Association, viz. Silver, silver/grey, grey and dark grey.

8. Those characteristics of both structure and conformation generally accepted as desirable in superior animals of any cattle breed, e.g. length of neck and body, smooth shoulder; straight, even topline; well-set tail head; good depth and volume of



chest and body; sound reproductive apparatus in males, and well structured udder and teats in females; sound legs and feet, neither post-legged nor sickle hocked, etc.

Breeders should adopt these criteria as their

standard, which will maintain the Breed's distinct identity. This in turn will support the ultimate objective of establishing Square Meaters as the pre-eminent domestic beef carcase breed, thus ensuring their popularity. ■

RAEWOOD STUD



Square Meaters

Cattle bred from proven bloodlines for paddock performance and nurtured for quality



Small property in the green hills of South Gippsland with select stock

395 Loch Kernot Road
Woodleigh Vale, Victoria 3945

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Email: srhickey8@bigpond.com

Cross breeding Square Meaters

By Graeme Singleton

The jury is out on whether they should be called Squantas or Meatrudis. What is in no doubt however is just how good the young calves sired by a Muurabay Square Meaters bull from Santa and Santa/Hereford heifers are at Viv Gill's farm at Bonville.

At just 3 months of age they are already showing the early maturity, length, thickness and muscle which will make them great vealers. Mr Gill is not just a long-time Santa breeder, but has a herd which anyone would be proud to own. He was being challenged however by calving problems in his heifers and calves that lacked the maturity pattern, muscle and bloom to sell to the premium milk vealer market.

The experiment with Square Meaters began with the purchase of a middle-of-the-road and completely paddock fed frame score 3.5 bull from Muurabay Stud who was immediately joined to a line of 7 impressive frame score 6 and 7 Santa and

Santa/Hereford cross heifers aged about 20 months. The result was seen just over 9 months later with all heifers calving down unassisted in forward to fat condition.

"The calves just slipped out and were up and about in no time. The heifers didn't miss a beat and being able to calve them down in good order meant I was able to rejoin them sooner," Mr Gill said.

The Square Meaters cross calves aren't as tall as their Santa counterparts but they are thicker and deeper, have better butts and are easier to work in the yards.

They are showing so much promise the Square Meaters bull was last spring joined to a run of 20 heifers and cows.

In a further endorsement of the impact of the Square Meaters bull, a buyer who was inspecting 20 month old Santa steers on the Gill property rang to congratulate me on the quality of the calves, and to enquire as to who else I'd sold bulls to so he could also option to forward buy those calves.

Not one to let anyone get away I got him to come and



This 13 month old Square Meaters steer measured 108cm at the shoulder and weighed 390 kilograms at 13 months - completely off grass.

inspect two of my own pure Square Meaters steers.

The siblings of these steers had been sold straight off their mothers at an average age of 8 months and average curfew weight in the sale yards of 270 kilograms.

Not so happy with the sale price I decided to wean these younger calves and sent them to my brother's property at Ebor. He specializes in backgrounding around 1000 Angus steers a year on high performance pasture for the feedlot trade.

My Squares stood out for being silver and much shorter at the shoulder, and for being ready to kill at just 13 months. While the same-age angus calves were heads and shoulders taller than my Squares they were far from finished. My calves at 13 and a half months and off grass only, weighed 390 and 387 kilograms and achieved an average daily gain from June to December of one kilogram a day before coming back to my place at the coast.

Needless to say the buyer was very impressed with their muscle and fat cover and paid a premium for

them straight out of the paddock. What these examples tell me is that as stud breeders we have to be focused on much more than just what we produce. We are suppliers of genetics, and so need to always bear the buyer in mind. We need to sell bulls which produce the easy calving, early maturity pattern, muscle and temperament which will make commercial breeders more money quicker from their pastures.

We need to supply the genetics which will produce great well finished tender and tasty beef off grass in as short a period of time as possible.

As stud breeders we also need to supply the genetics which will move our great breed forward.

I was particularly chuffed this year to note the success of Dawn and Bevan Voight of Warrill Creek stud who exhibited the Junior Champion Bull at the Brisbane RNA with a son of Muurabay Xavier; the continuing success of the Platinum Stud at the Sydney Royal Show with descendents of Muurabay Winston; and the Vesco

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A two week old Square Meaters cross Santa/Hereford calf already showing plenty of depth and muscle.



At 3 months of age these calves by the Square Meaters bull Muurabay Zulu and from Santa/Hereford cross heifers are showing all of the length and thickness of their sire.

and Chipililo studs who are getting great progeny from Darlea Wizard who I selected as a yearling and used for two seasons before selling to Jo Van Elten.

His half-brother Muurabay Assassin (also by Mandalong Tom Boy) is now my main sire although I won't be seeing many of his calves grow to maturity. In August, facing the prospect of a dry spring, and knowing I was about to be overseas for 6 weeks, I

sold the majority of my herd to a new breeder, Elizabeth Adams, who has now established the Windi Stud at Bingara.

Elizabeth had bought a bull off me in 2004 and was so impressed with his calves from Murray Grey, Hereford and even Friesian cows, she couldn't help but be bitten by the Square Meaters bug.

If you've got to be bitten by a bug is there any better one to fall victim too! ■

Muurabay Square Meaters



the compact quiet achievers



with length milk and muscle



bred for paddock performance



Graeme Singleton

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0412 467 701

graeme@vpctv.com.au



Square Meaters travelling North

There comes a time when you realise that quality of life is the most important thing. That time had come for us.

Rod & I had both been working in industry for many years and were looking for satisfaction and a sense of achievement in personal goals, rather than in our employment. Interestingly, once the decision is made to achieve quality in your life, the answer often presents itself soon after.

Rod discovered Square Meaters through his usual intense research and although there was only a relatively small amount of

information available on the internet at the time, discovered enough to whet his appetite. He gained more valuable information by contacting breeders directly and asking the "dumb questions" that people new to Square Meaters usually ask. He was consistently surprised by the positivity of the answers and the passion that Square Meater breeders exude.

We had found our answer and, therefore, the Southern Cross Square Meaters Stud was born!

Our stud is 40 kilometres from Mackay in North Queensland and is coming



Square Meaters to Rod and Sharon Tattersall means quality of lifestyle and product.

along well. Our initial purchases of Square Meaters have all been from NSW. We purchased a number of quality females & calves (of Woolaringa bloodlines) as well as a young bull from Stonehill Stud and three quality females and a calf

from Thurloo Park.

In order to maintain a broad gene pool, three registered Murray Grey heifers were purchased from a breeder near Dayboro who happily advised that he had sold Murray Greys into many areas of Queensland



Southern Cross Square Meaters Stud
Bringing quality Square Meaters to North Queensland.
Rod & Sharon Tattersall
Mirani-Eton Road, via Mackay QLD 4740
Ph: 0419 586 339 / 0417 609 415



over the years including Mareeba near Cairns. While we had seen Murray Greys in the Mackay area, this confirmed our thoughts that Square Meaters would do well in our area and they have all settled in perfectly.

One of the biggest organisational challenges we have faced to date has been transporting cattle from tick free areas in NSW to Mackay which is most definitely a tick area.

We visited Heidi Dick of Stonehill Square Meaters Stud the day after the Square Meaters judging at the Brisbane RNA 2007 and chose our initial purchase of cows and a young bull. Heidi has always worked in with us and happily liaised with the vet and DPI regarding the ordering of Tick Fever Vaccine, arranged for the vet to administer the vaccine to the animals six weeks prior to transport and continued to monitor them for us in the interim.

Points of interest for tick fever vaccination in NSW:

Dual application from both you and your vet to the DPI for supply of the tick fever vaccine.

The DPI supplies vaccine to the vet to administer on farm (3 day shelf life).

Adult animals especially, should be monitored for two periods after vaccination. The possible

reaction periods between 7 to 21 days and then between 30 and 60 days. It takes eight weeks for full maturity to develop. (If signs of a reaction are present notify your vet.) A final health check and notification to the DPI and they are ready for transport.

Interestingly, in Queensland, Tick Fever Vaccine can be ordered directly from the DPI and you can administer the vaccine on farm yourself.

Unfortunately, circumstances prevented us from being as pre-planned as we usually like to be with our purchase from Thurlo Park so the Trivalent vaccine was ordered the day before our trip to NSW and arrangements were made to collect the vaccine the day after the cattle arrived on our block.

We ensured that the Thurlo Park cows received an adequate dosage of Eprinex pour-on before entering the cattle truck and then administered the tick vaccine and sprayed for ticks as soon as physically possible after arrival in Mackay. We continued to spray and monitor closely for ticks over the six week period before the vaccine had taken full effect.

Another handy hint that we have picked up is to place a tick collar on calves that are too young to be tick



Square Meaters are quiet, easy going and have an efficient feed conversion.

fever vaccinated. We always have tick collars (suitable for large dogs) on hand for all of our calves. Trivalent should only be used on calves over 3 months of age.

With the inception of our stud going so well, we are openly singing the praises of Square Meaters in both

Central and North Queensland. Their quiet, easy-going natures, efficient feed conversion and easy birthing is certainly making some established cattlemen in the area take notice.

Square Meaters to us means "quality of lifestyle, quality of product". ■




JEMBELLA PARK

Michael & Jennifer Freund

'Jembella'
Storks Road,
Glen Oak, NSW, 2320

Ph: (02) 4988 6368
Fax: (02) 4988 7000
Mobile: 0404 896 368

Square Meaters



Elendee Sunburn LNDX05A
2006 Interbreed (B) Grand Champion Bull Canberra Royal
2006 All Breeds Grand Champion Bull Bathurst Royal
2007 Square Meaters Grand Champion Bull
NSW Beef Spectacular Dubbo

Elendee Sonny LNDA02A
2007 Square Meaters Reserve Champion Bull Canberra Royal
2007 Any Other Breed Grand Champion Bull Bathurst Royal
2007 Square Meaters Reserve Champion Bull
NSW Beef Spectacular Dubbo

Elendee Square Meaters

John Hodgson & Fiona Neumann
Phone: 0417 349 817 Fax: 02 6239 4960
Email: elendee@activ8.net.au



Looking back at the great results

Good rainfalls during late winter and spring produced a very good feed situation and the cattle are looking a picture at the Rainbow stud at Braidwood.

"We look back on gratifying results at our Show outings during 2007, and particularly Zippity Doo Da's Best Exhibit rosette in Sydney which, together with the best young bull and heifer calves since we began eleven years ago, reassures us that our modified line breeding program based on Rick Pisaturo's recommended method is starting to produce the desired result.

"Perhaps more significant from a long term commercial

aspect was Bede Polding College's Reserve Champion Lightweight Steer ribbon (by 0.5 of a point) with one of our steers donated to them said Tony Cairns.

"Our thrill at their success was then followed by the Vesco stud taking out the Grand Champion Bull ribbon at the Brisbane RNA with Rainbow Ace of Hearts, a half brother to Zippy by Rainbow Estate Xocet. For us that was the icing on the cake, and we were equally thrilled at Jo van Elten's success with him.

"At the moment we are in the process of downsizing our property and therefore our stock numbers, so if anybody out there is



The Square Meaters in the foreground demonstrates the breed's benefits.

looking for some really fine Square Meaters we would be only too happy to assist. We are presently considering a reduction sale at some time next Autumn."

"We sincerely hope that all readers get to share in the rainfalls ahead, and continue to prosper with their Square Meaters." ■

It was a year of dramatic changes at Woolaringa. In February a large portion of the Woolaringa cows were sold. The heifers which we decided to keep were joined. These heifers have been held pending ongoing negotiations of the sale of a property between a large corporation and my daughter Fiona and my son in law Mick Battiste.

June saw terrific rain, although as we entered spring with no rain in sight

it looked like summer would find us feeding stock again. We had a late spring and as there was more feed than anticipated, Murray Grey commercial heifers were purchased.

There is no better evidence of the huge difference between the Squaremeaters and the Murray Grey of today. The Square Meaters are thick set with rounded rumps while the Murray Greys are taller, narrower in the rump which can be evidenced in the above photograph.

The photograph is of an A grade Square Meaters with a Murray Grey heifer in the background. Please note the comparison is on the type not the condition. The Murray Grey heifers came from a property in drought and were in low condition when purchased. ■

WOOLARINGA
SQUARE MEATERS
SQUARE MEATERS STUD

Bulls and females for sale

Telephone/Fax
(02) 4821 5852

Ernie Stephenson -
Woolaringa Square Meaters
65 Eleanor Street, Goulburn,
NSW., 2580

Web: www.woolaringa.com.au
Email: info@woolaringa.com.au

Windridge
SQUARE MEATERS
KYNETON

Peter Brown & Lyn Ward

PO BOX 874
Kyneton 3444

TELEPHONE
03 5422 2329



Very pleased with Square Meaters

*By George Sherriff
Owner/Manager, Baringa
Past Co, Braidwood.*

I have been using Square Meaters bulls for the last six years with very pleasing results.

They have been joined to Angus, Hereford and Black Baldy heifers to produce a low birth weight, yet fast growing and high yielding calf.

Not only does the low birth weight mean that I have unassisted calving, I

am also able to calve the heifers down, confidently, in a forward condition.

Calving the heifer in this condition not only means they will return to oestrus quickly, but also enables them to express their full milking potential.

Once the progeny have been weaned they have been finished in feedlots and have proven very suitable for the domestic and also for the supermarket trade. ■

Rilpall Square Meaters


Mulgoa NSW 2745

***Breeders of
quality animals***



**Contact
A & H Green**

02 4773 8232



ACT NOW!

Stud Herd Book closes to registered Murray Grey Females 30/06/08. No Further Extensions. For more information contact Square Meaters Cattle Assoc. of Aust Ltd on **02 9834 4322**

More Meat on Four Feet! The Australian GREY



Rainbow Estate Yucatan



Rainbow Estate Maree Y15



Mandalong Rambo

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- Rainbow Estate Xocet:** Senior & Grand Champion Bull, Group B Interbreed Champion Bull, Royal Canberra Show 2004 (Feature Breed); Senior & Grand Champion Bull, Royal Canberra Show 2005
- Rainbow Estate Xanadu:** Junior Champion Bull, Royal Canberra Show 2004 (Sold: to Kerkette Square Meaters Stud 2005 \$12,500)
- Rainbow Estate Melody Y8:** Supreme Beef Breed Exhibit Braidwood 2005. Numerous Class winners at both Royal Canberra & Sydney Shows. ***
- Rainbow Estate Yucatan:** Reserve Junior Champion Bull, Royal Canberra Show 2004; Junior & Grand Champion Bull, Supreme Square Meaters Exhibit Royal Sydney Show 2004; Champion Pair of Bulls, Royal Canberra 2004 (Xocet & Xanadu); Breeder's Pair, Royal Canberra 2004 1st & 2nd; Sires Progeny Group, Royal Canberra 2004 1st & 2nd
- Rainbow Estate Maree Y15:** Senior & Grand Champion Female, Group B Interbreed Champion Female, Royal Canberra 2005; Reserve Senior Champion Female, Royal Sydney 2005; Two bulls not over 24 months, Royal Sydney 2004 (Xanadu & Yucatan); Sires Progeny Group, Royal Sydney 2004

RAINBOW
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Contact: Tony Cairns Phone/Fax: (02) 4842 8077, Braidwood, NSW, squaremeater@yahoo.com



Square Meaters spread to FNQ

By Jo van Elten

Square Meaters cattle are going from strength to strength in Queensland with an increase in membership achieved during the worst drought in recorded Australian history. Square Meaters are now as far north as Mackay.

More Square Meaters bulls are increasingly going into commercial herds. Some breeders have actually sold all their breeding age bulls and have clients waiting for the next crop. These commercial breeders are targeting the domestic market and are all looking for "more meat sooner" - the forte of the Square Meaters breed!

There has been a marked increase in the bloodlines now available in Queensland with bulls from

the Rainbow, Cluskers, Woolaringa and Muurabay studs to name a few, now making their mark. Square Meaters females from Spring Valley, Thurloo Park, Elendee, Rainbow and other studs are also adding to the northern gene pool.

The continuing promotion of Square Meaters by members of the QLD Breeder's Group resulted in a few "firsts" for the breed. A pen of young Square Meaters steers from Gary and Heather Sewell's Oakdale stud topped the sale at Murgon.

At the Kalbar Prime Cattle Show and Sale, Bevan & Dawn Voight exhibited 2 Square Meaters in the single calf under 250 kg class gaining first place with the steer and third with the heifer and then top price at the sale. A great result for Warrill Creek and



Continuing promotion of Square Meaters by members of the Queensland Breeder's Group resulted in a few "firsts" for the group.

further proof that Square Meaters make great vealers.

The Brisbane RNA conducted their "Beef Cattle Experience" for the first time where Square Meaters were one of the eight breeds showcased for the general public. As well as this great advertising opportunity, Square Meaters were one of the three breeds requested to supply cattle for the RNA Junior Judging Competition and was the only breed used for the finals. The quality, presentation and professionalism of the Square Meaters cattle and

handlers was to be applauded and was commented on by both officials and spectators.

The Square Meaters breed was represented at the "Cattle suitable for Small Farms" day held at Vitulus Lowline Stud at Thornton. Eight breeds were exhibited and in excess of 450 people interested in cattle attended. Enquiries regarding Square Meaters were overwhelming. Cattle were sold and new members were gained as a result.

All in all it has been a very satisfactory ending to another good year for Square Meaters in Queensland. ■



Kilayr Square Meaters

Producing low birth weight, easy calving, early maturing progeny with medium sized cuts suitable for the Australian gourmet beef consumer, restaurants & at home.

Adrian & Ellen Moffat

PO Box 1271, ESPERANCE WA 6450

Phone: (08) 9076 5059 Email: moffs@westnet.com.au



Breeder resisted large frame idea

Margaret Bohm owns the Kelkette Square Meaters Cattle Stud on her 440ha property just north of Albury.

Margaret states, "I have been a Murray Grey breeder for many years - decades in fact. Throughout this time the breeding pattern I tended to follow was to avoid increasing the size of the cattle as became fashionable some time ago.

"I stuck with the old breeding base of animals with shorter legs and smaller body frames.

"Right from the start I

could not really see any benefit in bigger cattle. I thought that the 'bigger is better' attitude was wrong because it seemed to me that you couldn't grow any meat on the legs and all that really happened as the cattle got bigger was that their legs got longer and they became thinner.

"When the turn-around in attitude started to take place and the idea of the Square Meaters breed was floated, I was in an ideal situation to easily come within the parameters of the Square Meaters. The renewed



interest in a medium framed beef breed has created an opportunity for me and I have been able to supply my animals to breeders wanting to get back to basics.

"The extended drought of recent years has also done a lot to advertise the benefits of medium framed animals. Time and time again I have

heard comment from people from all over Australia that the medium animals have performed the best in the drought. Their compact body just seems to be harder and tougher. "With this as the background my intention is to keep promoting the benefits of the breed along its classical lines." ■

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The tenderness is guaranteed

Hair samples, genetic testing, a big freezer and a focus on breeding early maturing well muscled cattle is proving a winning combination for Western Australian breeder Dominic Auguste.

While cattle from his Chevy Farm Square Meaters stud are finding increasing favor in the show ring, it's the returns from his commercial operation that have him convinced about the benefits of value adding and focusing on supplying customers with consistently tender beef.

Faced with poor prices at the saleyards Dominic has turned to Genestar testing to boost returns from his small scale operation near Bullsbrook.

"I thought if I could guarantee the tenderness of

my Square Meaters beef I could service a niche market," Dominic said.

"So I Genestar tested my entire herd, including my commercial calves, and the results were fantastic," he said

In fact 6 of the 7 calves Dominic had Genestar tested returned 7 stars out of 8 for tenderness.

"I thought that these calves were too good to merely send to the yards, so I organised to get them killed, butchered and packaged by a local butcher."

"I realized only a few households could take a whole carcass or even a side so we got the butcher to make up special family packs and began the process of selling beef that was guaranteed tender by



Genestar testing of Chevy Farms' animals has boosted returns by guaranteeing the beef's tenderness.

Genestar testing. I even bought a big freezer to hold the beef at home until the clients could take delivery."

"We initially started selling to just family and friends, but through word of mouth we've already sold 6 bodies



and have orders for more," Dominic said.

Each of the 10 kilogram



www.gleannholme.com.au



Chevy Farms meat packs are designed for two people and contain T-bone, rump, porterhouse, top side, round, blade, BBQ and chuck steaks as well as mince, sausages and a silverside roast.

Dominic said return orders have proven the popularity of the packs, which he sells for \$110 (including GST), although he can customize orders if clients want a different mix of cuts.

“My challenge now is having enough calves to process to meet future demand,” he added.

Dominic said the last heifer he slaughtered illustrated the increased returns he was now receiving for calves which would struggle to make \$400 to \$450 in the yards.

“She was 11 months old and had a carcass weight of 170 kilograms,” Dominic said.

“She boned out at around 70 per cent which meant we had 120 kilograms of meat to sell which we sold in 11 packs at \$110 each - \$1210 (including GST) all up for the one yearling heifer.”

The killing, transport, butchering and packaging cost Dominic \$270 which meant he cleared \$940 or more than \$850 after GST.

“That was more than double what I would have

cleared if I had sold her through the yards after taking out transport and commission,” Dominic said.

“Even when I take out the cost of Genestar testing which is \$60 a head, I am miles in front.”

Dominic realizes the success of his new venture is dependent on him supplying his customers with beef that is consistently tender and tasty.

So far the feedback has been excellent, even from his local butcher, Grant Booker who manages The Meat Arena in Midland.

“I found the body to have good conformation, with a good but not too heavy coverage of fat. The body had good colour with the texture being soft.

“I would rate the body to be a very good standard in comparison to the beef used in our retail establishment,” is how he described one Chevy Farm beast.

Genestar testing will remain pivotal to ensuring the tenderness of his beef, as will his commitment to Square Meaters.

“The Genestar results have merely proven what I’ve suspected for a long time and that is when it comes to tender tasty beef you can’t beat Square Meaters – No Ifs, Just butts! ■

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This breed has a distinct identity

By Tony Cairns

With a relatively new breed like ours it is inevitable that from time to time we all need to ask the question – “so what exactly are Square Meaters.”

As you'd be aware there has been a good deal of discussion within the membership recently about what really are the breed “type and characteristics” of Square Meaters cattle.

Some of that discussion has been stimulated by articles I have written within the Association's newsletter, although towards the end of 2007 the board received a letter from a prominent longstanding member which made us all, individually and collectively, ponder the very question of what are Square Meaters. This member drew our attention to Regulation 2.1 of the Association's Memorandum of Association, whereby the Board is vested with the power ... “To encourage the breeding, development and promotion of cattle that comply with the breed type and characteristics prescribed by the Company from time to time and to promote their popularity and use.”

Since the breed was established almost twelve years ago, the board agreed with me that it was time to

construct an official definition of what Square Meaters are, based on many sources such as the Association's own promotional material which has been circulated to potential, new and existing members since the breed's inception.

Our definition is included at the end of this article. The purpose of this definition is designed to bring to an end any prevailing debate and confusion about what the founder of the breed Rick Pisaturo envisaged 12 years ago when he developed our fantastic breed at Mandalong Park. Those cattle exhibited the characteristics listed in the document. Rick is no longer involved with Square Meaters, and given that the majority of current breeders very likely did not have the opportunity to see those cattle which he presented to us at that time we thought it was timely to reiterate exactly what our breed is all about.

Not long after the breed began to expand in those early years, Rick himself often expressed his concern that the natural tendency would be for the cattle to become smaller as the generations evolved, and that it may be necessary to go back to the original dominant sires Round Hill



These two bulls come from the same paddock with the same amount of feed. The bull on the left is 4 weeks younger than the bull on the right and weighs 30 kilos heavier.

Hansom and Ulster Park Laddie to restore adequate, but not excessive, size to the breed. With this in mind, and in an attempt to avoid it, I consulted with Rick before urging the Board, and in turn the membership, to adopt an extension of the frame score grid to include frame 5 females as Class A (formerly Class B and unable to be shown), and somewhat radically, to extend the bull grid to introduce a frame 5.

It is important to understand and accept the fact that these frame extensions were not

undertaken to increase the overall size of the cattle within the breed, but rather to allow breeders to use it as a tool to prevent the breed from becoming smaller and commercially non-viable.

One unfortunate and unavoidable consequence of this decision has been the emergence of some cattle which are taller, larger framed and later maturing than the original Mandalong type. This was not the original purpose Rick envisaged for the breed.

To ensure the future of our great breed, we as Square Meaters breeders



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must continue to focus on producing a moderate framed, early maturing and heavily muscled animal which offers a real and valid genetic alternative to the general cattle population.

The success of our breed will ultimately depend on how well we continue to adhere to the 'point of difference' that we offer.

It is mine, and the board's opinion, that the original true-to-type animals as bred by Mandalong and described in the breeds 'type and characteristics' document will best serve our future.

As a corollary of this outcome is the fundamental fact that Square Meaters is a measured breed upon which the eventual height/frame is founded, together with its type and characteristics, specifically an early maturing growth pattern. It is therefore equally fundamental that the measurements made at the time of registration of stud animals be made as accurately as possible, and validly and responsibly reported to the Stud Book. The latter is a matter of individual reliability and integrity. The former a function of how efficiently and carefully the measurement is made.

It is essential that the measurement at the shoulder be made when the

animal is standing quietly, still and squarely, on a level surface with the head and neck in the normal position, neither up nor down. The measurement is only valid if an accurate, vertically and horizontally levelled implement (such as the measuring sticks available through the SMCAA office) is used. Techniques such as marks on crushes or fence posts, tape measures or flexible measuring devices used on an uneven surface cannot be relied on to give an accurate result.

It goes without saying that if the measure reported at the time of registration is inaccurate or invalid, then eventually we shall all end up having wasted our time and will end up breeding cattle that are no longer as early maturing as was initially intended.

Having said that, it is really most critical at the upper and lower ends of the frame scale for the reasons cited above.

The breed Characteristics: Square Meaters are derived from the "original" grey cattle of medium, compact frame and increased fleshing similar to those of the pre-1975 era. In that respect they should demonstrate the following type and characteristics:

- Early maturing development pattern
- Medium compact frame

no less than Frame Score one, and no greater than Frame Score five as set down in the Association's Articles (preferable in the range three to four)

- Low birth weight calves, typically 25-30kgs
- Increased, smooth muscling of reasonable degree in both male and female cattle
- Typically, relatively short leg to overall height ratio
- Dark pigmentation of nose, eyes, ears, teats etc.
- Colour consistent with those prescribed by the Company, viz. Silver, silver/grey, grey and dark grey.

Those characteristics of both structure and conformation generally accepted as desirable in superior animals of any cattle breed, e.g. length of neck and body, smooth shoulder; straight, even topline; well-set tail head;

good depth and volume of chest and body; sound reproductive apparatus in males, and well structured udder and teats in females; sound legs and feet, neither post-legged nor sickle hocked, etc.

In accordance with Regulation 2.1 of the Memorandum of Association of the Square Meaters Cattle Association of Australia Limited, the Board has therefore resolved that breeders set the above criteria as their objective in breeding Square Meaters cattle in order to establish relative uniformity of type within the breed so as to maintain the Breed's distinct identity, and to achieve the ultimate objective of establishing Square Meaters as the pre-eminent domestic beef carcass breed, and to promote their popularity and use. ■

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Sydney Royal 2007

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Square Meaters Regulations

(A brief outline of Square Meaters Regulations)

General:

Square Meaters must be clean polled and of a single colour. Colour patches are permitted around the udder/testes, but not elsewhere on the animal. The official colouring range is from Silver to Dark. Black is to be included on the herd book as B Grade.

Automatically this excludes black bulls from being registered and black females from being exhibited. Black steers are ineligible to be shown. The following table is an indication of the colouring:

Silver	Silver/Grey	Grey	Dark Grey

Females:

There are two classes for Square Meaters females, Class A & Class B. Females that are between 100 and 110cm at 12 months of age can be registered as Class A. Outside this height criteria they may be registered at Class B. While it is technically acceptable to register females under 100cm, the SMCA strongly discourages this practice in order to preserve size standards.

Bulls:

There is only one class for Square Meaters Bulls, Class A. At 12 months of age bulls must be between 103 and 113cm. Bulls must be Mannosidosis tested and certified to be clear of this genetic defect. For both males and females, the measurement of the animal must be taken at 12 months (plus/minus two weeks). The point of measurement is the highest point on the shoulder. A witness to the measurement is required to sign the declaration form.

For Show Purposes only:

Only Class A animals may be exhibited at Agricultural Shows. These

restrictions do not apply to carcass classes.

Semen:

In order to sell semen, the donor bull must be approved by the board of directors and the prescribed fee paid. With regard to licenced semen the bull must pass all the relevant health protocols and be collected in an approved AB centre. Unlicensed semen (for example an on farm collection) may be used in Australia subject to certain conditions. Details can be obtained from the Office. In the case of shares in a bull being sold, the shares give the shareholder rights to the semen. In this instance, on-farm collections are permitted. In every case the Bull must be DNA tested.

Embryo Transfer:

Donor females for Embryo transfer must be DNA typed and the prescribed fee paid. Calves born as a result of embryo transfer and/or artificial insemination, must have the details recorded against the calf's registered name, ie. (ET) or (AI).

Multiple Birth:

Calves born in multiple births must be indicated in the calves registered name, ie. (T) for twin. Female calves from male/female twins should be tested to confirm that they are not freemartins.

Commercial Appendix:

Murray Grey females may be registered on a commercial appendix, for use with registered Square Meaters bulls, to breed-up to pure Square Meaters by breeding through four generations.

Stud Murray Grey Females:

The herd book is currently open to registered Murray Grey females until 30/06/08 within Australia. In order to assist Internatioonal Breeders, the herd book will remain open to overseas females after the June 2008 deadline.

SQUARE MEATERS REGISTRATION & FEES SCHEDULE

All fees are based on the interim registration being carried out.

A: BULLS

- (1) Birth - 3 months Interim registration..\$ 20
- (2) 12 mths & up to 15mths Calf MUST be measured & registered according to frame score system.....\$ 80
- (3) 15-18 months.....\$105
- (4) 18 months & up to 21 months Calf MUST be measured and registered according to frame score system if registration has not been carried out previously. Registration 18-21 months\$130
- (5) Bulls aged over 21 months can only be fully registered provided they have been placed on the interim register and measured at or prior to 18 months.....\$150

B: HEIFERS:

- (1) Birth - 3 months Interim registration..\$ 20
- (2) 12 mths up to 15 mths. & Calf MUST be measured and registered according to frame score system. Class "A" & "B"\$ 30
- (3) 15-18 months.....\$ 55
- (4) 18 months & up to 21 months. Calf MUST be measured and registered according to frame score system. Class "A" & "B" if registration has not been carried out previously.....\$ 80
- (5) Over 21 months All heifers will be registered as Class "B"\$105
- (6) Registered Murray Grey females registered as "B" Grade Square Meaters.....\$ 50

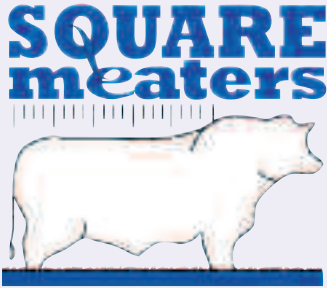
- 1. Membership Entry Fee.....\$100
- 2. Annual Membership Fee.....\$150
- 3. Transfer Fee (bulls and females).....\$ 80
- 4. Donor female registration.....\$ 50
Donor females and bull used on the donor cow by natural service or artificial insemination must be DNA tested. DNA test must be received by this office prior to ET work
- 5. Transfer of recipients.....\$ 50
- 6. Licenced semen must be registered.....\$150
And the bull must be approved by the Board of Directors. The bull must be DNA tested prior to any semen being sold.
- 7. Unlicenced semen\$150
The bull must be DNA tested prior to semen being sold.
- 8. Shares in bull per share.....\$ 50
DNA test must be forwarded to office prior to selling shares
- 9. Commercial appendix registration.....\$ 20
Foundation & calves
- 10. Commercial Appendix transfer.....\$ 10

Registration fees have not increased if the registration process has been completed prior to the animal becoming 15 months of age i.e. measure at 12 months and 3 months to forward paperwork to office.

This information has been extracted from the rules and regulations of the Square Meaters Cattle Association of Australia Ltd, as detailed in the Articles of Association and Memorandum, as amended. The above information is provided as a guide only, and not the absolute definition of any aspect of the breed. Persons interested in the finite regulations of the breed may obtain copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association from the SMCA office by telephoning (02) 9834 4322 or writing to PO Box 371, St Marys, NSW 1790.



Square Meaters Membership



Square Meaters Cattle
Association of Australia
Ltd A.B.N 87 797 856

PO Box 371
St Marys NSW 1790
Tel: 02 9834 4322
Fax: 02 9834 4311

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

APPLICANT'S NAME

REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME
(IF IT IS A COMPANY, REGISTERED BUSINESS OR PARTERSHIP)

PROPERTY ADDRESS

..... POST CODE.....

POSTAL ADDRESS

..... POST CODE

TELEPHONE FAX.....

EMAIL

PREFIX: My choices for a registered stud name (prefix), in order of preference, are:
(Can be no longer than 14 characters including spaces.)

- 1
- 2
- 3

HERD TATTOO: containing no more than 3 characters with standard numbers and / or letters only. Symbols are unacceptable.

- 1
- 2
- 3

FEES:	Entry fees (once only)	\$100
	Annual subscription	\$150
	Total	\$250

I / we wish to become a member of the Association and agree to be bound by the Provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Rules made pursuant thereto. The name and signature of the person authorised to vote on behalf of this membership.

Name of Nominee Signed

Dated.....

Please enclose a cheque for \$250.



Square Meaters Cattle Ass

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Interest growing for the breed

By Peter Horne

New and prospective Square Meaters breeders as well as those a bit more familiar with the game can find an enormous amount of support in joining a Breeders group.

The Square Meaters Cattle Association of Australia has a number of such groups in operation across the country. Square Meaters breeders are only too willing to assist you in your passage to developing your stud wherever it may be. Helping each other to grow is the best way to help yourself so, please help yourself.

In Queensland the formation of a Square

Meaters Breed Promotion Group grew out of a need to promote awareness of Square Meaters cattle. It has also been seen as a necessary means to assist both old and new members in every aspect of their venture.

The Queensland group recognises that breeders come from many different backgrounds. Some are experienced in the cattle industry while some who were looking for a life style change were drawn to the versatile nature of the Square Meaters. Others are fulfilling a childhood ambition to breed an easy handling quality breed of cattle. Whatever the reason, all our breeders recognise the

need to learn and grow with their cattle and what better way than to be encouraged by like-minded people

The inaugural 'meeting' of the Queensland group was in December 2005. The Queensland Breeders Group plans were for three or four events a year enabling breeders and potential new members the opportunity to visit Square Meaters studs in the region. Breeders, no matter how experienced, are encouraged to become a part of this opportunity to walk, talk and learn. Some of the Queensland Breeders Group members are not necessarily active in the show circuit but there are plenty of opportunities to hone one's breeding skills through the groups' interaction.

The growing interest in Square Meaters has encouraged breeders in

Queensland. In the group's first year the breed was able to more than double the number of cattle shown at the 2006 Brisbane Exhibition with 26 head shown by 12 breeders. The increased numbers have been a boost for the breed and allowed for new categories and prizes for the 2007 Exhibition due to the increased numbers.

Other ventures by the group include a combined show of force at a range of regional shows in order to promote the Square Meaters breed.

All members and interested fellow travellers are most welcome to participate at whatever level they are comfortable with. Please help yourself and give Jo Van Elten a call on Ph (07) 54268137 or ring Cheryl Mott at the national office for links to other groups across Australia. ■

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It might appear that we enjoy an endless abundance of cheap cattle feed in the U.S.A, however, the economic realities are far different. Alfalfa hay, a staple of beef and dairy cattle, has soared from an average of \$75US per ton in 2005 to \$150US in May of 2007 as a result of drought and increased production costs, most notably, fuel.

There is little hope that prices will return to 2005 levels as acres are converted from hay and pasture to corn destined for biofuels and bioplastics. Ethanol production alone reached almost 19 million gallons per day in 2007. The fertile minds at Cargill and other

agribusiness giants are developing everything from disposable cups to upholstery foam from corn. Cargill management recently stated their goal is to produce 10 billion tons annually of these green products. While there are other non-forage feeds used to fatten cattle, the principal feed continues to be corn. This unprecedented competition for corn has left the cattle industry in a state of uncertainty as prices rise and fall in cycles never before seen. American cattlemen who intend to stay in business will need to give more than lip service to feed efficiency, and to the value of the moderate-sized cow who is the soul of

efficient beef production. Rancher Ken Stephens of Nebraska had it right when he recently wrote:

“It appears to me that change happens in the [U.S.] cattle business in stages. First people start to talk about it. Second, they start claiming that they have made the change though they haven’t. The third stage is when you start to see the change really happen. In the case of the industry moving towards more moderate framed, efficient cattle, I believe we have entered the second stage...I keep reading ads from seed stock producers about their moderate framed, efficient cows. I have been to some of these places and their concept of moderate frame and efficiency is certainly different from mine. To me it’s a pretty big stretch to call a 1,500 pound cow a moderate female. When I ask some of these breeders about their efficiency, I hear them proudly proclaim that their cows must be efficient because they are strictly forage fed....That doesn’t make them efficient. It just means that the ranch produces good hay.”

The move towards moderate-sized, efficient cattle is also in harmony with stated U.S. consumer preference for lean, tender, smaller cuts of beef—the kind of beef produced by the Square Meaters breed.

Incredibly, the beef quality standards used nationally by the United States Department of Agriculture have never mentioned tenderness, the most important eating quality to the U.S. consumer, according to industry survey! Beef may achieve the top grade of Prime and still not be tender. Until very recently, tenderness and marbling went hand in hand in the minds of most U.S. cattlemen. Selection efforts were directed to production of highly marbled meat on the assumption that this meat would also be the most tender. That has now been proven untrue by research in the U.S. and Australia. Without active selection for tenderness, U.S. cattlemen have failed to consistently produce a tender product.

So how can the Square Meaters help in this regard? Research has identified genetics and temperament as factors influencing tenderness. While genetic testing of Square Meaters is not yet commonplace, there exist several years of data from testing of Murray Greys, the breed’s close relative. The Murray consistently tops the charts in the number of alleles of the “tenderness” genes. As an interesting aside, the only mature Square Meaters bull in the U.S. achieved a perfect score for tenderness



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when tested. These scientific results support anecdotal evidence from Australian butchers and consumers. Add to this genetic advantage, the legendary quiet temperament of the Square Meaters.

As science validates the health benefits of grass-fed beef, more U.S. consumers also want that lean, tender, smaller cut to be produced on grass alone. Grass-fed beef experts feel that only a percentage of the U.S. cattle population is suitable for finishing on grass. Depending on which of them you ask, from 10% to 60% is deemed suitable, with the majority of cattle taking too long to mature. Square Meaters genetics to the rescue! Early maturity and the ability to finish on grass are breed hallmarks. Certainly there exist moderate, early maturing cattle somewhere in our big country. If one has the

means and time to search out the "holy grail" of moderate cows from among the numerous cows that aren't, they can find them. I think it a quicker and more cost effective course to turn to a breed like the Square Meaters, proven to consistently produce the desired type. The moderate size, increased muscling, and improved temperament resulting from Square Meaters crosses on both bos taurus and bos indicus cattle have been demonstrated time and again in Australia. They can, and will, do the same for us in the U.S.

Heat tolerance is of major concern in the U.S., where the majority of beef calves are born and/or finished in hot and humid conditions. Here again, the Square Meaters have excelled in adapting to heat and humidity, another characteristic they inherited from the Murray Grey.

Australian research using Murrays, Angus, and Hereford found the Murray outperformed both other breeds in prolonged heat and humidity. Researchers hypothesize this is in part due to color, but is also possibly related to a unique manner in which the Murray metabolizes fats!

To date, the move to moderate size has run into the brick wall of the U.S. cattle feeding industry that requires large cattle to consume the most feed, gain the most pounds, and make the most money for the cattle feeder. As one cattle feeder remarked, they are really feed merchants, not cattlemen. In 2006, it is estimated only 100,000 of the 33 million cattle commercially produced and slaughtered were non-feedlot (grass-fed) beef. While this number will undoubtedly increase in 2007, the cattle feeders and

their allies, the meat packers, still pipe the tune to which the commercial cattleman dances. The fact that their end product is not what the U.S. consumer wants is proven by statistics: Domestic consumption of beef in the U.S. decreased by 20% from 1974 to 2000, then increased less than .5 pound per capita by 2007, and is forecasted to fall below 2000 levels in 2008.

How long before we move from the Phase Two to the Phase Three described by Ken Stephens? And, how long before the U.S. beef industry puts the U.S. consumer, its most consistent and reliable customer, first? It can't be predicted with any certainty. What is certain is the Square Meaters breed can satisfy both the demands of U.S. consumers for quality and the demands of U.S. cattlemen for profitability. ■

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Embryos available



Chevy produces quality cattle

Chevy Farm Square Meaters Stud is situated at Bullsbrook near the R.A.A.F. Base, north east of Perth. Our main aim is to consistently produce cattle that suit the domestic trade along with quality bulls for stud and commercial breeders. We feel that for us to have a viable business we need to get our bulls into both the commercial bull market to be used in commercial herds over heifers of any breed; and in Square Meaters stud herds. As well we are focused on producing females of diverse genetics from across Australia to ensure the breed progresses.

Recently, samples of hair were collected from the entire herd and forwarded

to Genestar for testing for marbling, tenderness and feed efficiency. The results were great. Genestar's scoring is from 0 to 8 stars. Not surprisingly most of the results were low in score for marbling with 2 scored no stars and the highest being 4 stars. This did not concern us much as most of our calves are sold as vealers and normally have enough fat cover on them. What was interesting were the ratings for tenderness and feed efficiency. Most of our cows scored 7 to 8 stars for tenderness. The lowest scoring still recorded a very creditable 5 stars.

Being Square Meaters, they should be efficient and again the results proved that they were with most cows

registering 5 to 6 stars. One registered 3 star but she still rears thumping calves. The highest score was a heifer with 7 stars for efficiency. This means about 1.8kg difference of feed intake per day to gain the same weight from an animal with score 0 to an animal at 8 stars. As the cattle do it tough here in the summer, we are culling out the lower performing or scoring cattle.

Through 2007, Chevy Farm purchased one of the breeds truly elite females – Woolaringa Leane S18 or “the old cow” as she is affectionately called by Ernie Stephenson. Leane S18 arrived in Western Australia in March along with a calf at foot, Woolaringa Leane C1. Leane is a great addition to the herd in all ways and could not have a better heifer calf at foot.

In August, we took Leane to the Beverley Agricultural show. It was an all breeds show with a good turn out of 40 to 50 head of British and European cattle. It was a good day and good interest was shown by the public. Leane was sashed the reserve Senior Interbreed champion behind a Limousin, but went on to be sashed the 2007 Senior and Grand Champion Female at Perth Royal Show. We were very impressed by her performance and I am now eagerly awaiting her next calf. Leane was selected by

the judge for her overall soundness, femininity, width and capacity.

With the loss of our Stud Sire Mandalong Ronald, SM R24A in 2007, Woolaringa Ben B56 was purchased as a replacement bull. Ben is sired by Woolaringa Extra and out of Woolaringa Leane Y9. Ben has fulfilled our expectations of him as a bull and I am waiting to see his calves on the ground next year. He is well muscled with good length, and balance. He is smooth and soft, and structurally well put together. Ben has undergone Genestar testing with excellent results - 7 for tenderness and 6 for feed efficiency.

Ben arrived on the 1st September 2007 and with only a few shows left for the year we decided to take him along as he was fairly well broken in to lead. Out of the four shows he went to, he returned home with seven broad ribbons including one Supreme Champion Beef Exhibit sash.

I would like to sincerely thank Ernie Stephenson of Woolaringa for giving me the opportunity to purchase these three magnificent animals. I believe they will have a big impact on our herd and hopefully their progeny will go on to help others in the breed to produce that perfect Square Meaters that we are all striving for. ■



Committed to breeding quality Square Meaters cattle

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www.gleannholme.com.au

CHEVY FARM

SQUARE MEATERS STUD



Woolaringa Leane S18 & Calf C1 at 8 months

Perth Royal Show 2007

Senior Champion Female

Grand Champion Female

Sydney Royal Show 2006

Senior Champion Female

Grand Champion Female

Supreme Square Meaters Exhibit

Canberra Royal Show 2005

Reserve Senior Champion Female

Canberra Royal 2004

Reserve Senior Champion Female

to her daughter Leane V23 who won Supreme

S/M Exhibit at the Feature Show 2004

Canberra Royal Show 2002

Senior Champion Female

Grand Champion Female

Supreme Champion Square Meaters Exhibit

Supreme Champion Interbreed Female

(B Division)

Canberra Royal Show 2001

Reserve Senior Champion Female

Woolaringa Ben B56

Harvey Agricultural Show

Champion Square Meaters Bull

Waroonna Agricultural Show

Champion Square Meaters Bull

Gidgeganup Agricultural Show

Junior Champion Bull

Champion Beef Breed Bull

Supreme Champion Beef Exhibit

Swan View Show

Champion Bull

Champion Interbreed Bull

**For any information on
Square Meaters Cattle in
Western Australia contact ...
Dominic Auguste at Chevy Farm
Ph: (08) 9571 8153
Mb: 0415 871 482
or email chevyd2@hotmail.com**

Brinsley Stud is growing strong

Brinsley Square Meaters Stud has gone from strength to strength over nearly eight years since inception in 2000. Whilst retaining their original holding of 80 acres at "Brinsley Hill" Freemans Reach, it is Deb and Tony Cotter's more recent acquisition of the historic "Lilburndale" (c 1830) at Sackville that has allowed for their continuing growth.

This 380 acre valley on the banks of the Hawkesbury River will be the focus of the main breeding operation running the majority of the 100 head herd.

"The cattle are thriving on a combination of different

grazing conditions and mixed pasture grasses. These range from alluvial river flats sown to oats and ryegrass to bull couch in the wetlands and microlena on the steeper country" says Deb.

2007 saw the beginning of an embryo transfer program using an elite female from the herd as a donor. This will be expanded upon each year to include females from all of our top cow families therefore ensuring the production of superior bull calves to meet the increasing demand for top quality sires.

The current drop of calves by A.I. sires such as Wongonbra Pablo, Mandalong Trusty and



Cattle at Brinsley Stud in the Hawkesbury district of NSW are thriving on mixed pasture grasses.

Mandalong Upshot to name a few has caused a lot of excitement. Also the young sire Brinsley Anzac has his first drop on the ground this season, all showing that amazing consistency that his family is known for. The calves of this half brother to Brinsley Xtreme have all the necessary carcass traits required by the marketplace.

"Brinsley will continue to show cattle occasionally as

there will always be those who buy their sires based on show ring results but our main focus will remain on our cattle's commercial performance. We are now selling stud bulls to a number of commercial clients." Deb said.

By placing a high emphasis on fertility and performance, Deb and Tony are aiming to produce a sustainable economic product. Beef - made to measure. ■

BRINSLEY

SQUARE MEATERS

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Windsor, NSW





Steady progress wins in the west

It has been another year of steady progress for the Malolo Square Meaters Stud which is situated in the southwest of Western Australia. Higher than average rainfall over the 2007 winter meant the grass grew well and the cattle at Perth Royal Show mirrored that..

Malolo had entered into an arrangement with both Denmark Agricultural College and Murdoch University of Perth for their students to feed, train and show some Square Meaters steers in the led and prime steer sections of the Perth Royal Show. This is a useful exercise to give Agricultural students experience in handling cattle as well as putting Square Meaters steers out there to compete with other beef breeds and crossbreds.

There were a total of 175 steers in the lightweight (180 –230kg) and medium weight (230-280kg) classes at The Perth Royal. All 4 of the Malolo steers fitted into this last class. The best of the entires was placed 8th on the hoof and 12th on the hook in his huge class, but was even more popular with the strong buying contingent, making a whooping \$1250.

When you look at the statistics, provided by

Murdoch University, for this steer it is not hard to see why he was so keenly sought for the premium butcher trade.

From the table you can see Basil's meat colour, fat colour, pH, rib fat depth marbling and ossification were either perfect or near perfect. His massive dressing percentage was close to perfect and incurred just a half a point penalty. His rump fat depth and eye muscle could have been better but look at that lean meat yield – 61.1 per cent – right on the money!.

Just as impressive were Basil's performance on feed prior to the Perth Royal (see table 2). He was run in a pen of 14 other steers with access to a self feeder after a 6 weeks introductory period. He put on an average of 1.1 kilograms a day from his induction on May 5 through to his appearance at the show on October 1, 2007. While the average for the 14 steers on feed was 1.2 kilograms a day, it's worth noting that Basil and his teammate had an extra 5 mm on fat coverage and a much higher dressing percentage – 60.8 per cent compared to 58.1 per cent. Both of those measurements meant that Basil and his mate were better suited and more



market-ready for their final destinations – the plate.

Weights
 5/05/2007 279
 19/06/07 287
 put on Adlib Feed Milme Fees – Easy Beef
 11/07/07 330
 14/08/2007 384
 11/09/2007 410
 18/09/2007 415
 25/09/2007 415
 01/10/2007 381^{show weight}
 p8 8, eye muscle 63

It's fair to say that Basil and his team-mate were not the biggest steers in their class and so were somewhat

overlooked by the judge. But when it came to the carcass competition they more than proved that Square Meaters really measure up.

Showing cattle can be a time-consuming and expensive business but the feedback from carcass competitions can be invaluable. In this case I'm confident that my Square Meaters are helping me meet what should be our ultimate goal – putting consistently better beef on Australian dinner plates! ■

Characteristic	Measure	Points
Carcase weight Penalty (max 20)	331.5	.5
Rump P8 Fat Depth (15)	13	9
Eye Muscle Area (25)	81.5	20.5
Meat Colour (10)	1C	10
Market Suitability (5)		3
Fat Colour (5)	1	5
Muscle pH (15)	5.47	15
Rib Fat Depth (10)	8	10
Ossification (10)	120	9
Marbling (5)	1	5
Total Points (100)		87

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It's all about how they are handled

One of the most valuable and marketable traits of Square Meaters is their docility. Quiet cattle are easier to move from paddock to paddock and a pleasure to work in the yards. Quiet cattle also produce the more tender beef.

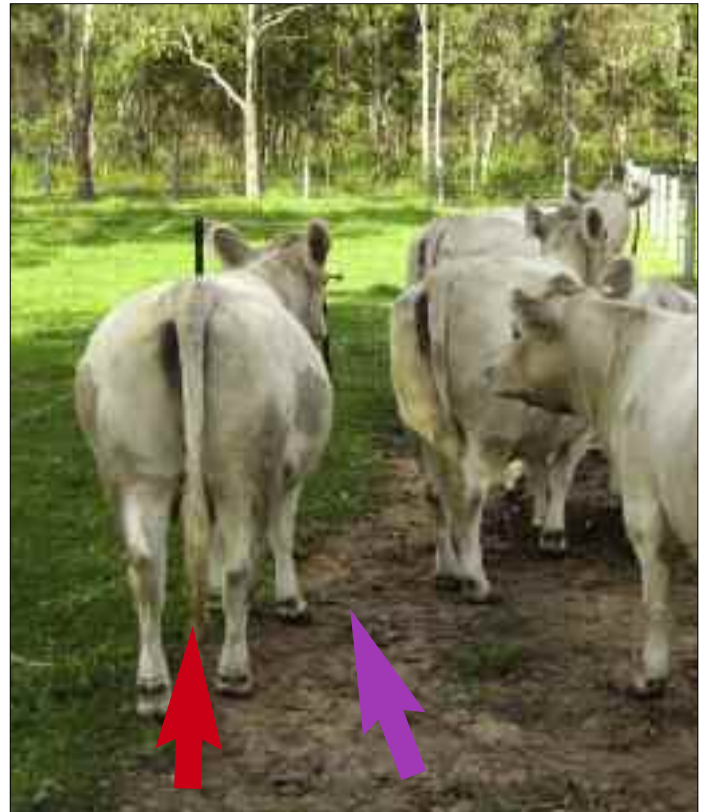
Regardless of an animal's inherent docility, their behaviour is also a reflection of how they are handled. Breeders who take a low stress approach to handling their cattle, and who are consistent in what they demand them to do, inevitably end up with animals and whole herds which are quiet.

You can never start an

animal's education young enough so get your calves into the yards as often as possible and just sit and talk to them. Make sure they enter and exit the yards the same way each time. Be consistent in how you work them through the yards and through the race.

When you wean them put their mothers in an adjoining yard or paddock so they can see and even lick each other. Yard wean them for at least a week with plenty of fresh water, shelter and hay and walk amongst them on a daily basis so they can get used to you.

Make sure you are fully prepared and have all your drenches and needles ready



The optimum position for the handler to approach cattle is indicated with the purple arrow. The red arrow is the animal's 'blind spot' a direction from which you should never approach.

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when it comes to vaccination time. Try to make any time they spend in the crush as stress-free as possible.

Never approach an animal from head on or directly from behind. They will become nervous if you challenge them head on and if you disappear behind them into their blind spot. The above diagram shows the optimal position for any handler.

Handling hints:

*Any time an animal is in the crush, either for brushing, washing, vaccinating or measuring give it a rub and keep a firm hand on it. Talk to it quietly and avoid sudden movements or loud noises. Talking to an animal allows it to get used to your voice.

*Walk and move around

animals quietly and tell children not to run or scream.

*When breaking in use a radio on loud music and wear bright clothes to get them used to show time.

*Be careful of patting bulls especially on the head. If they don't like it, they can get into the habit of bunting.

*When touching animals with poly pipe, touching them on the leg gets them used to not kicking.

*When going to shows get insurance cover of at least a ten million. Show Societies takes no responsibility if your animal hurts someone. If you want tractable cattle talk to them and praise them. Patience wins out over losing our cool. All you get is a red face, high blood pressure, sore back and an animal standing like a



“blob” or half way down the paddock “grinning”

Breaking in: The key to breaking in an animal to lead is to start as young as you can.

*Put a calf halter on them, gently rub them all over and even breathe down their nose.

*Put them out into a small yard, and keep a hand on them as you walk with them wherever they want to go. After 10 minutes let them go back to their mothers.

*By the time you have to get serious about breaking them in they will be less nervous and skittish around you. Remember an animal does not forget if it has been handled kindly or badly.

There are several different ways to halter break cattle. People will tell you the method that works for them.

*One way is to slip a halter on the animal and tie it up as soon as you can.

Do not expect miracles; your calf will be nervous and disrespectful of the halter at first. It will probably pull, yank, and jump around trying to get free. Keep a close watch on the animal when it is first tied up. If the animal should slip and fall while fighting to get free, it could choke itself.

Use either a Hackermore Halter, or one with a ring to

allow the section under the jaw to slacken as soon as it stops pulling back. They learn quite quickly not to pull with this method as the jaw becomes very sore.

*Tie the rope fairly short, 12-18 inches between the halter and fence. This is so the animal cannot get its legs tangled up in the rope. It is very important to tie the animal with a quick-release knot so that it can be untied quickly if necessary. Tie at eye level initially so as to not create undue pressure on the spine and hind legs. Later when Halter Broken, tie head up high to teach it to stand with its head up and feet under it properly.

*Keep a knife close by in the yards so that the rope can be cut if you cannot untie it quickly. Brushing your calf while it is tied will usually help to calm it down. Leave it tied up for a couple of hours the first day. Tie your calf up each day for about an hour until it stops fighting the halter and you. Stay with the animal as much as possible, talking to it a lot. Voice reward is very important.

*Another method that is sometimes used is leaving a rope halter on the calf and letting it drag the lead shank. When the calf steps on the lead it will give a tug, bringing the calf to a

halt. If this is done, take care that there is nothing the rope can get caught on. Having a halter on your calf all the time makes catching and working with your animal easier. Hackermore halters can be bought at saddlery supply stores. This type of halter does not have a lead on it, but has a ring under the chin piece so a snap-on lead can be attached.

*This type of halter should not be left on cattle that are housed around trees. The halter could get caught in the branches.

*Wash the animal as soon as it is controllable. Rinsing with water seems to take out the rest of the fight, and prevent some later kicking problems.

*Introduce the nose clip during the early stages of tying up. Don't wait until the week before the show,

even if the animal eventually leads easily without it. They frequently react unfavourably for several days.

Leading: When it comes to teaching an animal to lead walk by it's shoulder. If you can have someone walk behind the animal or follow another beast. Leading the animal to food or water always helps.

*If you walk in front of the animal it will stop and if you walk too far behind behind it will take off.

*Always hold your rope short as that gives you more control. The longer the rope the less control you will have.

*Never wrap the halter around hand or fingers when leading.

*Get them used to a gentle tug on the chin chain and the commands “WHOA” to stop and “CLICK” to go ■

Square Meaters



Elendee Sunburn LNDX05A

2006 Interbreed (B) Grand Champion Bull Canberra Royal
2006 All Breeds Grand Champion Bull Bathurst Royal
2007 Square Meaters Grand Champion Bull
NSW Beef Spectacular Dubbo

Elendee Sonny LND A02A

2007 Square Meaters Reserve Champion Bull Canberra Royal
2007 Any Other Breed Grand Champion Bull Bathurst Royal
2007 Square Meaters Reserve Champion Bull
NSW Beef Spectacular Dubbo

Elendee Square Meaters

John Hodgson & Fiona Neumann

Phone: 0417 349 817 Fax: 02 6239 4960

Email: elendee@activ8.net.au



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SQUARE MEATERS

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Vesco heading the right way

The 2007 year was one of ups and downs for Jo van Elten's Vesco Stud.

The drought almost overwhelmed the feed and finances available and resulted in the herd numbers being drastically reduced. However, we still managed to promote Square Meaters with Vesco bred or owned cattle participating in a number of regional Agricultural shows and also Brisbane RNA where our show year culminated with exhibiting Grand Champion Bull "Rainbow Ace of Hearts" and also the Junior Champion Heifer "Vesco Belle of the Ball".

Vesco Stud purchased "Ace" as a weaner early in

2006 from Tony & Ellen Cairns at Braidwood NSW. "Ace" has served a season at Vesco and we have retained a semen share in him. Following his RNA success this outstanding bull was purchased by Paul & Aileen Hain for their Hain Rural Stud at Mt Mee, where he will join last year's RNA Champion Bull Hain Rural Beau for stud duties.

Our Junior Champion Heifer, "Vesco Belle of the Ball" followed in other famous footsteps being the sixth calf of our outstanding cow "Domvale Treasure" to win an RNA Championship. As far as I am aware "Treasure's" record is unequalled in the Square Meaters Breed.



Vesco Stud is now collecting licensed semen suitable for export from their bull Liath Atholl Galashiels.

Unfortunately, "Treasure's" eagerly awaited 8th calf, a heifer by "Ace of Hearts" was mispresented and was dead on delivery. A huge disappointment to us.

We have high hopes for "Treasure's" seventh calf "Vesco Bobby Dazzler" whose show career is yet to begin. "Bobby" was one of the three animals exhibited at the "Cattle Suitable for Small Farms" expo day and his placid nature as well as his good looks earned him lots of admirers.

Vesco also participated in the Valley's Field Day at Walloon. The field day's motto is "From back yard to back paddock" and the Square Meaters appealed to many on the day.

Ashleigh Horne (Chipililo Stud) campaigned a Square

Meaters steer "Vesco Beau Brummel" as part of her agricultural studies course at Pittsworth High school. During the show season they gained placings in six open led steer classes and created a huge amount of interest in the breed.

To cap off the year the grand old sire, "Liath Atholl Galashiels" has returned to us. At 10 years of age he weighs in excess of 800kg and is in such fine form that we are now in the process of collecting licensed semen suitable for export from him. Galashiels is a Royal Show winner himself and has numerous RNA winning progeny to his credit. His offspring are also breeding on and he is a bull with nothing left to prove. ■

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Junior Champion Female

Liath Atholl Galashiels
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Maintaining the facts & figures

By John Hodgson

How is your new Square Meaters venture tracking? Do you know? Are you likely to meet the objectives you set yourself when you started?

Unless you have a record from that time, it's a very subjective opinion as to where you are now against those initial high ideals.

Maintaining facts and figures are an essential part of running any breeding enterprise and that's what a Square Meaters venture is. Whilst the financial figures related to costs and revenue is very important, the data, facts and figures about the breeding operations

represent the research and production lines of the stud. Good information about your breeding herd is vital to improving the quality of the animal and stud over time.

So what data should you be recording and how?

The essential data

You must record in an approved manner any data required of you by law or regulation. This includes a lot of information around chemical use on the animals, National Livestock Identification Scheme (NLIS), in NSW, Rural Lands Protection Board reporting (in the other states there are similar requirements). On any rural

enterprise, there is a growing list of mandatory recording you need to do. This grows significantly if you decide to sign up to any of the Quality Assurance schemes (such as Organic certification, MAP, NVA, or such).

Elendee in NSW collects and reports on the following mandatory data items amongst others. The reference of what needs to be kept is shown where known:

- An annual stock report for the Lindendale Property Identification Number (PIC) is required by the Cooma-Monaro NSW Rural Lands Protection Board (www.rlpb.org.au). Other states have similar requirements, but not via the RLPB.
- ATO requires an annual stock valuation and report for the tax return (see your accountant) if the stud has become more than just a hobby.
- National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) and Stock Movement Sheets must be kept for 5 years. (www.mla.com.au)
- Use of herbicides, pesticides and stock treatment chemicals on the property must be recorded in an approved register and kept for at least 3 years. (www.chemcert.org.au).
- A Stud book and folder records the Square Meaters

registration details for each registered animal (The Startup kit and the Association regulations). The stud book includes any Semen Straws we have in storage and who is storing them.

- Each animal must have a unique NLIS number and tag attached and all movements of that animal between PICs are reported to the NLIS database, often by agent's on our behalf. (www.nlis.mla.com.au).
- Each registered Square Meaters animal must be clearly tattooed in the left ear with the Stud prefix and animal number. This also is a form of mandatory recording and not easy to get right.
- Each registered bull needs to have a Mannosidosis test and subsequent negative report kept. Any veterinary reports on your animals should also be kept for the life of the animal.
- Joining records for each breeding cow are essential and a joining date is very useful; the mechanism can be a simple manual diary, a spreadsheet or database, a software package like Herd Plan, PAM (Fairport), Livestock Recording, Stock book (Practical Systems), Cattlelink and lots more. Really depends on how much money you've got to spend.
- The Association requires

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(and supplies) a number of standard forms for calf registration, change of ownership, full registration and measurement, and other data related to maintaining the association's stud register. We keep copies of those that Elendee has submitted.

At Elendee we keep most of our raw herd data in a Microsoft Access data-table on the computer, so we can make up our own reports and forms for use in the cattle yard, office, at a show or a sale. But we are probably reaching the point (in size of herd) where we will need to investigate the professional packages. They do cost money but they save a lot of time.

The Useful data: We also collect and report on the following useful information, which often forms the basis of the above mandatory reporting requirements.

One of the customised forms that is used at Elendee Stud. The data comes from Elendee's Microsoft data table.

•Each animal has Herd Management tags in its left ear showing sex, herd number and origin. A large tag at the front and a small one at the back of the ear.

Left ear as that can be seen when they are in our cattle race and crush. The NLS tag is usually in the right ear.
•All herd events including

all joinings, separations, therapeutical treatments, births, deaths, movements, classing opinions, shows and other occurrences for each animal are added to



Meta Park Bottlebrush
Junior Champion Female



Meta Park Bottlebrush & Barbiedoll
Junior Champion Female &
Reserve Junior Champion Female



Meta Park Bug-a-Lugs
Junior & Grand Champion Bull

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our simple database. We collect the data on some simple forms in the paddock and yards, then we enter the data later to the computer.

- Show entries and results per show and year are added to each animal's record in the database.

- We find out dates and in November we prepare a show plan for the next year to ensure we have animals ready for show preparation and in the right classes. Don't believe those who suggest "we just got her out of the paddock last week". It takes time and effort to get animals ready for any show if you want to perform well. We have a lot of facts and figures to support our show efforts.

- What animals we are willing to sell (and the value we would like) is available well before anyone might ask us. You can't afford to miss an opportunity if it arises.

- Who we have sold (or leased) animals to, or supplied semen straws to. The Association needs to know who holds semen from your bulls to correlate with any future calf registration requests.

- Genestar DNA

marker results for all Elendee bulls, bred or acquired.

All our calves are independently classed by an expert eye in the first six months; so only the best bulls are kept entire, to identify future show animals, to record visible structural faults, to agree on future breeding options per cow and identify animals to sell or be culled.

Between twelve and 24 months, this classification may again be reviewed before animals are used for breeding. All this data is recorded against each animal in our simple database.

Weight-gain over time is also important and a future intention of Elendee is to be able to record this (we need a set of scales in the cattle crush). This is why all bulls and steers at the big shows are weighed. The critical times to record a weight are likely soon after birth; at 100 days, at weaning and at 12 months when all Square Meaters need to be measured for height.

Other opportunities to record a weight are also useful and should be taken if available.

Other measures you will



Elendee Vincent - So how big is he, how much does he weigh, what fat score and how quickly did he grow up? Is he genetically inclined to produce top quality tender steer calves?

hear mentioned are the fat thickness over the rump and ribs, the size of the rib eye muscle, length of the spine, circumference of the testes and almost any other part of an animal that can be identified and measured. All Square Meaters do have to be measured at the shoulder at 12 months of age. The rest is typically in interest of developing a better, more saleable (and profitable) animal and often may depend on how much you can afford to feed them (e.g. weights).

We also choose to take and hold digital photographs of every Square Meaters class at every show we attend, especially the class winners and champion animals; even on the occasion they beat an Elendee entry. These are held on digital media, grouped by show and class.

The Elendee images are used for various promotional opportunities and the other for reference as to what other quality animals are out there. Good images are essential

2008 Coming Shows and Events



February

6th Sydney Steer Entries close
15th - 17th Seymour Field Days
15th -17th Clifton QLD Show
15th 4pm Board Ballot close
15th - 17th Maitland NSW Show
23rd AGM at Canberra Royal
23rd Canberra Judging
29th - 2nd March Bathurst 02 6331 3175
29th - 2nd March Castle Hill NSW Show

March

7th-8th Gresford

7th -8th Pittsworth QLD Show
7th -8th Muswellbrook NSW show
15th Braidwood NSW Show
21st 22nd Camden
27th -30th Farm World
03 5626 1373

April

4th -6th Warwick QLD Show
5th -6th Goulburn NSW Show
10th -12th Toowoomba 07 4634 7400

11th -13th Hawkesbury Show
May

4th - 6th Tocal Field Days
14th - 18th National Beef Bendigo

June

6th -7th Lowood Show
3rd - 5th Farmfest Kingsthorpe

July

12th -13th Mudgee Small Farms

Field Days

August

7th -16th Brisbane Royal

16th Beverley WA Show

September

18th -28th Melbourne Royal

27th - 4th October Perth Royal

October

11th Tooday WA Show

11th Waroona WA Show

11th - 12th

Murrumbateman NSW Field Days

17th -18th Harvey WA Show

18th - 19th Cootamundra NSW Show

25th Gidgeganup WA Show

November

15th Swanview WA Show

As dates may be subject to change please confirm with the show/event organisers

for anything to do with the Internet.

Genestar DNA Markers

Elendee uses the Genestar DNA markers for Tenderness, Feed Efficiency and Marbling for both future breeding plans and marketing. Essentially the scientists have worked out that animals showing high values in these three characteristics also have specific DNA sequences that can be identified from a hair sample. Each characteristic has four different DNA marker elements and any animal can have two copies of each (one from its sire and one from its dame); so a score (or Star) out of eight is used to show the tested value. Eight "Stars" is perfection and any score above four is pretty good. Science isn't perfect and sometimes you can get "No Result" for one of the traits.

Remember, there is NO current genetic test for structural soundness, breeding and calving ability, growth rate, "do-ability" in a drought and the many other aspects of a "good animal". Genestar helps but isn't everything.

Where to start?

There are as many ways this information can be maintained as there are to breed your cattle. Where the reporting (and access to data) is infrequent, we still retain simple written

records based on colour-coded and marked plastic folders and pre-printed proformas (created using Microsoft Office).

Much of the rest is maintained as simple computer files based around Microsoft Office and a few other packages. Some data must be maintained in other's computers (like NLIS tag numbers) via the Internet.

The Association is there to maintain the master records for the breed such as the membership lists, show requirements, association rules and the collective Square Meaters Stud Book, but you are expected to keep copies of your own stud records.

Get a computer and start with software you are familiar with; a spreadsheet or simple database and record the information important to you and the organisations you have to report to.

Once you know what you need to record, ask other breeders about what software they are using and why. Then get some pricing on the options available to you, including how much it is going to cost to support and train yourself in its use.

Even then, a good set of forms, some plastic folders/binders and a simple diary has great value for a lot of the real data collection. ■



An Elendee moment of success captured for prosperity - All Breeds Grand Champion Bull at Bathurst Royal Show 2006.

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A magazine got us motivated

A lifestyle of weekends with horses was not to be for Narromine couple, Kylie McKinnon and Matt Brown.

Mabelie Stud is situated on 12 hectares on the outskirts of Narromine. While Matt admits he's not into horses, both agree they needed to make the most out of their spare time and earn money doing it.

In 2004, an article and picture in a magazine got them motivated.

"We saw a picture of a Square Meaters bull in a story published in a Farming Small Areas magazine", Kylie said.

"We were not actually planning or even thinking about getting any cattle at

the time, but were attracted to the size and muscling, efficiency and commercial viability of Square Meaters".

"We were hooked and decided to get involved".

Within a month the couple had purchased their first two show heifers, in calf, from Rainbow Stud, Braidwood.

"The heifers were the ones pictured with Tony Cairns in the article about Rainbow stud in the story," Kylie said.

They also bought a heifer and a cow in calf from Thurloo Park Stud, Cootamundra.

"Our original plan was to have five or six elite cows, but we have come to enjoy the cattle so much and are

now looking at leasing more land to run up to 20 breeders."

As a veterinary nurse, Kylie sees many problems that face cattle breeders in the area, mostly fertility issues, calving problems and pinkeye.

"We have not experienced any major health problems in our Square Meaters Herd".

Of significance to the couple, was the fact that they were buying cattle that were handled and had lead experience.

"We started out with little infrastructure, including no yards or crush, so buying a quiet breed of cattle was very important to us," she said.

At present the couple run nine stud cows, five stud heifers and a sire, plus 10 calves with 14 due next year.

The breeding program is set for two calvings, Spring and

Autumn.

"We prefer our autumn calving as this means the calves are old enough to take advantage of the winter-spring feed enabling better growth rates before our hot dry Summer," Matt said.

"With such a small area, it is important to have the highest quality stock and turn the steers off before they are 12 months old".

"This makes room for the next calving so we don't overstock."

Cattle graze through a rotation of six of the seven paddocks on the property. One paddock is set-aside as a holding paddock to rest the mob when necessary. Pioneer graze forage oats is the dominant improved pasture at Mabelie.

"Rotation the stock fully utilizes our good seasons, particularly late winter and spring," Matt said

During the drought they

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kept the herd together in the holding paddock to minimize damage to the other paddocks and to limit weeds brought onto the place through hand feeding. "The cattle's medium frame size meant they have held on extremely well," Kylie said.

"It would have been impossible to maintain larger framed animals in such good condition on a small area and be able to afford to feed them in an efficient and profitable enterprise"

Kylie and Matt are focused on catering to three markets.

"We sold two bulls to a Coffs Harbour stud, plus we have joined a new member, helped them set up with cows and calves," Kylie said.

"One a bull calf they are so impressed with he will become their primary stud sire."

"Demand for stud animals has far outstripped our ability to supply cattle".

"With small numbers, we have, on occasions, had to seek other studs to supply cattle."

The second market is the supply of bulls to local commercial beef producers.

"Square Meaters are ideal to put over larger breed females to produce well muscled, high yielding calves," she said.

Bulls are also ideal to put

over first calving heifers, which can be kept in forward condition and calve easily.

"We have sold bulls to a commercial Hereford herd whose owners have taken advantage of the easy calving and also the polling factor." She said

"Another bull went to a large crossbreeding herd as they like to calve their heifers at or before two years of age, and then sell the vealers over the hook at young ages.

"They were looking for high yielding, early maturing beef."

Local stock agent, Ashley McGilchrist of Landmark, Narromine agreed.

"Square Meaters tend to be great butcher's calves, real quality vealer types and do very well.

"They'll top the market if finished properly and live up to their name with plenty of meat per beast".

At Mabelie steers are sold off at between 10 and 12 months weighing 350 to 400 kilograms and dress out at 57 to 60 per cent.

"These are sold at the Dubbo sale yards at premium prices and are consistently mentioned in the top "cattle quotes".

Alternatively, there is a strong market for "half - a beast" butchered into individual cuts and pre-packed for the freezer.

Local butcher, Ken



Mabelie Stud are focussed on catering for three markets; beef, commercial and stud animals.

Anderson of Country Butchery, said the steer carcasses he had prepared for freezer packs were very good beef.

"The meat is tender, had good coloured fat coverage, but not excessive fat depth," Mr Anderson said.

"The yield is very good and the rumps seemed to be a little larger than usual, and the T-bones are a good size as well."

Kylies Tips:

- Start off with top quality stock. This will produce better calves and less culling on performance and / or structural problems, making for a herd to be proud of and that will return top dollars.

- Consider the type of beef enterprise you want to conduct, then target markets that suit your circumstances. "We started with females but also bought some square Meaters steers to finish. These were marketed locally to begin a cash-flow"

- Training cattle to tie up and lead is attractive to potential clients. The cattle quieten and can be handled easier.

- Selling steers before 12 months leaves fewer cattle on the property before the cows calve again. This minimizes stocking rates. ■

Article courtesy of Mark Griggs, The Land Newspaper, Dubbo, 27/07/2007



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