

Outside the Square

With Compliments

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

**Improving herd
quality**

**Meat that meets
the market**

Steer success

Crossbreeding advantages

Square Meaters Cattle - "No Ifs, Just Butts"



Chairman's report exciting times



By Graeme Singleton

The year that was 2010 must go down as one of the most exciting and demanding in the relatively short history of the Square Meaters breed.

While some breeders were confronted by deadly firestorms, others continued to endure debilitating drought and many ended the year inundated by floodwaters. It is indeed a credit to those members who were challenged by the trifecta of fire, flood and drought that they remain on the land and still passionate about their Square Meaters.

Across this wide brown land of ours, and despite disparate conditions and climates, our mighty Square Meaters have continued to perform to and above expectations. From commercial operators with cross breeding programs to those engaged

in pure breeding, Square Meaters continued to excel for beef producers by adding the all important traits of docility, polledness, fertility, muscularity, early maturity and efficiency to their herds.

The Square Meaters benefit has been highlighted across the country with stellar performances in Royal Show hoof and hook classes. The results achieved at Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth were nothing short of outstanding. We owe a debt of thanks to all those members and schools who have made the huge effort to promote our breed to the market place. It is because of how you have bred and exhibited Square Meaters steers that the future is looking particularly bright for the rest of us. Well done and congratulations.

Another exciting development throughout

2010 was the success of those breeders marketing Square Meaters beef direct to consumers. From all reports the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive to the extent that demand is outstripping supply. That has led to some breeders forming co-operatives to meet the market – another great initiative.

Encouraging breeders to work co-operatively is one of the elements of the marketing plan developed by the board in the first part of 2010. It outlines our strategies for the next few years such as an emphasis on the end product and the commercial application of Square Meaters genetics through to incentives and rewards for people who achieve success with showing steers and those who want to form regional promotional groups. Anyone interested in the

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concept need only call a member in south east Queensland to get an idea of how a group can be set up as well as the many benefits that flow when members unite to support and learn from each other.

The marketing plan formed the basis for the new membership plan which you endorsed via a ballot in September. At the heart of the membership plan which is now in place is a commitment to structural reform of your Association to make it more efficient and its operations more cost-effective. The membership plan has been devised to make the process of registering Square Meaters easier and cheaper for members. It will also allow your Board to be much more strategic in planning and implementing a number of advertising and marketing initiatives designed to drive the demand for Square Meaters cattle and Square Meaters beef. As always your Board welcomes your feedback, questions and input. By working together and with a shared passion there will be no limit to what we can achieve.

Throughout 2010 your Board worked very hard to address the many issues which arise in the operation of a breed association by holding monthly teleconferences and sending innumerable email chains. A lot has been achieved thanks to the dedication and input of all directors. Mid-year one of our original breeders, true champions and former presidents, Tony Cairns, tendered his resignation due to an increasing off-farm workload. Given Tony's amazing and sustained contribution to the Board and the breed over so many years no one could begrudge him his decision while at the same

time missing his input. Kylie McKinnon also resigned mid term and Fiona Battiste has decided against re-nominating. All three should be proud of their contributions and be aware of the appreciation held by the membership and their fellow directors for their dedication and representation.

To your continuing Board members, Jo van Elten, Eric Ross and Dominic Auguste, a heartfelt personal thank you for your continuing passion and dedication to taking our great breed forward. We all look forward to Steve Moffat joining us as we work to consolidate the place of Square Meaters in the Australian beef industry.

At the core of our Association is our indefatigable secretary Cheryl Mott whose contribution remains well above and beyond the call of duty and is one of the great strengths of our breed. Thank you Cheryl for being our 'keeper of the knowledge' and for representing our interests with such diligence, enthusiasm and integrity.

To all those members who supported the breed through 2010 by advertising, holding Super Square Sundays, by showing and supporting schools, by breeding and selling Square Meaters beef or even just by spreading the good oil about our great breed, thank you very much indeed.

Our Association is as much about the cattle we breed as it is about the people who breed them. May 2011 be marked by better financial rewards for all that you do, less extreme seasonal conditions and a continued emphasis on working co-operatively and collectively to take Square Meaters forward. ■

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Cover photograph courtesy of Chevy Farm.

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CMI a tool for stock selection

There are a lot of different approaches to selecting breeding stock.

The use of Breedplan has gained considerable favour across Australia despite limitations associated with the accuracy of the data that is collected and used. There are concerns too about the integrity of those people collecting that data.

Critics also argue that the use of Breedplan can lead to an over-emphasis on some traits, such as yearling weight, to the detriment of others such as cow herd efficiency.

Now another program has been thrown into the mix which would seem to be well worth the

consideration of Square Meaters breeders who are focused on producing the very best beef for the premium domestic market.

It has been developed by the Livestock Solutions division of the Natural Ecosystems Group (NEG) which offers a range of consultancy services including Livestock Assessment, Selection and Breeding Programs.

At the core of these programs is the Carcase Merit Index (CMI) which evaluates the potential retail meat yield of individual live animals.

The index assesses the meat yield, meat quality and variable fat content of



The Carcase Merit Index developed by the Natural Ecosystems Group has confirmed the potential of Square Meaters to deliver a premium quality, high yielding and tender carcasse.

livestock and enables the identification of 'Super Elite', 'Elite', 'Standard' and 'Sub Standard' livestock.

The critical point of difference with the CMI over other indexes is it

accounts for both meat yield and quality, ensuring that going forward the livestock produced have the ability to be both high meat yielding and the meat produced can be tender

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and, therefore greatly improving the chances of highly satisfying the customer.

You'd have to agree that's a win win situation for everyone.

The system uses ultrasound technology conducted by an industry accredited scanning contractor to scan livestock carcasses relative to their live weight.

The data is then formulated into an index value, known as the CMI, for each individual animal. Animals with heavy live weight(LW), large eye muscle area(EMA), least fat depth(FD) and high intramuscular fat(IMF) will be rated highest by the 'CMI'.

The CMI helps everyone to make important decisions from actual data and empowers everyone to operate with surety and confidence.

The Carcase Merit Index produces an objective measurement tool for evaluating individual animals that ranks them from highest to lowest and allows peer group comparisons.

The Natural Ecosystems group argues the CMI;

- can readily be used for the selection of breeding stock.

- can be used to engineer superior progeny that will meet specification(s).

- assists in efficient livestock production and, therefore the use of farm resources.

- assists in marketing of stock to fellow producers, meat buyers and feedlot operators

- assists in achieving optimal returns at the 'Farm Gate'.

- is very educational - increasing the understanding of carcase data and the variation of the

meat:fat:bone ratio of individual animals.

From the point of view of meat wholesalers, butchers and retailers the CMI can:

- assist in livestock selection for efficient processing - allowing a higher rate of success of carcasses meeting specification(s) and, being uniform to a desired type.

- assists in lowering the waste in processing, and therefore reduces the need for disposal requirements which will over time be a massive gain for society and the environment.

- maximises the opportunity to achieve optimal financial returns from processed product(s). Square Meaters breeders have had the opportunity to submit animals to the CMI test at the Farmfest Field Days at Toowoomba where it has offered to the exhibitors of both led steers and stud cattle.

Jo van Elten from the Vesco stud said the Square Meaters performed exceptionally well.

"We put up five Square Meaters and they all scored 'super elite' for carcase merit," Jo said.

"That means that when it comes to producing animals for meat quality Square Meaters are on the money."

"But what was really interesting was that a lot of breeders, particularly of larger framed and euro cattle ran for the hills and wouldn't allow their animals to be scanned and weighed."

To find out more about the CMI and the other services offered by the Natural Ecosystems Group contact Leon A Martin, B.Ag.Sc.(Hons), on 0260431328 or 0428577138 or email leonmartin@naturalecosystemsgroup.com ■

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Meat that meets the market

Fiona Battiste is the well known principal of one of our oldest and most successful Square Meaters Studs, Woolaringa, at Goulburn, between Sydney and Canberra. Prior to taking over Woolaringa from her father Ernie Stephenson, Fiona and her husband Mick ran a mobile butchering service, slaughtering, processing and packaging meat on farms around the district. Then in September 2009 Fiona and Mick opened their own retail butcher shop in Goulburn to sell their own Square Meaters beef. Their first 12 months of trading in their new business has exceeded all expectations but has highlighted some common problems within the beef supply chain as Fiona reports.

One thing that we have found challenging is trying to source beef that fit our specifications. It seems that some producers have little or no idea of live weight and fat cover. The accurate assessment of fat in cattle is one of the keys to meeting

market requirements.

Too much fat is wasteful as it has to be trimmed off the carcass and thrown in the fat and bone tub. This is then picked up as a service only. We as butchers have had to pay for it on the live animal and then we also pay by the kilo to get the carcass delivered back to our shop (30cents a kilo) from the abattoirs. Too little fat will allow the carcass to dry out and lose moisture content in cool rooms, remembering that it could hang to age a number of weeks. Meat will need to be trimmed prior to being sold, so it is imperative there is fat on the carcass to allow the butcher to do this.

The carcass weight range for a local butcher shop is between 160-220kgs and between 4-8mm on the rump (also known as the P8 site). In our butcher shop we like our carcasses to average 200kgs. It costs us the same amount of money to transport the live animal to the processors and the same costs to slaughter, irrespective of their carcass weight.

Byrnongbrae
Square Meaters Stud

33 Ben Valley Lane
Yackandandah
Vic 3749
Ph: 02 6027 1629



We are reaching the carcass weights that we are after from 11 months onwards. This depends on the season and in winter the steers were supplementary fed. The weights depend on the frame scores and we aim for cattle in the 4/5 Square Meaters frame score range to meet our shops 200kg carcasses.

Estimating live weight is a difficult skill. The best way to measure an animal's weight is by using electronic scales, especially if you are targeting a particular market.

Cattle that are early maturing like Square Meaters will normally fatten at a lighter live weight. This will depend on a couple of factors;

1. Muscle Score - The muscle score describes the shape of the animal and predicts the amount of muscle, for very heavily muscled animals it will be harder to meet fat requirements.
2. Genetic - There is a range of maturity patterns with different breeds of cattle (also within breeds).
3. Nutrition - Depending on your season and location of your property. At certain times of the year it may be necessary to supplement your stock to meet the market requirements.

When appraising your young cattle there are three ways that fat can be determined.

1. Ultrasound. Commonly used in hoof and hook competitions and is being increasingly used on large properties.

2. Visual. As cattle fatten their ribs become less visible, the tail head softens. The muscle seams on the hindquarters are less evident when cattle walk. The brisket, flank, cod and twist all fill out (cattle are usually approaching the required level of fatness when the cod is half filled).

3. Manual. This is more accurate than visual assessment as you are actually feeling for fat deposits. Fat can be felt at four main locations; the short ribs, long ribs, tailhead and the rump (P8). The most important thing that we have found is that Square Meaters need to meet these weight and fat requirements before they finish growing. They must do this prior to eighteen months of age.

Some processors provide basic carcass information that is linked to the NLIS system. Alternately producers that supply direct to a butcher can ask to see the carcasses, so they can visually compare the carcass to the live animal. ■



Woolaringa bred steers that fit the butcher trade.

Heroes not villains

Tony and Julie Vander Loop, of Malolo Square Meaters at Boyanup, WA, have been delighted with the performance of the breed since commencing their Square Meaters Stud in 1999. They have helped facilitate seven new Square Meaters studs. They've never looked back.

"Of late however, there has been one black cloud hanging over the whole cattle industry", says Tony. "This is the idea being pushed in the media that our cattle are warming the planet with their gas emissions".

"This always seemed wrong to us but it was an idea that was taking hold in public opinion".

"To our delight we have just read a book that we recommend to all Square

Meaters owners – indeed, all cattle owners. It is titled, "Should meat be on the menu?" and comprehensively explains why our cattle are not global warming villains. Indeed, it makes the point that our cattle should be heroes. They are neutral in the carbon cycle and, if managed correctly, can cause a net storage of carbon in our farm soils.

"And, with the fact that our Square Meaters are early maturing and can be finished on grass, we can be doubly proud of our breed as being a neutral influence in the atmospheric carbon cycle", says Tony.

The book can be purchased at www.journalist.com.au or phone 0411 172 328 ■

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Our cows working for us

The formation of a new marketing co-operative is delivering new options and profits for the already successful Silver Gully Square Meaters Stud on the NSW Central Coast.

Silver Gully principal Christine Wade is a well known and respected breeder with an enviable record for producing Royal Show winning cattle. Her focus has consistently been on raising her cattle in a biologically sustainable manner and on the end market – the consumer.

“By utilising the principles of rotational grazing to reduce the burden of weeds, worms and disease, we have

minimised the use of artificial products,” Christine said.

“Square Meaters cattle are such easy to manage cattle and by simply following good animal husbandry principles we find we do not need to rely on artificial pesticides, herbicides or fertilisers in our herd management.”

“The quality of our grass fed, free range beef reflects this, in stark contrast to the grain fed feed lot products that are found in the supermarket.”

So confident is Christine in the quality of the Silver Gully end product she recently formed a co-operative with the Raines



Award winning genetics used in paddock to plate business

family, also at Mangrove Mountain, to sell Square Meaters beef direct to the consumer.

“The Raines had purchased stud stock from us, and we have found that offering potential stud clients a market for their produce increases interest in stud sales.”

“This also guarantees the quality of the product we are able to offer to our clients.”

“Another advantage to forming a co-operative is ensuring a constant supply for our market.”

Christine said that being able to procure and produce enough numbers of quality steers is a critical to growing a paddock to plate business.

“A co-operative not only increases the actual numbers of animals available for slaughter but also improves the availability of product throughout the year if the members of the co-operative have different calving times. The end result is that we are now able to send away a constant number of steers more frequently.”

Maintaining the quality of the end product is another crucial factor.

“Quality is critical to our

operation, our clients are fussy, they know what they want and they know where I live,” Christine said.

“We cannot afford to bring someone into the co-operative who is not going to be able to supply us with quality stock.”

To that end Christine is enlisting members to her co-operative who are her “seedstock” clients and aims to ensure each member brings a particular set of skills.


“We organise the logistics of the client list, transport, sales, delivery etc, Steve Raines is our quality assurance officer and has taken responsibility for ensuring that the animals are properly finished.”

“As we enrol new members into our co-operative, if their animals require finishing we would provide them with that service at a cost. This will be particularly important for first time breeders.”


One of the biggest challenges of any ‘paddock to plate’ business is building a customer base.

Christine said word of mouth advertising had proven 100 per cent successful so far but as supply grows she is going to use the Silver Gully website

Argio Park Square Meaters Stud



Roelf & Glennister deKoning
Kangaroo Flat Road, Glencoe, S.A. 5291
Ph/Fax: (08) 8739 4039 Mobile: 0439 857 320
Email: argio.park@bigpond.com





to advertise the meat packages and streamline the ordering process.

“Certainly selling the meat packages is a more lucrative venture than selling stud stock, simply due to the ease of sales. The meat sells itself, and we can’t supply enough.”

Silver Gully meat packages are sold on a quarter-carcass basis at a rate of \$12 per kilogram. The meat is presented packaged into serving portions and includes all cuts such as sirloin, scotch fillet, T-bone, BBQ blade, rump and round steak, mince and sausages.

The packages range from 24 to 30 kilograms demanding on the size of the steer.

“On average, a 30kg package priced at \$360 will last a family of four 3-5 months.”

“We offer a money back guarantee on our product if

the consumer is not satisfied. We have never had an unsatisfied customer and it is with great pleasure that we receive our repeat orders from clients wanting to know when the next package is arriving.”

Proof of the market acceptance of Silver Gully beef came in September when the Central Coast Chamber of Commerce hosted a VIP luncheon for various ministerial departments in the business and tourism industry at Parliament House.

Silver Gully was asked to supply the beef.

“The co-operative was utilised, as alone we couldn’t supply enough beef at short notice for 30 head, and the Raines dug deep and generously handed over their scotch fillet.”

“Why were we asked? Consistent quality is the answer; there was no room for error at this luncheon



Silver Gully Estate quality grass fed, free range beef.

and when it counted the most, Square Meaters beef delivered.”

The net result of developing end product paddock to plate sales is a much healthier bottom line at Silver Gully.

“The imperative to sell

stud animals has lessened with our new income stream,” Christine said.

“If people want to buy our stud animals well and good but we now don’t have to sell cows and calves or bulls to ensure the viability of our operation. ■

Square Meaters

Cows and Calves For Sale



Silver Gully Estate

Contact: The Wade Family

Ph: 02 4374 1300

60 Niclins Road, Mangrove Mountain,
NSW 2250.

email: peterwade@bigpond.com

www.silvergully.com.au





Getting started in Squares in SA

Square Meaters. What are they? This is the question we get asked all the time. In fact, we asked ourselves the same question when we were researching different breeds for our modest property.

The answer we give people is that "Squares" are the original type and style of the Murray Grey. This is what they looked like 40 years ago before other breeds were infused.

My husband Simon and I decided 5 years ago that living in a reasonable house in the outer suburbs of Adelaide just didn't cut the mustard anymore and that we both wanted to get back to our rural backgrounds. We went looking and found our current property, Willows Rest- 20 acres on the outskirts of the famous Barossa Valley nestled between the two towns of Eden Valley and Springton. It was a little run down but hey what's a little hard work.

Unfortunately, 20 acres was all we could afford so the breed of cattle we needed had to tick numerous boxes and the "Squares" did this for us. They had to have a quiet

nature because we have young children: tick. They have to be polled as I don't like horns: tick. They have to be easy calving: tick. They also have to be smaller framed and feed efficient because we have to maximise stocking rates for viability: tick.

After months of trawling the internet and magazines, we decided that "Squares" were the right breed for us. There was, however, one huge stumbling block. They didn't exist in South Australia.

We managed to purchase three registered Murray Grey cows before the herd book closed and then we had these girls mated to Mandalong Rambo and hence our stud, Willows Rest Square Meaters, was underway.

We have since then purchased three females from NSW, two from Kelkette and a lovely heifer from Cluskers in Canberra. We have found that any property we have visited or contacted, we have been greeted with friendliness and helpfulness. On our trip to Kelkette, we took along Simon's sister and brother-in-law of Rainbow



Willows Rest Adonis, 8 months, was Junior Champion Interbreed at Murray Bridge Show 2010.

Valley Square Meaters and assisted them in purchasing their first girls.

We have over the last five years managed to build a very nice little herd through selective breeding. Our focus is on quality not just quantity.

The past 12 months, however, have just been amazing for us. We have begun showing teams of our own breeding and we are getting very favourable comments from judges as well as breeders of other cattle.

We currently have a young bull, Willows Rest Achilles D2, who in March was Reserve Champion British Bull at a local show and then went on to win Senior and Grand Champion bull at The Royal Adelaide Show a few weeks ago. After he was weighed and scanned we were over the moon. At 23 months he weighed 590kg and scanned at 125cm² EMA.

We also have a young heifer, Willows Rest Millies Pride E1, which was Junior Champion female at the "Royal" this year. It was also

good to be able to enter and win in the Breeders Group class with two bulls and a female.

To put the icing on the cake, our young bull calf, Willows Rest Adonis F1, took out Junior Champion British Breeds and then went on to win the Junior Champion Interbreed at the Murray Bridge Show, all this at the age of 8 months. The judges said they couldn't fault him, happily placing him above animals twice his age.

We are currently forward planning for next years' "Royal" as we have a great crop of calves and we are really looking forward to their futures.

We love our "Squares" to bits and we are looking forward to being able to provide other breeders with our outcross lines. We have a Johnes status MN3 so hopefully this is useful for our Western Australian compatriates. We are also considering a trip east of the border and showing that you don't have to have a lot of land to breed quality cattle. ■

WILLOW REST
SQUARE
meaters

SPRINGTON, SA, 5235
 MRS K PALK
 Contact tel: 08 8564 1393
 Email: willowrest@bigpond.com.au



Cross breeding advantages

By Peter Horne

The advantages of using a Square Meaters bull in a large framed herd are many. Our own foray into cross breeding includes crossing with both the Brahman and Limousin breeds. The Square Meaters bull adds softness, removes horns and humps as well as increasing the quantity of meat on the carcass of the Brahman. He helps quiet their sometimes troubled natures and assists in the easy birthing of cross breed calves.

The addition of a Square Meaters bull is a powerful advantage when combining cross breed vigor along with the early maturity of the Squares. He also opens up markets that have traditionally not been easily available to some purebred breeds.

Square Meaters x Limousin

Two years ago I was approached by a young friend who was interested in using our Square Meaters Bull over his Limousin cow. He had seen the advantages of using a Limousin cow with a Murray Grey Bull in the show ring and decided to give it a go. The softness

along with the quiet easy doing nature that the grey cattle give to the Limousin makes for a sought after combination, both in the show ring and on the carcass.

When the bull calf was born it was an instant hit. As the calf grew it became noticed for its softness, growth and easy handling but the big surprise was when the steer started to finish at a much earlier stage than was normally expected of a Limousin. By 10 months the steer had reached 380kg with a 9mm fat cover. It went on to receive 4th place in a lineup of steers at Toowoombas Ag Show and was then purchased by the judge.

The Limousin has never been able to fatten easily for an early market, even though they are well regarded by some for the taste of their meat. The breed has traditionally been a bit temperamental and lacks the softness of the Square Meaters. It will also probably never finish with the 7 to 9mm fat cover at 400kg live weight required for the butcher trade. The Square Meaters cross however completes the



Square Meaters x Limousin cattle demonstrate strong Square Meaters traits.

picture.

Square Meaters x Brahman

The first impressions of our initial Square Meaters Brahman cross steer were nothing special. It was when he was sent to the Emmerg Beef feedlot at Pittsworth that we saw the advantages of this particular Square Meaters cross. During the steers life, quality pasture was not in big supply and he went into the feedlot at 10 months of age and weighing 302kg.

Over a 10 week period the steer averaged 1.6kg/day weight gain. At first we thought he was not going to finish on time for the butchers trade. However,

when the carcass was hung the steer came in at 7mm fat cover and a carcass at 61% of live weight. The real surprise was when 52% of live weight was boxed up as quality meat. This was the same as for our purebred Squares and was an unexpected result for the Brahman. Brahmans normally give less meat in the box when compared to British Breeds. ■



For information on
Square Meaters
phone: 02 9834 4322



Elendee Sonny

- ◆ Sqr Mtr Reserve Senior Bull, Canberra Royal 2007.
- ◆ AOB Senior Bull, Bathurst Royal 2007.
- ◆ Res Senior Sqr Mtr Bull, NSW Beef Show Dubbo 2007.

Elendee Sunburn

- ◆ Grand Champ All Breeds Bull, Bathurst Royal 2006.
- ◆ Supreme Interbreed B Bull, Canberra Royal 2006.
- ◆ Grand Champ Sqr Mtr Bull, NSW Beef Spectacular Dubbo 2007.

Elendee

Cattle on the Monaro

“Lindendale”, Anembo, NSW.

Square Meaters

John Hodgson & Fiona Neumann

Ph: 0417 349 817

Fax: 02 6239 4960

Email: elendee@activ8.net.au



Outside the Square - Show Champions

* Represents Grand Champion

CANBERRA 2010



CANBERRA 2010

* Junior Bull ~ Woolaringa Dave D59

SYDNEY 2010



SYDNEY 2010

* Junior Bull ~ Woolaringa Dave D59

BRISBANE 2010



BRISBANE 2010

* Junior Bull ~ Vesco Easy Does It



CANBERRA 2010

Senior Bull ~ Gumnut Valley Doronamoe



SYDNEY 2010

Junior Female - Woolaringa Bonnie D7



BRISBANE 2010

Senior Bull ~ Dakabin Declan



CANBERRA 2010

Junior Female - Woolaringa Bonnie D7



SYDNEY 2010

Senior Female ~Silver Gully Chinka (AI)



BRISBANE 2010

Junior Female ~ Vesco Extra Special



CANBERRA 2010

* Senior Female ~ Thurloo Park Betsy

For all show society information visit the following websites:

Canberra Royal - www.rncas.org.au
Sydney Royal - www.sydneyroyal.com.au
Brisbane Royal - www.ekka.com.au
Adelaide Royal - www.adelaideshowground.com.au
Melbourne Royal - www.royalshow.com.au
Perth Royal - www.perthroyalshow.com.au
NSW Beef Spectacular - www.farmonline.com.au/theland/beefspectacular
National Beef Bendigo - www.nationalbeef.org.au



BRISBANE 2010

*Senior Female ~ Rosellinos Diamond (AI)



ADELAIDE 2010



ADELAIDE 2010

* Senior Bull - Willow Rest Achilles

PERTH 2010



PERTH 2010

* Champion Bull ~ Kilayr Daroth

MELBOURNE 2010



MELBOURNE 2010

* Junior Bull ~ Windridge Express



ADELAIDE 2010

* Senior Female - Kelkette Leane C669



PERTH 2010

* Champion Female ~ Kilayr Catalina (AI)



MELBOURNE 2010

* Junior Female ~ Windridge Evelyn

NSW BEEF SPECTACULAR



BEEF SPECTACULAR 2010

Champion Bull ~ Woolaringa Dave D59

NATIONAL BEEF BENDIGO



BENDIGO 2010

Champion Bull ~ Agrio Park Upshot



BEEF SPECTACULAR 2010

Champion Female ~ Woolaringa Bonnie D7



BENDIGO 2010

Senior Female ~ Woolaringa Leane D2

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Squares' bull is a very useful tool

By Peter Horne

Drought was once the biggest problem that farmers had to face. Unfortunately cattle breeders are now at the mercy of markets as well. The need to get the best price possible has never been greater. The addition of a Square Meaters Bull in a cross breeding program can broaden the focus of a breeders operation. This is achieved by broadening the market that a breeder is able to access.

Breeds of Bos Indicus and European cattle such as the Brahman and Limousin breeds take a long time to mature and reach the required 7mm plus fat cover. Therefore these breeds must be held for a much longer time prior to sale. This is also the reason why research is currently being undertaken by Australia's CSIRO in Brisbane in conjunction with Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) into DNA markers for early onset of puberty in cattle. In other words, they are looking for what we already have in our Square Meaters bulls; early maturing genes. It is these same early maturing genes that bring our cattle to market quicker.

Large framed cattle are great for the export feedlots who like to purchase their cattle at an advanced stage. More frame is more money for them at the feedlot exit. However, it is not always good for the breeder as it limits the opportunities for marketing at the best price. The Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) web site shows the level of market volatility in their Eastern Young Cattle Index (EYCI). The EYCI graph below, for the years 2008-2010, proves how much the price changes. This is true across all indices



A breeder who only breeds for export has just one crack at the market. This comes at the very end of a long growth stage. If the prices and conditions are unfavorable at the time of sale then that is too bad. Cattle that are not in good condition and ready to go to market will suffer a price markdown. By adding a



Crossing with Square Meaters provides early maturity traits in larger framed breeds.

Square Meaters bull you will broaden your market access. This is achieved by selling when both prices and conditions are more

Bull in a large framed herd of Bos Indicus or Euro breeds not only gives the breeder access to a broader market but also adds the serious weight gains due to hybrid vigor and early maturity

favorable and by selling because there is a market that suits the stage that your cattle are at. It is effectively a means of spreading the risk.

The Square Meaters advantage in a cross breeding program is to broaden the market available to the breeder through cross breeding. This provides greater flexibility when selling quality beef. In other words, you choose when you want to sell. You will no longer be dictated to by a limited market and encroaching drought. The Square Meaters bull is therefore a very useful management tool giving you the breeder a greater choice of markets for your breeding program. ■

The addition of a Square Meaters bull is a powerful advantage when combining hybrid vigor along with the early maturity of the Squares. A Square Meaters



For information on Square Meaters contact the Square Meaters Association Aust. Ltd
Phone: 02 9834 4322 or visit the website:
www.squaremeaters.com.au
Email: squaremeaters@bigpond.com



Minimise input, maximise output

By Gary Sewell 'Oakvale'
Square Meaters Wondai Qld

When we talk of inputs (money we payout to run our businesses) this can be from purchasing your fodder requirements right through to the chemicals for weed control. So I decided to write this article from my own experiences with our own properties and also the many properties I have sold through our real estate business. Hoping that there may be something that could help you with minimizing the ever increasing cost of running your breeding operation. Property selection does come down to a few main points, location to suit your lifestyle (family, work, facilities, etc.) your budget and most of all if you feel comfortable with the property you will be going to call Home!

I would suggest prior to purchasing a new property to check if there is any restriction on the property with regards to vegetation management, which could impact on the development of the property. Also check with the local authorities for notices, which may have been issued with regards to noxious weeds or pests. The carrying capacity of the country is a question I would be asking, and a good idea would be to speak to some adjoining landowners just to confirm this as it is amazing how this number can grow.

I am not saying untruths have been spoken, but that one good season when the owner ran 100 head can be well remembered, but a normal season's capacity

may only be 60 head. The property infrastructure should also be looked at, the condition of the fences, number of paddocks, cattle handling facilities, watering points and permanency of supply.

Its good to have in your mind how you see the grazing of the property being managed so there is sufficient pasture to graze at all times throughout the seasons, whether you decide on Continuous Grazing, Rotational Grazing or Cell Grazing. There is an abundant amount of information available on the Internet for you to view on these different systems.

When I inspect a property one of the first things I tend to look at is the amount of available feed and the condition and number of livestock the property is carrying, as cattle in good condition equates to dollars in the bank. Then just ask the questions, if that is the normal stocking rate - and the length of time that number of stock have been on the property and if they receive any supplement feeding, this will help determine the quality of the country.

Another suggestion would be to obtain a soil test from the property and have the results analysed by an agronomist check for deficiencies in the soils. You may also consider consulting a stock feed nutritionist with the results for their professional opinion. As mineral imbalances can be very detrimental to the health of your livestock with regards to fertility and growth rates.

This can be especially the



Stocking rates on unimproved pastures will be considerably less.



Pasture improvement provices greater output.

case on country that has been farmed in the past with fodder and crops being removed with no replacement of the nutrients. ■

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Sq genetics are put to the test

By Graeme Singleton

A bold experiment on the alluvial floodplains of the Clarence River in northern New South Wales is highlighting the future of Square Meaters genetics in the Australian beef industry.

On the 'flat-as-a-tack' and often sodden property 'Benfield', Bev Bennett and Greg Field are putting Square Meaters to the test – and couldn't be more delighted with their performance.

They are running about 50 cows of every shape, size, colour and genetic background with two Square Meaters bulls. At

first glance the cow herd of herefords, angus, bos indicus and euro crosses is unremarkable. The calves however are a completely different story.

Their uniformity and conformation simply can not be ignored. "It seems as though it doesn't matter what you put the Square Meaters bull to, you always get the same result – a polled calf that's very long, thick and deep and with great body shape and temperament," Bev said.

"Regardless of whether their mums are black, white, red or brindle the calves are like peas in a pod."

"We have had no calving problems at all, and while



A 3 month old Square Meaters sired calf and his crossbred dam.

they are tiny when they are born they are up and running around very quickly and then grow like weeds."

Included in the Benfield herd are 15 Square Meaters and Squares cross santa females sourced from across the North Coast.

"We couldn't be happier with how they have adapted to life on the floodplain. They actually seem very suited to these hot, humid and wet conditions," Greg said.

"The silver cows stay out in the sun grazing longer than our black cows and their temperaments are



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amazing. We run our cows in two mobs and they all get the same treatment. It's when we get them into the yards that the differences are apparent. The Square cows are just a pleasure to work unlike the bos indicus cross which tend to be flighty and easily excitable."

"The amazing thing is the Square Meaters cross calves are noticeably quieter and easier to handle than their dams."

That docile nature came in handy last autumn when a massive flood forced the evacuation of the entire Benfield herd to a rough flood free hill paddock half an hour away.

"The Square cows didn't miss a beat and settled quickly to their confined new home and round bale hay diet. Some calved and as we found out later others went back into calf during the six weeks they were away."

The superior fertility of the Squares females is another trait being appreciated by Bev and Greg.

"None of our Square cows or Square cross santa heifers have missed a beat and have all gone back in calf within their allotted time. The only cows we have culled on fertility are the brahman crosses."

The performance of their squares cross santa heifers has so impressed Bev and Greg that they believe they will have a market in the future selling replacement females to other breeders. For the moment however they will keep all their heifer calves as they work on building a high performance herd.

"The feedback from the butchers who have bought our vealer and yearling steers has been great. All up our Squares are delivering everything we expected and wanted." ■



An Angus x Santa cow with her Square Meaters sired calf.



Note the great body shape of this Square Meaters cross bos indicus calf.

Misty Meadows



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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.

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. Unlicenced 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 100 per cent pure Murray Grey females can be entered onto the Commercial appendix F2 females.

Stud Murray Grey Females:

The herd book is currently open to registered Murray Grey females in all countries OTHER THAN AUSTRALIA.

For Show Purposes:

Contact the Association for the show regulations

Registration Process:

All breeders will be required to calf record all animals born each year on a C1 form supplied by the office. The original will be forwarded to the Association at the end of each calendar year, or when your last calf of the year is born, and a copy will be held in your file. Additional C1 forms will be

available on request. There will be no fee attached to the lodgment of the C1 forms. Interim registrations will be provided on request and the fee of \$20 per animal, will be deducted from transfer and registration allocation as prescribed in membership level.

At 12 or 18 months animals should be measured and will be eligible for registration as per Association regulations. Send the duplicate C1 form with measurement details, the date the measurement was taken and the name and signature of witness of the animals you wish to register to the office for the assessment of payment.

From July 1, 2012, only animals that have been C1 recorded and measured at 12 or 18 months can be registered. Animals, which are over 24 months of age at the time of registration, will incur a late fee of \$100 per head.

- To register or transfer registered Square Meaters Cattle, Full Members must subscribe to one of the five (5) membership plans (Grey, Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum). Each of the plans includes the \$165 Annual Subscription.
- School and Youth Members are exempt from having to subscribe to a membership plan to register and transfer cattle.
- New Members, will be required to pay the \$110 Joining Fee.
- Silver, Gold and Platinum subscribers can pay in 2 installments - on or before January 1 and on or before July 1 each year - but the 5 per cent discount will not apply to split payments.
- In all levels of membership, members can increase their advertising in the magazine, newsletter, website or newsletter at the appropriate cost.
- All "Outside the Square", newsletter, web site sale yard advertisements that are included in the membership plan allocation, are to be supplied to the office, by the member at the member's expense.
- All trophies and "Outside the Square" advertising offers detailed in the plan will be applicable for the following 12 month period due to planning and membership payment time frames.

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

MEMBERSHIP & REGISTRATION FEES:

Once only Membership Joining fee:

Full Membership	\$110.00
Commercial/ Associate	\$ 27.50
School/ Youth Memberships	\$ 27.50

Annual Subscription

Full membership	\$165.00
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And must subscribe to one of the 5 membership levels

Commercial/ Associate	\$ 27.50
School/ Youth Memberships	\$ 27.50

Registration Fees

'A' & 'B' Female registrations	\$ 50/head
Bull registrations	\$100/head

Transfer Fees

Female transfers	\$ 50/head
Bull transfers	FREE

Registered Murray Grey females

Outside Australia only

registered as "B" Grade Square Meaters \$ 50

Donor female registration

\$ 50
Donor females and bull used on the donor cow by natural service or artificial insemination must be DNA tested. DNA est must be received by this office prior to ET work

Transfer of recipients

\$ 50

Semen

Licensed 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.

Unlicensed semen \$150

The bull must be DNA tested prior to semen being sold.

Shares

in bull per share \$ 50

DNA test must be forwarded to office prior to selling shares

Commercial appendix

Registration foundation & calves \$ 20

Commercial Appendix transfer \$ 10

All animals registered over 24 months will incur a \$100 late fee

THE FIVE (5) MEMBERSHIP LEVELS ARE:

GREY Membership

\$400/year (\$380 if paid before January 1)

Annual Subscription	\$165
Female and bull registrations / transfers to the value of	\$250
Stud listing in "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 10
1 extra copy "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 5
Total value:	\$430

All additional female registrations or transfer at \$50/head
Bull registrations \$100 per head – no transfer fee

Bronze Membership

\$800/year (\$760 if paid before January 1)

Annual Subscription	\$165
Female and bull registrations / transfers to the value of	\$600
Stud listing in "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 10
2 extra copy "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 10
1 Web site "Sale Yard" listing a year	\$ 25
1/8th page "Outside the Square" magazine advert	\$ 50
Total value:	\$860

All additional female registrations or transfer at \$50/head
Bull registrations \$100 per head – no transfer fee

Silver Membership

\$1600/year (\$1520 if paid before January 1)

Annual Subscription	\$ 165
Female and bull registrations / transfers to the value of	\$1200
Stud listing in "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 10
4 extra copy "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 20
Stud web page or site Ink SMCA website	\$ 50
3 "Sale Yard" listing a year on SMCA website	\$ 75
1/4 page "Outside the Square" magazine advert	\$ 120
2 minor or 1 major trophy at Royal/feature show	\$ 100
Total value:	\$1740

All additional female registrations or transfer at \$50/head
Bull registrations \$100 per head – no transfer fee

Gold Membership

\$3200/year (\$3040 if paid before January 1)

Annual Subscription	\$ 165
Female and bull registrations / transfers to the value of	\$2300
Stud listing in "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 10
6 extra copy "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 30
Stud web page or site Ink SMCA website	\$ 50
4 "Sale Yard" listing a year on SMCA website	\$ 100
1/2 page "Outside the Square" magazine advert	\$ 210
3 major Royal show trophies	\$ 300
1/4 page newsletter ad each edition	\$ 160
Super Square Sunday promotional support	\$ 200
Total value:	\$3525

All additional female registrations or transfer at \$50/head
Bull registrations \$100 per head – no transfer fee

Platinum Membership

\$4400/year (\$4180 if paid before January 1)

Annual Subscription	\$ 165
Unlimited female and bull registrations & transfers	
Stud listing in "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 10
8 extra copy "Outside the Square" magazine	\$ 40
Stud web page or site Ink SMCA website	\$ 50
4 "Sale Yard" listing a year on SMCA website	\$ 100
Full page "Outside the Square" magazine advert	\$ 400
4 major Royal show trophies	\$ 400
1/2 page newsletter ad each edition	\$ 240
Super Square Sunday promotional support	\$ 200
Supporter acknowledgement on SMCA web page, Outside the Square magazine & Small Farms magazine	

Total value: PRICELESS



Square Meaters Cattle Ass

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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

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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.

- 1
- 2
- 3

Symbols are unacceptable.

FEES:

- Membership level (please tick)**
- Grey \$ 400 \$
 - Bronze \$ 800 \$
 - Silver \$1600 \$
 - Gold \$3200 \$
 - Platinum \$4400 \$

Entry fees (once only) \$ 110

Total (Membership level + Entry fee) \$

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. In the case of a joint, partnership, business membership etc, please include the name and signature of the nominated representative for the membership, giving them authority to vote on behalf of the membership.

Name of Nominee

Signed Date / / 20....

Please give details on where you first heard about Square Meaters.

- Which publication
- What Show
- What Field Day
- Which Breeder
- Internet
- Other



The Sq Meaters experiment

By David and Joan Cook, Gandaragan Organic Beef, Western Australia.

Butchers are an exacting bunch. We know because we have been supplying organic beef to a raft of Perth butchers for more than eight years. These days the soaring cost of labour and other overheads have seen more butchers' want smaller, more manageable bodies that can be processed quickly. Even fat cover, good muscling and a high meat yield are also on the top of their 'must have' list.

We run around 1800 head of Angus cattle and over the years have

selectively bred to get a smaller, more compact animal. But last year we decided that we might give the chunky Square Meaters breed a go. We were after a first calf sire that would throw a smaller calf and reduce the incident of calving problems in our Angus heifers. We were also interested to see if the cross would deliver an earlier maturing and smaller body that still delivered a high meat yield.

In May this year our first drop of Square Meaters sired calves was born. Encouraged by the smaller size of the newborn calves, we bought in another two Square Meaters bulls and



Promising traits are appearing by crossing with Square Meaters.

have mated around 50 Angus heifers. Our first Angus x Square Meaters calves are now more than six months old and thriving. Time will now tell whether their growth and weight gain will meet our requirements for an ideal market animal

The recognised quiet temperament of the Square Meaters was another quality that attracted us to the breed. Our market cattle are yarded weekly and we move mobs several times a week. We have found that Bud William's low stress stock handling techniques have



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made cattle work safer and more efficient, and because we always have our butchers in mind, these techniques of keeping the cattle quiet also help us produce better quality meat.

Our journey into organic agriculture began back in 2000. Like most other broadacre farms in the Dandaragan region we farmed sheep, cattle and cropped but the fact that our land was slowly becoming less and less productive prompted us to take a reality check and explore other ways of farming. We took the leap and began to convert our two farms "Noondel" and "Tekymbah" (7,300 acres in total) to organic. Our inspiration was recognising the importance of the link between healthy soil, healthy stock, healthy food and healthy people. Our commitment to organic and

ethical farming principles is based on this belief.

Today both properties are managed without the use of chemicals, synthetic fertilisers or hormones. We have implemented a cell grazing program, which mimics the grazing patterns of wild herd animals. We run our herds in large mobs of around 300 or so and move them every few days onto fresh pastures, thus breaking the worm cycle and eliminating the need for any drenching of the cattle.

Another key change has been the addition of perennial grasses. These grasses have made an enormous difference to our pastures, soil quality and our business. The grasses thrive if there is any summer rain and the permanent ground cover means that soil microbes flourish and humus builds



Dangaragan hope that by crossing Square Meaters it will help climate proof Australian farms.

up in the soil. In combination with the cell grazing system, we have noticed greater pasture density, reduced weed population and a vast improvement in the biodiversity above and below our soils. To date early estimates have indicated that these pastures could be

as effective as tree plantations in sequestering carbon.

Like our Square Meaters experiment, it is too early to tell but we are great believers in these marvellous grasses and hope they will play a role in climate proofing more Australian farms. ■

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Rosellinos very impressive year

Rosellinos Square Meaters Stud has had a successful year on the farm and at the show. We showed at 3 shows and exhibited Grand Champion Female at each show, with a different animal each time. Toowoomba Royal Agricultural Show where Rainbow Puddin was Grand Champion Female, Brisbane Royal with Rosellinos Diamond and Pine Rivers with Rosellinos Ericas' Eungella. Our Stud also won Reserve Champion Senior Bull at the Brisbane Royal with Vesco Double Trouble, and Champion Female Calf at Toowoomba Royal Agricultural Show with Rosellinos Danti.

Vesco Double Trouble has been used over the herd during the past year, and his first calves are excellent type and quality and have a wonderful temperament. Since his success at the Brisbane show, Double Trouble has been sold to Sue and David Salvin,

Bowraville NSW. We have retained semen from DT for further use in the stud or sale.

Rosellinos have recently purchased a mature cow Domvale Pearl U34 from Hain Rural Enterprise. Pearl is in calf to Rainbow Ace of Hearts, and she was purchased because of her tremendous body capacity and temperament and her progeny will be used to improve the herd with a new blood line.

The season has been good with falls of rain right through the year and the cattle are in good condition and while we have sold 4 bulls and 2 females this year, we are presently selecting animals for the 2012 Toowoomba Feature Show and Sale. We are planning to offer 6 to 8 head of quality animals at the sale. There is tremendous support for the Show and Sale, where substantial prize money will hopefully attract Exhibitors and Breeders from other States.

The future success of



Rosellinos Square Meaters Stud has had tremendous success with their animals in the show ring during 2010.

Square Meaters Cattle is in quality beef, early maturing 350 to 450 kg at 12 to 15 months and efficient converters of feed. We are planning to prepare steers for the Led and Carcase competition in the future, and presently negotiating with a High School to prepare our animals.

Rosellinos held a very successful Super Sunday on the 3rd October, and even though it was wet we had approximately 90 visitors attending from a radius of 200 kilometres and some Square Meaters enthusiasts

from NSW. The highlights of the day were Short Addresses regarding the benefits of Square Meaters, Guess the weight of the "Fred" the steer, the support from local businesses, a display of paintings by local artists, music, raffles and a BBQ. We will be holding a Super Sunday again in October 2011, and we plan to try and make it as interesting, informative and exciting as the previous.

We thank our clients, visitors and friends who have made our year so successful. ■



ROSELLINOS

**Exhibited at 3 shows during 2010
Won Grand Female Champion at each show, with 3 different animals.**



Rosellinos Diamond
Brisbane Royal National Show
Grand Champion Female



Rainbow Puddin
Toowoomba Royal Agricultural Show
Grand Champion Female



Rosellinos Erica's Eungella
Pine Rivers Show
Grand Champion Female



Vesco Double Trouble
Res Champion Senior Bull
Brisbane Royal National Show 2010



Enquiries & Visitors Welcome
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Ph 07 3026 6730
Mob 0409 068 222



2010 - Year of the Steer

THE Square Meaters breed more than cemented its commercial credentials after a stellar run of success at major hoof and hook show across the country throughout 2010.

The amazing 'Year of the Steer' began at Sydney Royal where 12 Square Meaters were among more than 250 entries in Australia's premier purebred led steer show.

At the end of judging 10 of those animals had won ribbons, including three firsts, two thirds and four fifth placings.

A steer from Narrara Valley High School and bred by Maryvale Stud went on to

win the reserve champion open middleweight steer of the show.

In the carcass judging Square Meaters won a bronze medal in the middleweight open steer class, and scored two first placings and two second placings in the virtual taste test classes.

Three steers comprising two from Narrara Valley and one from Murrumburrah High School then amassed enough points on the hook and hoof to earn the Square Meaters breed third place in the prestigious Stan Hill Trophy.

The success continued at

Brisbane Royal where the four Square Meaters steers entered in the field of 366 pure and cross bred entries walked away with 3 first ribbons, one second and a fourth.

Dawn and Bevan Voight from the Warrill Creek stud started the campaign in grand style winning the first of the 9 led steer classes. Their calf was a clear winner in the 325 to 350 kilogram class and then went on to be placed second on the hook. The steer's combined hook and hook scores placed it the fifth highest placed steer in the show.

Jo Van Elten's two entries from her Vesco Stud entered in the 325 to 350 and 375 to 400 kilogram live classes both won first places in the Meat Standards Australia - MSA - Eating Quality Awards which are

determined by assessing a number of key meat indicators.

The Warrill Creek and two Vesco steers then came a creditable fourth in the Ken

MacDonald Trophy for the combined hook and hoof scores of three led purebred steers. Their achievement was all the more significant given the breeds which placed above the Square Meaters had up to 30 head to choose their final teams from.

At the Melbourne Royal the equivalent is the Borthwick Trophy.

David & Julie Thompson from Thurloo Park stud sent down a team in the care of Cootamundra High School which came a very creditable equal 5th on the hoof out of 14 teams.

The Thurloo Park steers had earlier achieved third,

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fourth and fifth places in their respective strongly contested classes.

Peter Brown and Lyn Brown the Windridge Stud also flew the Square Meaters flag with pride. Their 10 month old steer won the lightweight steer class and was then placed first and named champion lightweight carcass over the hooks with a score of 83.853 which was more than 10 points clear of the second place getter.

The Perth Royal was another happy hunting ground for Square Meaters. Adrian and Ellen Moffatt from the Kilayr Stud took home the trophy for the reserve champion medium weight carcass.

Their 423 kilogram steer dressed at over 61 per cent and scored maximum points for carcass weight, rump fat, meat colour,

market suitability, fat colour, muscle pH, fat depth and marbling – a fantastic effort.

The performance of these steers confirms that Square Meaters are ideally suited for the premium domestic market and the consistency of the results indicates the genetic strength of our breed type.

The results are particularly pleasing given the small numbers of Square Meaters steers entered at these Royal Shows.

All the breeders and exhibitors who entered steers deserve our deepest appreciation for showing the rest of the beef industry that when it comes to the domestic market Square Meaters really are contenders that can and do punch above their weight.

Well done to everyone! ■

2010's Award Winning Steers



3rd Stanhill Trophy, Sydney Royal Show.



Reserve Middleweight Carcass, Perth Show.



Lightweight Champion, Melbourne Royal Show.



Ken MacDonald Trophy & 1st MSA Award, Royal Queensland Show.

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Still golden at Rainbow Valley

By Robin Prokopec

We have lived in Rainbow Valley, near Springton on the edge of South Australia's famous Barossa Valley, for two and a half years now, and with the breaking of the drought it now looks very different! Ken has been busy fencing while I have been looking after and breaking in the Square Meaters, by far the more enjoyable end of the bargain, I think. With their ready response, so much can be achieved in such a short space of time. It is very exciting and rewarding to see such good results so quickly.

Our numbers have

increased to fourteen purebreds with some lovely new calves born late January – early February by last year's Royal Adelaide Grand Champion Bull, Mabelie Damascus D1A.

We were intending to take him and two cows with their calves to the Adelaide Royal but just a week before leaving we were forced to change our plans when he injured his nose, catching the ring on something out in a very dry and dusty paddock.

The cow had been shown before, but her seven month old heifer calf had had only very limited association with a halter. She improved dramatically in those few

days before we left, and showed just how beautifully the Square Meaters respond to you when you have their trust. In Adelaide she and the other two calves all quickly accepted their new environment, and were beautifully behaved throughout the show in the wettest and most unpleasant conditions there in decades.

Kelkette Leane C669A with her calf Rainbow Valley Robinny Leane at foot, won Senior Champion in the biggest class for Squares at the show, and then went on to be named Grand Champion but for me the highlight of the show was seeing all our Squares responding so beautifully to each different situation. They were in very limited space for a week, and couldn't lie down at the same time until they worked out how to put the jigsaw together, but they

were calm and well behaved throughout the show and did me proud.

Well-made plans just weren't to be for us this year! We were intending to take a small team to Bendigo, but with all the preparations for our daughter's wedding we were forced to abandon the idea. Our son's 21st birthday party meant we nearly didn't get to Millicent either but with a short three week preparation our Squares rose to the occasion once again. We took Leane with her calf at foot and two other nine month old calves and did well against the other breeds. All three SA Square Meaters studs were at Millicent and put on a great show and attracted very favourable attention.

One interested butcher, seeing the breed for the first time, remarked on how they were animals ideally suited

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to slaughter and the domestic market. The breed certainly made an impression.

We also competed at Mt Pleasant and Mt Barker, in the British Breeds, earlier this year. Leane, with her calf, was Champion British Breeds Female at Mt Barker. Damascus was beaten by a big Murray Grey, but the judge came across afterwards and was full of praise for him. Unfortunately, the near future will see us have to part company with Damascus as most of his calves are heifers which we will probably keep to build our herd.

All in all it has been another good year for us, and one which I have enjoyed immensely with the Square Meaters. They have again proved to be highly competitive with the bigger breeds and to be wonderfully easy to manage with a beautiful, friendly

temperament which makes them an absolute pleasure to handle.

Our vet says he loves working with our animals. They give their trust very willingly and I have found that no matter their age, they are not difficult to break in. Their ease of handling make them an ideal breed for a new comer to the industry, while at the same time they produce an excellent product for the market place, making them equally attractive to the serious beef producer. Recent successes in hoof & hook and carcass competitions interstate prove that.

We are indeed fortunate to have such a wonderful breed of cattle and an association which is always there for us. The pot of gold at the end of our rainbow here in Rainbow Valley is still looking golden! ■



Rainbow Valley Square Meaters Stud are delighted with the recent drought breaking rains and their property looks great.

Kelkette Square Meaters Stud

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Kelkette Puddin R1
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Photo: 22nd October 2009
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Dam: Kelkette Puddin R1
Born: 7th August 2009
Photo: 22nd October 2009

Kelkette Square Meaters Stud
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Reference Sire:Thurloo Park Sako

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They come from the land down under where the "Big Dry" sorts the truly efficient cattle from the wannabe's. Grass-fed is the Australian tradition.

At times, that grass is less than ideal, while at others it is as lush as any in the U.S. The Murray Grey was Australia's first gift to the cattle world—grass efficient, heat tolerant, fertile, calm, and possessed of a superb carcass prized especially for its tenderness. In the 1990's, some Murray Grey breeders became concerned that the trend towards larger cattle was threatening the very existence of the moderate sized, high efficiency Murray Grey. Under the leadership of noted grazier Rick Pisaturo, a new organization was formed to preserve the moderate Murrays and to continue to develop them into an even more efficient and outstanding carcass breed. Their name, **SQUARE MEATERS**, is both humorous and appropriate. They're compact, well-muscled cattle.

No, they're not miniatures, mate.

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- Outstanding efficiency
- Consistent tenderness and flavor
- Disposition, disposition, disposition
- Fertility, milk and mothering
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rwischov@uiuc.edu



Steady progress in the USA

Steady progress has been made in expanding the Square Meaters breed in the USA. Four farmers scattered around the mid section of the country have adopted the breed and are building their herds with foundation Murray Grey females bred AI to Caloona Trouble, Thurloo Park Winchester and natural service to several young sons of Trouble, Winchester and Sako. Most of the resulting calves have met the height range for class A registration.

Vaca Roja and Glenbrook Farm are considering importation of semen from bulls and embryos from

Australian stock.

Vaca Roja has placed several young bulls in breeding trials at Colorado State University. Glenbrook Farm has sold two yearling sons of Winchester to North Dakota State University for a breeding trial comparing Square Meaters to local Angus for grass finishing.

Windswept Farm, in anticipation of their relocation to southwest Iowa in mid 2011, is expanding with the purchase of several high quality Murray Grey females and possession interest in a Caloona Trouble son.



Grass finished Square Meaters will fuel expansion of the breed in the USA.

A number of bulls have been sold to several commercial beef herds and one dairy operation for breeding heifers due to the small calf size.

High grain prices have caused a tremendous interest in grass finishing and will continue to fuel expansion of the breed here in North America. ■

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Schools promote the product

By Jo van Elten and Dominic Auguste

The end product of all beef cattle breeding is meat. However, there are tremendous differences between breeds in the quality and quantity of this red meat.

All beef breeds make statements regarding the quality and amount of saleable meat yield or their bred and there is one good way available to all to prove these claims and that is Hoof and Hook competitions.

Many breeders however, feel that they do not have the time and expertise to prepare stock for carcass

competitions and if you are one of these, there are other options.

These days there are many high schools and colleges all across the country that have agricultural departments with competent and knowledgeable teachers that are willing and able to prepare steers for competition.

There are many scenarios regarding the financial side of the arrangement, following are some of the most common.

1 You give the animal to the school who breaks it in, feeds it, prepares it for showing (clipping etc) transports it and exhibits it.



High School student presents Square Meaters steer against all comers in Steer Competition

When the animal is auctioned the school takes out the cost of the feed etc and then the profit is halved between you and the school.

2 You take the steer to the school and pay them a weekly fee to feed, educate, prepare, transport and exhibit the steer and all

auction monies are yours.

3 The school purchases the steer from you at an agreed value and all costs / profits are theirs.

Whatever the financial arrangement you agree on, the school offers a stress free way to promote your stud and the Square Meaters breed, so give it a go. ■

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Breeding cattle for success

By Graeme Singleton

Making a business out of breeding registered or stud cattle is not quite as easy as it seems. Just because a bull and a cow are registered does not necessarily mean their progeny will be worthy of also being registered and sold as a stud animal.

Just as there are great rewards to be enjoyed from breeding and selling stud stock the laws of genetics will dictate that there will also be great disappointments. The challenge for all breeders is to work to maximise the chances of success and to minimize the odds of failure.

Regardless of what breed takes your fancy setting ideals and goals, being brutally honest with yourself and your cattle, and being committed to ongoing self education, are all vital if you want to move forward with your breeding program.

For Square Meaters breeders that means firmly establishing what it is you want to achieve through your breeding program. While Square Meaters are generally defined as early maturing, heavily muscled, polled and quiet grey cattle with shoulder height descriptors there is still room for variations to suit your particular environment and markets.

In a nutshell an animal which is not balanced or has poorly constructed feet or legs, has an aggressive or flighty nature or is sub-fertile has no place in any registered breeding program. Such animals will not take your program forward and should not be

registered, retained or on-sold as stud stock under any circumstances.

If in doubt take a good hard look at animals in your herd and ask yourself if they deserve to stay there. Only keep those animals which tick all the right boxes and get rid of any that you are unsure of.

Having made the investment to bred stud cattle it is ultimately your responsibility and in your best interest to seek out as much information as you can to give your program the best chance of success.

With those core decisions out of the way and less than ideal animals providing cash-flow the challenge is to then select for the characteristics which best suit your operation or those of your potential clients.

A real bonus for Square Meaters breeders is those decisions can be made with more confidence and much earlier than with other breeds of cattle.

If a calf does not measure up at weaning or as a yearling – in height, muscularity, early bloom or in regards to its temperament – don't just cull the calf but also take a good honest look at its dam. Regardless of the season if all your cows are being run under similar conditions only keep those ones which not only produce the best calves but which also go back in calf.

Successful breeders know only too well that as hard as those decisions can be to make, culling poor performing animals from your herd and getting rid of freeloaders is ultimately an essential element of moving a dynamic breeding program forward. ■

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What is a cows optimum size

By Graeme Singleton

IF you want to start an argument in a show shed or a saleyards there can be few topics more likely to get pulses racing than a debate about optimum cow size. I was involved in one such 'discussion' at the Dorrigo show in November when the judge put a massive and very fat 900 kilogram cow up for the Supreme Champion Female.

Her calf was a cracker, weighing about 275 kilograms at 6 months and clearly already on grain. She won over a cow of another breed which was noticeably lighter and smaller framed – around 450 kilograms – but with a very hungry 6

month old calf of about 200 kilograms chasing her around the ring.

The judge justified his decision by saying "you just can't go past such a strong big cow." Not surprisingly very few of the commercial breeders I was with agreed with him. All were of the opinion that out in the paddock that big fat cow would fade away and would be very inefficient when it came to weaning a good calf year after year. All said they'd much rather have the smaller framed cow at their place.

That opinion is now finding favor around the world with reports that more and more commercial operators are working to

reduce the frame score of their breeding herds as they seek to improve the efficiency of their operations in the wake of a tightening cost/price squeeze.

That anecdotal evidence is increasingly being supported by cutting edge research which can be readily accessed via the internet.

In one such study at the University of Wisconsin (USA) Olson, Peschel, Paulson and Rutlege used hereford cows to investigate the effects of cow size on cow productivity.

They found that expressed as a ratio of cow metabolic weight, calf weaning weights relative to the number of cows exposed, the smaller framed cows came out on top by a figure of 1.63 to 1.15 for the largest cows

When they looked at the weight of calves slaughtered

compared to cows exposed, the smaller cows were also way in front by a ration of 4.10 to 2.90 for the largest cows.

Another US researcher Heather Smith Thomas looked at why more and more 'ranchers' were tending back to a moderate frame size.

She quotes Colorado calf producer Kit Pharo as saying "It doesn't really matter how big your cattle are, or how fast they can grow, or how pretty they are, or what their breeding is – if they are not profitable,"

"When we consider cow efficiency, a smaller cow will always have an advantage over a bigger cow. Smaller cows can do more for less. If your ranch can support 100 head of 1400-pound (625 kg) cows, it will support 120 head of 1100-pound (490 kg) cows – on the exact same inputs. That's 20

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percent more cows producing 20 percent more calves – and I guarantee those 120 smaller cows will always produce more total pounds of beef than the 100 larger cows. On top of that, the calves out of the smaller cows (because they have smaller individual weights) will be worth more per pound,” Pharo said

Pharo said the feed requirements for the larger cow are not compensated for cost-wise by the additional size of her calf, compared to the smaller cow.

“A cow eats about 2.5 to 3 percent of her own weight in feed every day. The larger animal will have a larger feed requirement. Yet she cannot wean off enough extra pounds of calf to justify that extra feed cost.

“A cow that weighs 1000 pounds (446 kg) can easily wean off 50 percent of her own body weight. In contrast, it is much harder



Research is showing, and leading producers are confirming, that moderate frame cows such as Square Meaters have a reproductive and production edge over larger framed females

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Rainbow Estate Xocet: Senior & Grand Champion Bull, Group E 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 Keltette 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 Mare 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

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Outside the Square

for a 1200 pound (540kg) cow to wean off 50 percent of her own weight, and a 1400 (625kg) pound cow will never be able to wean off 50 percent of her own weight and stay in the herd. Some of the smaller cows will actually come close to weaning off 60 percent of their own body weight," he said.

"Early on we were selecting for more and more growth and performance. This increased the size of our cows, while decreasing our net profits. Eventually we took a good hard look at our good old grandma cows—cows that had done everything right for 10 to 16 years without missing a calf. These were our most efficient and profitable cows. Their pedigrees and EPDs were not all that impressive, but they were making us money. Those good old grandma cows were considerably smaller

than our other more modern cows," he explained.

"If smaller cows can produce more total pounds that are worth more per pound on the exact same inputs – then smaller cows are obviously much closer to optimum than bigger cows."

Smith Thomas then put the argument about "how small can we go?"

In the United States it would seem that answer is very much dictated to by the feedlot industry, but with the looming world food shortage Pharo argues that might not be the case for much longer.

"The current beef production model was built on cheap grain and cheap fuel. Times have changed! Cheap grain and cheap fuel are things of the past. Therefore, I believe the parameters for the commodity beef industry will soon be changing. As

we move away from our current corn-based system to a grass-based system, optimum cow size will be reduced even more," Pharo said.

"If fuel and grain prices keeps going up, what we think is optimum cow size now may actually be too big, a few years from now. When prices drop, the picture will dramatically change, and stockmen will have to seriously look at trying to raise cattle that can thrive on a minimum of harvested feeds."

In Australia, beef industry consultant Terry McCosker voiced similar views in the Queensland Country Life, in December 2010.

He said the alarming poor performance and profitability of breeder herds in tropical and sub-tropical areas was related to the selection of animals based on growth rather than reproduction which had

resulted in herds of big cows with poor calving rates.

He said the focus needs to switch to reproductive efficiency.

"If the cow is 600kg and weans a calf that is 200kg, the efficiency is 33 per cent. If a 400 kilogram cow weans a 200kg calf the efficiency is 50 per cent. If you get the same size calf out of a bigger cow the cost is the feed," McCosker said.

"Generally stud breeders have focused on the bullock-producing market, breeding animals for the fattening and growing end of things. That's the tail wagging the dog."

"The northern breeding herd needs different genetics to the current genetics what has put the emphasis on size. Commercial breeders need bulls that come from cows that have had consecutive calves in under 365 days and those cows should be small cows." ■

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