

Devons heavier than expected

It is not unusual for meat company buyers to under-estimate the weight of Red Devon cattle being consigned to slaughter, a breeder says.

A selection of Red Devon cattle from Ken and Prue McDowall's Rotokawa herd near Wanganui and Graeme Dyke's Pahiatua property were again on display at this year's Central Districts Field Days in Feilding where they were used for cattle handling demonstrations.

They also ran a competition to guess the weight of two 19-month-old bulls and found the estimates varied widely.



"One guy was within a kilogram of their combined weight, but the range was all over the place. One of the bulls weighed 748kg and the other was 714kg as they left the farm," Ken says.

Riverlands livestock manager Kevin Benseman agrees Devon-sired cattle are impressive on the hook and can see why buyers might under-estimate their weights and grading.

"I visited Ken's farm recently after driving past for many years and was always impressed with the stock I could see from the road.

The temperament was outstanding. They're big animals too. I've already talked to one runholder about buying some Devon bulls to try this year because I'd like to see more of these cattle coming through our plant," Benseman says.