

New Zealand

RED DEVON

Cattle Breeders Association

Newsletter  February 2020

Welcome all to the first newsletter of the decade.

This is my first attempt at a newsletter via the Google account without Kevin's valued assistance, so bear with me if it doesn't look as professional.

Your Council intends to get more communications out to all the members. We plan to send out newsletters after each Council meeting and in between we invite members to contribute articles about their own stud activities or other items they think may be of interest to other members. Please find attached the first one of such contributions from Ahuroa Stud. Maggie has been on Council since the last AGM and has proven to be a valuable and enthusiastic addition to our Council.

Angus Cottey from the UK visited NZ recently and on a whirlwind tour of the North Island visited many of our studs. I found him knowledgeable and refreshing. Angus has retired from breeding Red Devons but his passion still shone through. His firsthand knowledge of our association and a lot of its members goes back over 20 years.

The drought is biting hard in many parts of the country and stock water is a problem for many farmers. On the bright side this is a time when our Devons prove their best and maintain body weight or even increase it on rank stinky grass that many other breeds would turn their noses up at.

Our next Council meeting will take place by conference call on the February 25 and I expect to have more updates following that.

Please enter the AGM date in your diaries, Saturday May 2 at Hamilton Airport. It will be a very important meeting for the future of our association. Notices will be sent out in due course but I expect lunch to start at 12 and the AGM at 1 pm.

In the mean time enjoy the contribution from Ahuroa Stud and think hard about writing a contribution yourself in the future. Email to nzreddevons@gmail.com

Dirk Sieling

Acting President
NZRDCBA



<u>Owners:</u>	Ian (Hutch) and Maggie Hutchinson
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As relatively new members Dirk suggested to Maggie and Hutch to write a short article for the Red Devon Cattle Breeders Association about their Red Devon Cattle farm at Ahuroa. Ahuroa Red Devon is located in the Ahuroa Valley 10km west of Puhoi and about 50km north of Auckland, 10km inland from the Puhoi Pub for those that know it.

Maggie (nee Berger) and Hutch bought Maggie's parents farm from the Berger Family Estate in July 2017. The original dairy farm was 200 acres and we have subsequently purchased adjoining land so the farm is now 330 acres.

Our farm is lightly stocked with around 90 Red Devon Cattle and 10 Wiltshire sheep that over two years have multiplied into 50 Wiltshire sheep. Our aim is to sustainably farm pedigree red devon cattle and our primary objective is to enjoy farming and raise the awareness of the Red Devon cattle breed.

Hutch has a Civil and Structural Consulting Engineering business in Orewa and completes farm duties outside business hours.



Hutch with Daisy
Dam: TO Tessa 1329 Sire: Vix Jurrasic (AI), of Daisy not Hutch!

Maggie looks after the farm during the day and is in her first year on Council of the Association.



Maggie with Jack

As new members that wanted to learn to know more about the Association we attended the AGM in Stratford last May and Maggie ended up on the Council.

The farm has been redeveloped since taking ownership in 2017 and we have replaced all fences, the entire water supply system, new races, yards including installing a new bore and genuine Aussie Comet windmill.



Comet Windmill

The water supply system on the farm needed to be replaced and we were looking for a sustainable way of supplying water to the farm. A quick visit to Macksville Australia to view the Comet windmill factory made the water pumping decision easy. The 22' (7m) fan diameter windmill pumps water from 250m below ground at a rate of around 1,200 litres per hour in a gentle breeze. The windmill is 15m tall and the two 6,000 gallon water storage tanks at the base of the windmill provide some perspective as to its size.



The herd grazing the summer grass

Maggie has put together a website for the farm and it has many photos and videos of the farm in its gallery section. You can view it at www.hutchinson.co.nz

When we bought the farm Maggie suggested Red Devon cattle as her grandfather had used Red Devon cattle as bullocks in the early 1900s. After thorough research Hutch and Maggie were fortunate to visit Wayne and Trish Aspin's Tinopai Stud to purchase their first two yearling bulls (Jed and Rye). After brief discussions with Wayne in September 2017, Hutch and Maggie ended up buying Wayne and Trish's entire herd of 52 in calf pedigree Red Devon cattle. "We could not have been in a better place at the right time".

The in-calf cows remained on Wayne and Trish's farm until January 2018 so that we could complete the much-needed water reticulation system and fencing. The cows arrived in January 2018 and that is where the journey began.



The herd on the move between paddocks in our dry summer

The Aspin's autumn calved and our first autumn of new calves in the muddy north Auckland soils proved difficult, we persisted but struggled. An executive decision was made to rest the cows for 6 months and transfer over to spring calving. Having calves in warm dry conditions has proven to be the best decision we made as our soils are not conducive to wet weather. Although little rain this year, we are lucky enough to have avoided the very dry conditions being experienced around much of the country.

It has been rewarding to have visitors from both NZ and overseas visit us at the farm to view our herd and we owe the quality of the breeding to Wayne and Trish Aspin.

This year we are actively investigating importing quality semen from overseas to dilute the NZ gene pool. We are flying to Dunedin on the 27th February to visit Genomnz to gain a better insight into the DNA enhancement process.

We welcome any members if you are in the area to call in and see us.

Warmest Regards,
Maggie and Hutch

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Members List

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