

New Zealand

RED DEVON

Cattle Breeders Association

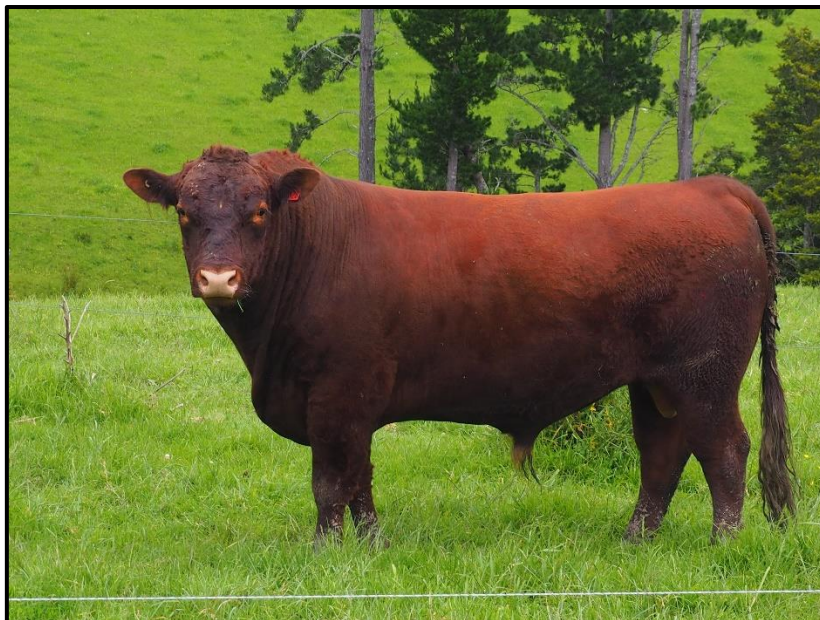
Newsletter 🌸 December 2021

Hi all,

I have the good fortune to be responsible for the Christmas newsletter this year. Merry Xmas and a wonderful 2022 to you all, it has got to be better than 2021!

Northland has had a number of very high humidity days and regular warm rain over the past few weeks. This has resulted in amazing grass growth rates and the kikuyu grass is motoring. The stock has been putting on heaps of weight and being well fed during mating, should result in a good concentrated calving next year.

As some of you will know, I am currently between farms and I have been leasing a small block of land not far from my home base, just outside Whangarei. As a result, I've had to cut my herd size back to bare basics, so I only have 20 x mature cows going to the bull this season. This spring, Arcadia Pine is my herd sire and he is featured in the current issue of Bulldust. Along with 16 x 15mth old heifers that are being mated to a new young bull, Thelmara Remington 869. Remington has very few genetic links to my herd so he should be a good outcross for me. Going forward I am hoping to use 869 as the future herd sire.



Arcadia Pine, pictured above, has also been selected for the 2021 Dairy-Beef Progeny test program. It is a requirement that 70+ AI straws of semen are collected for the program. This was a first for me and was done on farm, in September this year - an interesting exercise. I find it amazing how breeding cattle is really long-term. Breeding decisions you make today, won't really impact your herd for another 4-5 years. I've been breeding Devon cattle for almost 30 years now and I still think I'm only just getting started with so much more, still to learn.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, The Northland Red Devon Club has been restarted after a number of years in hibernation. We had a great day out at Rockview Red Devons near Dargaville. Colleen & Ross had their cattle in excellent condition and had a new crop of AI sired calves at foot. It is really pleasing to see the growth rates Rockview are achieving. I think it just goes to show, with the right genetics and good feeding, our Devon cattle can achieve as good or better results than any other traditional British breeds.

With the prospect of a wet summer and amazing cattle prices, it's a great time to be a beef farmer... if we could just get this Government to stop putting the boot into rural NZ, things would be rosy.

All the Best,
Gavin Cooper of Arcadia Devons
Red Devon Association Council, Marketing Lead

Note from the Chairman

Seasons greetings to all members. As 2021 draws to a close it is time to reflect on another year impacted by events outside of our control. The effects of COVID have ruled our lives since March 2020 and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. We can only hope that high vaccination rates means our beloved leader will allow us to resume some sort of normality and not continue to be restrained by the 10 percent of non conformists.

The agricultural sector has been less affected by the pandemic and even our lifestylers will be grateful to have a few animals and a bit more space to endure the lockdowns we were subjected to. Our thoughts should be with the hospitality and tourism sectors who have really done it hard.

On the farming front the effects of last year's drought continued to affect many, with lower grass covers, reduced supplements and lighter weights impacting on overall results. In my case 600day weights were 150kg back on normal despite additional supplementary feed.

There seems to be an increased interest in the Red Devon breed of late with strong demand for females, especially in the South Island, and most bulls sold in the spring following our advertising efforts. We have new member applications coming in with a couple of potentially 30+ cow herds being formed.

We are investigating if there are ways to work with the Australian Association that will benefit both. The ABRI charges are increasing and registry issues need resolving.

Hopefully the new year will bring a return to a more normal way of life and the great growing conditions being experienced currently will last till the autumn. On behalf of Council we wish you a Merry Christmas with family and all the best for the coming year.

Regards,
Heughan Gordon
Red Devon Association Council, Chairman

2022 AGM date and location

Please note that the AGM is tentatively set for a weekend in late May in the central North Island. The likely date is the 21st of May at the Te Pahu Hall, to be confirmed next month. There will be an associated farm visit nearby on the same weekend. Look for details in the January newsletter.

Next farm visit February 2022 in Hawkes Bay

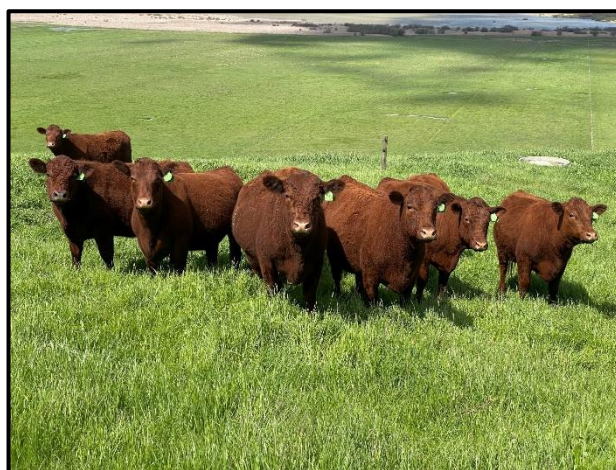
The next farm visit is being hosted by Heughan Gordon, Millstone Stud located at Waipukurau, Hawkes Bay. This is planned to be held in mid February, precise date will be confirmed in the January newsletter, or email Heughan if you are making plans and want to be advised as soon as it is settled.

Modest fee increase

Fees are not automatically increased, but costs go up with inflation and changes in service fees so need to be reviewed periodically. The Council has reviewed fees with several guiding principles such as good value, balanced budgets, and pay our way. Minimising costs to members is an overarching goal, so fees are not automatically increased and have not been raised since 2018. But general inflation and a significant change in ABRI fees has led the Council to approve a \$2.50 increase in dam fees and shift transfer fees to \$25, effective in the new calendar year from January 1. This increase may not quite balance the budget but it will come close and increased membership would see it all balance out. So go recruit! Membership fees will not be changed.

New member introduction for Para Hills Red Devon

New members Jeremy and Monique Stead have jumped into the Red Devon adventure with both feet. Their Red Devon stock includes 15 two year heifers sourced from members Ahuroa Stud and Dave Bellamy, and 16 yearling heifers and a bull from Millstone Stud. Pictured below are the yearlings on the left and the others on the right. Looks like they are all coming along well!



Based 20 minutes south of Hastings in Poukawa, the Steads have 80 acres of bare land purchased in 2017, with plans to develop three house sites on the land. They have completed one of the homes and live there with their three children: Elsie 7, James 4 and Sophie 18 months.

Jeremy comes from a dairy farming background but operates a construction company to cover expenses. He reports appreciating the work with the stock as time for himself because there is no cell-signal in the paddocks (or so he says!) and the stock don't talk back. Not the way everyone kicks back but it will certainly keep him busy!

Red Devon genetics proved themselves out to Jeremy over the first three years they were putting stock on the land, starting with some cross stock whose nature he quite liked. Feeding out starts early in Hawke's Bay when things get dry, and Jeremy found the stock were quite likable and would come right up to him. He started reading up on Red Devon and learned more from members he eventually purchased from.

The supportive nature of the Red Devon breeder community complemented the nature of the stock, Jeremy found, in contrast to some other breeds that he researched. Now even the more experienced locals are seeking information from Jeremy on the fine looking stock in his paddocks, and he's pleased to be able to continue sharing that supportive sense of community further. Ideally Jeremy would like to have an 800 to 1000 acre sheep and beef breeding farm in central Hawkes Bay. Which makes me wonder if he'd also be running the construction company and still consider this his relaxing hobby?

Seeking feedback on marketing efforts

The Red Devon Association seeks feedback from membership on marketing efforts. Review to date suggests the year has been successful, with bull stock cleared and prices on the rise. Let us know if that is your experience, via message to any Council member or with specific advice to marketing lead Gavin Cooper, contact details at the end of this newsletter. Suggestions to expand next year's marketing efforts are encouraged, send them in!

The Council continues to support the market by sharing data on pricing, anonymously. Recent reported transactions this month include mature cows at an average of \$1850 per animal. If you trade stock, please report your transaction values. Contact Dirk, Danielle, or any member of the Council, details for communication on the last page of this newsletter.

Wholesale herd offering, plus more stock offered individually

Red Devon stock transactions continue at a high pace. Whole herd offerings have also been made and taken up, with another one coming up, reluctantly driven by the unexpected events of the global pandemic.

New member Phil Pigneri took on the Manawa Toru stud from Logan Craft, whose stock are now enjoying a pleasant environment just north of Tauranga. This herd is now available for sale and Phil prefers to keep them together, but will consider offers.

The herd includes 10 cows, four with heifer calves at foot, and the other six due to calve by end of 2021; as well as 4 heifers, half of which are yearlings. Six of the cows were put in calf by Ferdinand, and the remainder by Valentino, who is available with the herd. More details available on the website. Examples shown here:



