



GLORY OF GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY FOR RAFF ANGUS

THE Raff family have bred Angus for 50 years and celebrate this milestone with their 2015 bull sale on property at Mundibulanga, Drillham, August 10.

They are presenting a draft of bulls that truly reflect the type of animal they set out to produce from their humble beginnings in 1965.

"These bulls have been bred within our strict and somewhat uncompromising breeding program over the now many years," stud manager Andrew Raff said.

"We do believe that this draft of bulls can meet every realistic and commonsense requirement for profitable beef production in Australia."

Mr Raff, with his wife Anna and their children Harry, Charlie, Georgiana and Olivia, control all aspects of the business, managing a herd that is run on an aggregation made up of five adjoining properties.

Founder David Raff and his wife Jill are still actively involved in providing full support to the younger generation.

"As we are changing our direction in coming years this sale contains a number of elite bulls that we would usually be retaining for within stud use," Mr Raff said of the coming sale.

"If ever there was a time for fellow stud breeders to visit us we strongly encourage you to make the trip up this year."

The Raffs had a breeding opinion a little different to the mainstream, but they had never lost sight of the breed's unique ability to produce an outstanding product, he said. "That is, a piece of beef that is consistently of favourable eating quality with natural tenderness, marbling and external finish.

"Nor have we lost sight of the breed's unique fertility, maternal and foraging ability. However, we get paid on weight."

Since 1965 the Raffs have based a breeding program on trying to produce breeding seed stock that has extra growth to allow for more weight-gaining potential and extra-yielding benefits.

"We are humbled by the fact that we are a family-run and -owned business that has now survived its 50th year in the same business living 100 per cent off the proceeds generated from our cattle.

"We are humbled by the fact that on an annual basis over 85pc of our sales go to repeat customers that continue to come back, year in year out.

"If our clients were not returning it would mean that our product was failing."

Variance of type and breeding direction between each seed stock program across the country was important, but genetic



Andrew Raff carries on the long family tradition of breeding high-quality Angus cattle. INSET: Raff Blackbird D349 – the 2012 Brisbane Royal Show grand champion Angus female and Interbreed champion.

Low birth weight obsession

A PULLET lays small eggs not because she was mated to a low-egg weight rooster but because it is nature's way of dealing with early reproduction – think about it! The birthweight of a calf at 6 per cent bodyweight from a 500kg cow is 30kg. The birthweight of a calf at 6pc bodyweight from a 750kg cow is 45kg. Relative to the size of the cow the calves came out of, there is no difference yet instantly people assume that the heavier calf will cause calving trouble. Isn't it time the industry put less emphasis on actual birthweight and more on the actual shape of the calf, maybe even the shape of the cow that the calf came out of? Think about it! – RAFF ANGUS.

Elite bulls that we would usually be retaining

diversity was essential for the long-term sustainability and survivability of any species.

Over the years the Angus breed had put enormous selection pressures on a handful of specific performance traits, Mr Raff said.

"Because of this we have seen a limited number of sires that fit this criteria being used extensively, which has unquestionably seen a dramatic narrowing of the Angus gene pool.

"The word 'outcross' is now used with the belief that one generation removed from

a highly used sire entitles the word 'outcross' to be flagged.

"Due to our varying beliefs to mainstream and our clear breeding program direction, that has been maintained since establishment 50 years ago, our herd must undoubtedly now be considered 'outcross' or at the very least 'genetically different to the mainstream Australian Angus'."

With record cattle prices being received

and with forecasts suggesting it was set to continue for quite the foreseeable future the Australian beef industry had never looked brighter, Mr Raff said.

The premiums for quality continued to increase at the same level with the rise of the general market place.

If there is to be a period of 'catch up' then these years ahead might do just that and we all should look forward to it and enjoy it, he said.

"As most would be aware our business model and place of residence will be changing.

"As this may be our last on-property sale we sincerely thank every person who has followed us over the years.

"It is with a touch of sadness that I write these final words. Last year I came up with a quote: 'Life's success should not be judged on the business dealings that you make but should be judged on the friendships that you make from those business dealings'.

"It would be great to have your support this year to help celebrate with us this our 50th year."

The sale starts noon on Monday, August 10, with gates opening from 8am on sale morning for viewing.

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