

Webb business driven



**ON-FARM by
SHEENA COFFEY**

PHILIP Webb established his cattle business on a few firm business principles, backed up by proven genetics.

The operation – Webb Black Simmentals, based at Glenburn – has blended into this mix a belief in being an industry forerunner, “doing bold things and doing them first”, according to stud principal and real estate director Mr Webb.

And keen for his investment in the agricultural industry to function successfully, Mr Webb is quick to stress it is not just for lifestyle that he has bought back into the area in which he grew up.

“I’m not here for lifestyle – I want it to be an investment.”

The operation, which is managed by experienced stud and commercial producer Lynton Harrison, has been built – twice – from the ground up since 2005, after the property was burnt out in the Black Saturday bush fires.

On a combined total of 350

At a glance

- ◆ Webb Black Simmentals, Glenburn
- ◆ 350 hectares of leased and owned land
- ◆ 130 head stud black Simmentals



■ The next generation of cattle genetics: Webb Black Simmentals’ stud foreman Lynton Harrison and Philip Webb pictured in front of bulls for sale last week.

hectares of owned and leased land, 130 stud black Simmental breeders – heading towards 200 head – graze the lush perennial pastures.

They have been bred up from a mix of US sires including Gateway Black Simmentals and closer to home, Bonny Dale, Western Australia. Females have mostly been secured from the Brewers Simmental herd at Koetong.

Buying decisions were heavily influenced by sires displaying calving ease, “one of the most crucial traits”, low birth weight, good growth and carcass traits – specifically marbling, muscling and eye muscle area.

The stud is almost entirely black, because as Mr Harrison emphatically stated “black is best”, quickly adding: “to fit into the crossbred market with Angus cattle”.

Having previously run black Simmentals crossed with black baldy cows in a commercial operation at his family property at Holbrook, NSW, Mr Harrison has a firm belief in the breed.

He said they crossed well with British bred cattle and help to reduce fat content and increase meat yield, they gave the best first-cross of any breed and fit any market specification.

“You can put them into milk vealers programs or the feedlot or you can grow them out to Jap ox if you like,” Mr Harrison said.

Currently focused on breeding bulls – they held their first bull sale last week – the property will soon have a commercial herd of Angus females.

The breeding herd is joined twice a year from 12-14 months of age for heifers, in May and

October, with bulls used from the same age.

Calves have been weaned from six months of age, which will potentially be reduced over time.

Both for cash flow and a marketing tool, the Simmental-Angus progeny will be sold through weaner sales or to feedlots and will provide proof of the potential the Simmental holds for straight-bred commercial producers.

And with people “looking to make more money and make it quicker”, the first-cross will have enormous possibilities, Mr Harrison said.

“If you can have a product which keeps your herd black, polled, with more meat, greater fertility and longevity in your herd, you can only make more money.”

Bidding up a storm

A PAIR of repeat buyers bid up a storm at the Webb Black Simmentals’ first bull sale at Glenburn last week.

Keen to repeat the successes achieved at home with a bull bought from the stud four months earlier, Steve and Rebecca Marriott, Kisantra Downs, Outtrim, secured five of the 11 bulls offered at auction.

Across the draft, they paid an average \$3500, and a top rate of \$4250 on 750-kilogram Webb De Niro, an artificial insemination son of Bar CK Vision 227P and out of Simmgene Red X Otica SGA P X 421, who had a scrotal circumference of 43 square centimetres, rump and rib fat of four millimetres each and



■ Steve and Rebecca Marriott, Kisantra Downs, Outtrim, (far left and right), paid to a top of \$4250 to secure five bulls at the Webb Black Simmental sale. Pictured centre are property manager Lynton Harrison, owner Philip Webb and brother Brian.

an eye muscle area (EMA) of 95.

The bulls will be used over Angus-Friesian and Hereford-Friesian cows for milk vealer production.

Kerrisdale Estate, Strath Creek, paid the auction’s highest price of \$5500 for a son of CNS Dream On L186, out of GW Miss Lucky Buck 906J.

The bull had an impressive EMA of 105 and hit the scales at 660kg.

Rounding out the sales was local property Lojosa Springs, Glenburn, who paid \$3000 and \$2750 for sons of CNS Dream On L186 and Bar CK Vision 227P, Sally Abbott Smith, Glenbur, who took a Dream On son at \$3500 and Tony Cardamore,

through Elders Pakenham, who secured a Lancaster Black Magic LCS P son at \$2750.

Stud principal Philip Webb was beaming at the close of the auction, declaring the sale to be “a great first effort”.

Elders conducted the sale with Ron Rutledge at the rostrum.

– SHEENA COFFEY

In brief

Genetics seminar

A SEMINAR on sustainable profit through genetics and soil carbon seminar has been organised by Paringa Livestock.

Keynote speaker is Lee Leacham, a third-generation US cattleman who will discuss beef genetics and the role of a smaller, more efficient, cross-bred beef cow in the future.

The seminar will be held on October 13 at Tom and Olivia Lawson’s Yea property Miss Youngs.

■ **RSVP essential. Contact: 5797 2743 or 0434 146 795.**

Beef directions

WELCOME Swallow principals Jim and Suzy Martin will hold a beef open day at their Benalla property looking at the future of the beef cattle industry and understanding and adding value.

The field day, sponsored by Meat and Livestock Australia More Beef From Pastures, will host speakers discussing the directions of the beef market, on a domestic and global front, analyse breeding and trading programs and profitability and discuss feedlot specifications and reward structures.

The field day is on October 14 at Illalangi, Benalla.

■ **RSVP essential. Contact: 5767 2244 or 0418 577 627.**

Fostering closer ties

PRODUCERS keen to forge closer ties with their clients have been encouraged by Southern and Tropical Beef Technology Services to host a Closer to your Clients workshop.

The workshop picks apart estimated breeding values (EBV) and details how to best utilise them for genetic improvement.

■ **Anyone wanting to host a workshop should contact Andrew Byrne, (02) 6773 3357.**