

Sires of proven value™

# Looking to 2009

Climatic conditions last summer added to the challenge of preparing bulls for sale in 2008. In contrast Trevor, Andrew, Matt and Roger were all reporting that growth rates in their current crop of yearling bulls have been tremendous up to January and then slowing down a bit as pastures dry out. They are looking forward to presenting their bulls which will be ready for inspection at the Bull Walks and then for Sale. The calendar for these events is:

## Landcorp Bull Walks

**DUNCRAIGEN, Angus:** Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March  
Weir Road, Manapouri, 10.30am start

**DEEP CREEK, Angus:** Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April  
Broadlands Road, Reporoa, 10.30am start

**WAIKITE, Simmental:** Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April  
Earthquake Flat Road, Waikite Valley, 1.00pm start

**KAPIRO, Angus:** Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April  
Takou Bay Road, Kerikeri, 10.30am start

## Landcorp Bull Sales

**DUNCRAIGEN, Angus:** Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May,  
On farm, Set Price Paddock Sale  
Weir Road, Manapouri, 11.00am start

**DEEP CREEK, Angus:** Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June,  
On farm, Public Auction,  
Broadlands Road, Reporoa  
Viewing from 11.00 am, Sale starts 1.00pm

**WAIKITE, Simmental:**  
By appointment with Roger Bedford  
On farm, Set Price Private Treaty Sale  
Earthquake Flat Road, Waikite Valley

**KAPIRO, Angus:** Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June  
On farm, Set Price Paddock Sale  
Takou Bay Road, Kerikeri, 11.00am start



Above: Landcorp Angus bull, Duncraig, Te Anau

**For further information on the Bull Walks, Bull Sales and Catalogues, please contact:**

**Matt Canton**  
Farm Manager  
Duncraig  
027 497 2479

**Andrew Kirk**  
Farm Manager  
Kaplo  
027 430 7922

**Trevor Grimwood**  
Farm Manager  
Deep Creek  
027 478 1599

**Chris Neill**  
Genetics Marketing  
Manager, Landcorp  
0508 526 326

**Roger Bedford**  
Farm Manager  
Waikite  
07 333 1835

**Bruce Orr**  
Genetics Manager  
PGG Wrightson  
027 592 2121

# The contribution of Landcorp Angus

The purchase of a Landcorp Angus bull is a long term investment in the maternal ability of your breeding herd. The primary driver of sire selection in our Landcorp Angus breeding programme herds is improving the profitability of commercial beef production. The traits we select for in our programme are:

- Number of calves weaned
- Weaning weight of calves
- Growth to 400 days

The performance levels of the modern Angus make them a versatile dual purpose breed with the ability to achieve slaughter weight and condition before the second winter. The growth rates to 400 days achieved by Landcorp Angus make them very popular as early maturing cattle.

In addition to the genetic selection, Landcorp is rigorous in assessing temperament and structural soundness to ensure the bulls offered for sale are worthy of the guarantee we offer.

Landcorp's two selling options offer buyers the opportunity to select from all the bulls offered for sale either in the open forum of auction or the controlled environment of set price sale. With PGG Wrightson supporting Landcorp's bull sales, customers can readily involve their agent in the selection process.



Above: Commercial Angus cows, Rangiputa Station, Northland



Above: Yearling Landcorp Simmental bull, Waikite Station, Waikite Valley

# The contribution of Landcorp Simmental

The Landcorp Simmental is bred as a Terminal Sire to complement and capitalise on the selection for breeding ability in our Angus cattle. Landcorp Simmental selection is focused on fast growth to a heavy carcass weight and the herd rates very highly in Australasia for this.

The outcome is that Landcorp Simmental x Angus calves are born with the advantages of a background in genetic selection for carcass growth in the Simmental and for early growth in the Angus, together with the hybrid vigour benefits in the crossbred calf.

Ultimately the farm business benefits from moderate-sized Angus cows producing fast growing crossbred progeny that achieve heavy carcass weights.

The average BV Carcass Weight for Landcorp Simmental bulls is 17.4kg heavier than the average recorded Simmental in Australasia. When we translate that to the added value of an average Landcorp Simmental bull producing 30 progeny per year for 3 years with half the genetic gain coming from the bull, there is a \$2,450 lifetime advantage over an average recorded Australasian Simmental bull. In this calculation we have assumed a schedule price of \$3.50/kg.

# End of an Era

The Waihora Romney flock has been relocated to Landcorp Goudies Farm at Reporoa. It marks the end of an era in which dedicated researchers and farm advisors challenged New Zealand ram and bull breeders to increase farm production through selection of sires for productive traits. Following is a very brief summary of Waihora's role in this process.

A more extensive review is available courtesy of Dr Clive Dalton on his blog site: <http://woolshed1.blogspot.com/search/label/Lands%20and%20Survey>

**1967** The germ of an idea by two Whatawhata scientists (Lang and Hight) that the Lands & Survey Rotorua District 280,000 ewe flock could provide a source from which to screen twinning ewes for a research trial to develop higher lambing percentage.

Superintendent of Land Development, Rotorua (Alf Tinkham) agreed to twinning 2th ewes being screened into a nucleus flock at Waihora from L&S farms around Taupo.

**1968** The new Superintendent of Land Development, Rotorua (Eric Gibson) recognised the potential of population genetics to increase sheep performance and pushed the programme ahead.

MAF Whatawhata Hill Country Research Station personnel were the drivers behind the programme and data processors with L&S staff doing the on farm work. At one time there was something like 7,000 stock units being recorded and an index worked out for them using manual calculations for all their traits - all done by Graeme Hight.

**1969** Lands & Survey (Rotorua Land Development District) ceased buying rams from the stud industry.

**1975** Waihora Sheep Improvement Programme involved 7,700 ewe, 3900 ewe hoggets and 3,000 ram hoggets and run on the adjoining L&S farms of Waihora, Kakaho and Otutira.

**1979** Ballot sale of ex-Nucleus 4th rams to Sheeplan users.

**1980** Ballot sale of ex-Nucleus 4th rams to Sheeplan users.

**1981** Ballot sale of ex-Nucleus 4th rams to Sheeplan users.

**1982** First public auction 78 x 2th rams sold (av \$155); 20 x 4th rams sold (av \$343).

First application of computer recording and display of animal records.

**1983** Public auction 75 x 2th rams sold (av \$247); 19 x 4th rams sold (\$932).

Developed first relational database for animal data management.

**1984** Public auction 50 x 2th rams sold (av \$278); 14 x 4th rams sold (av \$854)

**1987** Lands and Survey farming assets sold to Landcorp.

**1990** Started FE testing ram lambs

**1996** First Landcorp BLUP-estimated Breeding Values applied in selections.

**2001** Lambs assigned to parents using DNA parentage testing technology.

**2004** Sires of Proven Value™ programme started to sell rams by private treaty to the public.

Landcorp's Waihora Romney sheep have proven themselves across a wide diversity of topographic and climatic conditions. Scanning rates are over 200% (including triplets) and lambing up to 160% while maintaining high ewe survivability against challenges such as facial eczema. The introduction of multi trait breeding selection indices in the 1970s then BLUP breeding values estimations since 1996 have driven genetic improvement in the breeding programme which in turn is transferring improvement in performance in our commercial flocks.

As we move the flock to Goudies, the exciting prospect of SNP Chips and Genomic BVs look to offer the means for future quantum gains in selection for increased sheep productivity, - especially in traits which have a low heritability, or are costly or difficult to measure.

Ken Burt and his team have had an enormous task over the past 12 months, preparing Goudies for its new role while keeping the business going at Waihora, and then finally making the move. Ken is justifiably proud of what has been achieved and he's looking forward to showing you his "old" flock at their "new" home.



Above: Landcorp Romney ram hoggets, Waihora Station

# Questions and Answers

**1. "Your rams are always improving, however worm resistance or worm resilience is always an area that has great potential for genetic gain. Do you see a time when this economic and time consuming problem can be overcome?"**

Yes, it is a time consuming and costly problem. It's doubtful that worm resistance can be fully overcome but we can reduce its impact and its cost. We're using WormStar in our Romney and Landmark programmes and using those results in our selections. The genotyping service for this has only just been released so we are not likely to see much progress for a while yet.

**2. "I farm in North Canterbury and would like to buy in 2 tooth ewes, all of which would be mated to terminal sires. Can you supply me annually with a line of Landcorp Landmark 2th ewes to sustain my flock and Landcorp Lamb Supreme terminal sires to use on the whole flock?"**

The short answer is Yes. While we have followed a fairly traditional model of marketing our rams and bulls, we are interested to look at opportunities that utilise the scale of our commercial business. We're also convinced that Landcorp's livestock genetics do perform and we would consider arrangements to grow out lambs and weaners bred from Landcorp sires.

If you have a proposal that could benefit your business and ours, we would be pleased to discuss it with you to see how we could make it work.

Contact Chris on freephone 0508 526 326 or email [sires@landcorp.co.nz](mailto:sires@landcorp.co.nz)

**3. "Landcorp ram prices are pretty steep given the state of the sheep industry – how do you justify them?"**

It was a challenging year to sell rams with commercial ewe numbers back due to the 2007/08 drought and pressure for dairy conversions, combined with lamb prices for 2007/08 that discouraged lamb production. All this contributed to commercial sheep farmers, including Landcorp, feeling "considerable discomfort".

Rams purchased in 2008/09 are to produce the lambs born in 2009 and beyond and their value needs to be assessed against what they will earn. The lift in lamb prices, the diminished appeal of dairy, and demand for dairy grazing is giving sheep farming more prominence.

The best information we have for comparison is with Landcorp's terminal sires, Lamb Supreme and Texel which both rank very highly in the SIL ACE comparisons of meat sires. In fact Landcorp has 53% of the top 100 sires in the December 2008 analysis. The economic advantage for meat from these Landcorp sires over the average of the 3,488 SIL ACE sires recorded is \$4.10 so you can expect to receive \$2.05 per lamb more than a lamb from an average industry-bred sire mated to an average ewe.

If we extrapolate this SIL ACE information with some assumptions (eg, rams used for an average of 3 years with 150 weaned offspring per year, all of which are sent to slaughter), we get a total of 450 lambs earning an extra \$2.05. On this basis, an average Landcorp terminal sire will return you \$920 more over its lifetime than an average industry ram.

Given that you want at least 50% of this advantage, you could pay \$500 more for a Landcorp ram than the average and still be ahead by \$420. The rams we offer for sale are priced at \$750, \$850 and \$1,000 which we reckon on the basis of this analysis is very good value.

The response we get from customers using Landcorp terminal sires is overwhelmingly positive for lamb hardiness, growth and profitability. We're happy to give you the name of a farmer to talk to about them. Be persistent, believe it or not some blokes are a bit shy talking about how good the lambs are because they don't want too much competition for the rams!

## Breeding Farm Locations



1. Kapiro
2. Waikite
3. Rotomahana
4. Goudies
5. Stuart
6. Kepler
7. Freestone
8. Duncraigen

Landcorp

**SIRES**

**Sires of proven value™**

**"Landcorp Genetics  
- proven throughout  
the country."**

**Chris Neill**  
Genetics Marketing Manager

Landcorp Farming Limited  
PO Box 5349, Wellington  
Email: [sires@landcorp.co.nz](mailto:sires@landcorp.co.nz)  
Freephone: 0508 526 326