



## Red Genetics Newsletter

### Aussie Red Bull Breeders Edition – June 2011

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

It is always a pleasure and at the same time it is always a challenge writing about breeding Aussie Red bulls to reach the high standards required to be selected for *Genetics Australia's* Aussie Red Progeny Test program. In reality it is an opportunity for all of us to work together and benefit Australian dairyfarmers. It is also an opportunity for Aussie Red breeders to get themselves better known and consequently to create higher demand for any cattle they may wish to sell.

When you reflect on recent events, there are three important dates in the history of the Australian Red Dairy Breed (ARDB) to date.

1. The date when the breed and the Breed Society was founded.
2. 1987-88 – the period when Australian farmers first started to gain access to genes from the Scandinavian Red Breeds.
3. 1992 – The start of the Aussie Red progeny test program. It started in a very modest way with the selection of one progeny test bull, ARBECHO – BEAULANDS ECHO.

We should all acknowledge the role of Pat Swasbrick, a former Executive Officer of the ARDB, in getting the progeny test program started. Pat and her husband Bob worked tirelessly promoting the Aussie Red Breed throughout Australia for many years. Pat is a lady with vision. She realized the great benefits Holstein and Jersey supporters were gaining because of significant Australian Holstein and Jersey progeny test programs. Naturally Pat wanted the same benefits for Aussie Red breeders and she worked hard behind the scenes to get the program started and then to help it to grow.

**The benefits from testing Aussie Red bulls under Australian conditions are now very obvious.**

### **CONSIDER THE RESULTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN BREEDING VALUES (ABVs) RELEASED IN APRIL 2011**

#### **RED DAIRY BREEDS**

ARBBOWDOWN – LODEN BOB – is the team leader – No. 1.

ARBBONJOVI – BOSGOWAN BON JOVI is No. 3.

ARBLEX – BEAULANDS LEX – an outstanding new graduate, is No. 4.

ARBMAWSON – BOSGOWAN MAWSON is No. 5.

ARBHARFORD – BOSGOWAN HARFORD – another successful new graduate, is No. 7.

ARBLINDBERG – LOUVIC LOOT – another successful new graduate, is No. 9.

This is a terrific achievement. I thank the hundreds of people who have contributed to this success. Another achievement is the high market demand today for semen from highly rated proven Aussie Red sires.

#### **THE CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES OF TODAY**

- KEEPING UP THE MOMENTUM
- BREEDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF HIGHLY RATED PROVEN AUSSIE RED SIRES.

#### BREED DIRECTION:

Please find as an attachment, a copy of a report "ARDB PROGENY TEST POLICY", originally written by the late James Hill, former Executive Officer of the ARDB. I asked Michael Riggs, President of the ARDB and Sam Graham, Convener of ARDB's Progeny Test Committee, to review this document. They reported that what James wrote is just as relevant today as the day when it was written. They asked me to make any small changes needed to update it and to forward it to everyone.

I personally endorse what James wrote. What I consider is very positive is that all organizations involved with testing significant numbers of bulls in the Scandinavian Red group are travelling down the same road.

#### FOR THE REMAINDER OF THIS NEWSLETTER I PLAN TO FOCUS ON:

- Breeding the next generation of top Aussie Red proven sires
- Keeping up the momentum.

Further in this newsletter there is a list of preferred mating sires. Some of these bulls were proven in Australia and the others were proven overseas in the Nordic countries. For those bulls proven overseas, it is important that we study their overseas proofs, their ABV(i)s, or Interbull proofs and select those for the preferred list that we think have the best chance of contributing in a positive way to the future development of Red dairy cattle in Australia.

However, the emphasis in this newsletter will be helping breeders to make the best use of their top cows and heifers. It is very important that we help farmers to breed Aussie Red bulls from their top cows and heifers, with the genetic potential to carry the breed forward and continue the growth in demand for Aussie Red Genetics. The reality is that *Genetics Australia* can only test a limited number of young Aussie Red sires every year and it is very important that we select those with the highest genetic potential.

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW AUSSIE RED BULL BREEDERS**

When you study the list of top proven Aussie Red sires marketed by *Genetics Australia* in recent years, you should realize that the development of the breed remains very dependent on decisions made by a few successful farming families.

ARBBOWDOWN	)	Bred by the father and son team of Dennis and Michael Riggs from
ARBTHATCH	)	Cooroy in Queensland, trading as Loden Aussie Reds.
ARBPIRATE	)	
ARBBAGGINS	)	
ARBONJOVI	)	Bred by John R Williams and his late father, John Williams, from Meningie in
ARBMAWSON	)	South Australia, trading as Bosgowan Proprietors.
ARBMOLONE	)	In recent years the Bosgowan milking herd was sold to Michael Green and
ARBHARFORD	)	the last batch of heifers was sold to Beaulands P/L.
ARBLIPPMAN	)	
ARBLAWRENCE	)	
ARBBLAIR	)	
ARBLEX	)	Bred by the father and son team of Ron and Sam Graham from Nowra in NSW,
ARBSUNNY	)	trading as Beaulands P/L.
ARBJIM	)	
ARBSYDNEY	)	
ARBLINDBERG	)	Bred by the Waltham family at Glengarry in Gippsland.
ARBLORIKEET	)	

In recent years Aussie Red progeny test sires have also been selected from the herds of a number of other breeders including "Arajarra" – Wayne and Karen Moroney, "Calister" – Craig Lister, "Johville Park" – Greg Goulding, "Koenarl" – Tim Taylor, "Meriben Park" – Steve Snowdon, "Myrtleholme" – J P Bourke & Co, "Orana" – Toby Leppin and

“Waikato Farm” – Michael Green. This is very positive and we all hope that in the years ahead these breeders will also breed some sires with top proofs.

However, I remain convinced that there are top cow families in many other herds worthy to breed bulls suitable for Genetics Australia’s Aussie Red progeny test program. I ask everyone who receives this newsletter to study their top cows and their herd recording sheets – you may have some cow families which are good enough. I always remember the words of wisdom from one of my friends and mentors, Goran Malmberg – “You must study both the cows and the computer sheets.”

However, it is always useful having a second opinion. Paul Douglas, at Bacchus Marsh, is a true pioneer with the ability to think outside the square. For a number of years Paul has been doing a fantastic job developing the “Gene Screen” program. My opinion is that it will never be fully developed; it will always be “work in progress” as Paul is always looking for ways to improve it.

Gene Screen is another way of assessing cattle. If you have not had a report in recent years, or perhaps never had one at all for your herd, give Paul a call on 03 5367 9238 or talk to your local Genetics Australia representative. You don’t have to agree with everything on the report. Some of the data may be very challenging. It is another way of looking at things. It may help you to decide which really are the top cow families in your herd. These may well be the cow families to breed Genetics Australia’s Aussie Red progeny test bulls of the future.

### **POTENTIAL FOR FINDING YET MORE TOP COWS**

Many farmers are now using Aussie Red Genetics in their crossbreeding programs. Encourage any of your friends, neighbours and relatives doing some crossbreeding to study all their first crosses sired by Aussie Red genetics. Some of these may be outstanding cows. Encourage their breeders to take the top 15-20% of these crossbreds out of their crossbreeding herd and into their Aussie Red herd and use semen of top Aussie Red sires to mate to them. Some of these cows could be the foundation cows of some very successful and significant cow families. In the years ahead some of their descendents could be at Parwan Park as members of Genetics Australia’s Aussie Red Progeny Test team.

### **TOTAL MERIT INDICES (TMIs) & AUSTRALIAN PROFIT RANKING (APR)**

Thankfully we live in an era where TMI’s or Total Merit Indices are being used in many red populations throughout the world. The name used in Australia for our TMI is the APR or Australian Profit Ranking.

However, there is one point that I would like to make. The emphasis within these TMIs may vary greatly from country to country according to the needs of the local situation. As an example, the TMI used in Norway is in my opinion, a very good TMI for the conditions that apply in Norway. But I believe it would be a totally unsuitable TMI for Victorian farmers. I believe the present APR system to be a good system for farmers in Victoria but I believe it is an unsuitable system for the majority of farmers in Norway. Another point – TMI systems are subject to change regarding the allocation of points for different traits. The allocation of points in many systems has changed in the past and I anticipate further changes in the future.

### **PRACTICAL POINTS – BREEDING BULLS LIKELY TO ACHIEVE HIGH ABVs**

We need to stack the odds in our favour as much as possible.

**THE DAMS OF THE BULLS:** I am sure that everyone milking cows will agree that bull dams need to be cows that are productive, profitable, quiet, quick milking, highly fertile, have good udders and at the same time produce milk with low cell counts and have few mastitis problems.

The second point is that depth of pedigree is very important. When selecting *Genetics Australia’s* Aussie Red progeny test team we look for bulls with several generations of successful cows and bulls behind them.

**THE SIRES OF THE BULLS:** We need to select a team of sires with high ratings for many traits. We all need to remember the perfect bull is yet to be born.

#### A NUMBER OF POINTS ARE IMPORTANT: -

- ◆ Part of the skill of breeding bulls with a good chance of being selected for *Genetics Australia's* progeny test team and later on achieving a top proof is to avoid doubling up of obvious serious faults when deciding on matings for your top cows and potentially great heifers. Other factors to consider when considering a potential bull dam include checking the proof of the sire of the cow and the suitability of members of her cow family.
- ◆ We also need to minimize the risk of problems from future inbreeding. With all breeds there are always famous or dominant animals in any era. In the Aussie Red world, GRASGARDE 820 was famous as he was the first proven Scandinavian Red bull to be available to Australian farmers. Later on Backgard and Tbruno were bulls that achieved much in Australia and many other countries. Right now the greatest red sire of sons in the world in my opinion is ORRARYD 1433.

Orraryd is doing a fantastic job breeding great sons as well as great daughters in Australia, Denmark and Sweden. I am obviously very pleased to have in our current proven team, ARBBONJOVI, ARBLEX, ARBMAWSON and ARBMOLONE. Naturally we plan to test sons of these great bulls in future *Genetics Australia's* Aussie Red Progeny Test teams.

However, to minimize risk of problems caused by inbreeding, it is very important that we test in future teams a significant number of bulls with pedigrees that don't include Orraryd or any of his sons.

#### **BULL SIRES – PREFERRED MATING SIRES, JUNE 2011**

Below is a list of 8 sires that will be discussed in this newsletter. All these bulls included have in my opinion, something to offer the Aussie Red Breed Improvement Program. This list is not exclusive. We may indeed also test a few sons of other worthy sires.

#### **GROUP A – BULLS WITH PUBLISHABLE ABVs (APRIL 2011)**

- ◆ Please note: This group is THE HIGH USAGE TEAM. The reason this group is the high usage team is because these bulls were proven in Australia. I believe it is very important that significant numbers of sons of these bulls are tested here. If we do not test sons of these highly rated sires, they will not be tested anywhere else in the world. All these highly rated, successful bulls deserve to have a significant number of sons included in progeny test programs.

BULL ID	PEDIGREE	APR	ASI	P (KG)
ARBBOWDOWN	BOTANS X HUSVEG	226	195	26
ARBBONJOVI	ORRARYD X TORP 882	204	149	16
ARBLEX	ORRARYD X CHRISTIANSBORG	198	137	20
ARBMAWSON	ORRARYD X BJURIST	195	127	23

#### **GROUP B – BULLS WITH ABV(I)s – INTERBULL PROOFS (APRIL 2011)**

- ◆ Please Note: This group is the LOW-MEDIUM USAGE TEAM. These bulls have been specially selected because they have good proofs in their country of origin and also have high Interbull proofs. However, a significant number of their sons either have been or will be tested in their country of origin. This means that even if we can only test a limited number of sons in Australia, breeders here should get access in the years ahead to highly rated sons proven in their country of origin.

BULL ID	PEDIGREE	APR	ASI	P (KG)
RANDERSDAVID	FYNAKS X TBRUNO	249	156	30
ASMO TOSIKKO	LAMMIN LIFE X JOHDE	219	162	22
OYGARDEN 5848	RANES X NYLOKKEN	189	184	33
V FOSKE	MIQUR X GARDO	183	157	23

#### **COMMENT – PLANNING MATINGS FOR YOUR TOP COWS & HEIFERS**

The aim of these comments about individual sires with their strengths and weaknesses is to help breeders make the very best use of their top cows and heifers. As mentioned previously, I believe it is important to avoid doubling up of significant weaknesses. I always ask breeders to study the proofs of the sires of their top cows as well as being aware

of the strengths and weaknesses of their actual top cows. When planning their matings, there are two important points breeders need to consider: -

1. What do they aim to gain by using a particular sire? To answer this question you need to be aware of the strengths of the sire.
2. What do they need to look for in a cow family and the bulls previously used in it? Clearly, to make the best possible decisions you need to be aware of the weaknesses of the sire as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the cow family and the bulls that have previously been used in it.

ORDER OF THE BULL FAMILIES BEING DISCUSSED IS NOT SIGNIFICANT

However, we are starting off with members of the ORRARYD bull family. We are giving this bull family the honour of leading the team because Orraryd has done such a great job breeding successful sons and daughters.

### **THE ORRARYD BULL FAMILY**

**ORRARYD 1433** (BACKGARD 3082 X OJY MABRU X STOREGARD 139)

As previously mentioned, I consider that Orraryd is the best Red sire of sons in the world today. One of our challenges is making the best use of his many good sons.

**ARBONJOVI – BOSGOWAN BONJOVI** (ORRARYD 1433 X TORP 882 X STOPAFORS 548)

ARBONJOVI comes from the very successful Primula cow family at Bosgowan.

HIS STRENGTHS –

- ◆ ARBONJOVI has a very good all round proof.
- ◆ He improves protein and fat as well as milk components. He is one of the best red sires to mate to low fat composition cows.
- ◆ Improves type – body traits, feet and legs and the mammary system.
- ◆ High ratings daughter fertility, cell counts, survival and workability traits.

STRENGTHS NEEDED IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE PEDIGREE –

- ◆ There is a need to select highly productive bull dams that are the daughters of sires with outstanding proofs for the production of protein and milk.

**ARBLEX – BEAULANDS LORRY** (ORRARYD 1433 X CHRISTIANSBORG 125 X TORLAND 4075)

ARBLEX comes from the highly productive Lady cow family at Beaulands.

HIS STRENGTHS –

- ◆ ARBLEX has an outstanding, well balanced all round proof.
- ◆ He improves production of protein, milk and fat plus milk components.
- ◆ He has an outstanding type proof.
- ◆ High ratings for survival, temperament and farmer likeability.

STRENGTHS NEEDED IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE PEDIGREE –

- ◆ Prefer bull dams and maternal grandsires with high ratings for cell counts and mastitis resistance (udder health).

**ARBMAWSON – BOSGOWAN MAWSON** (ORRARYD 1433 X BJURIST 1011 X CHRISTIANSBORG 125)

ARBMAWSON comes from the very successful Primula cow family at Bosgowan. He is a top sire but he has a very different type of proof to that of his half brothers ARBONJOVI, ARBLEX and R FASTRUP. This makes him potentially a very useful sire of progeny test sons, but we need to look for bull dams with different strengths.

HIS STRENGTHS –

- ◆ High production milk, protein and fat. Currently he is the team leader of Genetics Australia's proven Aussie Red team for milk and No. 2 after ARBBOBDOWN for protein.
- ◆ High ABVs for cell counts and survival.

- ◆ Good type ABV – emphasis on improving virtually all traits of the mammary system.

**STRENGTHS NEEDED IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE PEDIGREE –**

- ◆ Need a bull dam with high milk components, particularly for fat and a MGS with high ratings for improving fat composition and production.
- ◆ Need a bull dam with high ratings for strength and power “up front”.
- ◆ ARBMAWSON has a rating of 96 for teat length. Prefer bull dams with teats average in length or longer and a MGS with ratings of 100 or higher for this trait.

**THE BOTANS BULL FAMILY**

**BOTANS 3829** (INGVASTA 6153 X SKOGSBERG 5679 X GRASGARDE 820)

**ARBBOBDOWN – LODEN BOB** – A POLLED BULL (BOTANS 3829 X HUSVEG 4630 X TRIDENT)

ARBBOBDOWN comes from the Loden Spotty cow family. He is currently the highest ABV rated red bull in Australia. It is very important that we include a significant number of sons of ARBBOBDOWN as well as sons of ARBBONJOVI, ARBLEX and ARBMAWSON, in future progeny test teams.

**HIS STRENGTHS –**

- ◆ ARBBOBDOWN is the team leader for profit.
- ◆ Outstanding proof for improving production of protein and fat and milk components. ARBBOBDOWN is one of the best Red bulls to mate to low protein composition cows.
- ◆ High ratings for survival, temperament and farmer likeability.
- ◆ He has many positive type ratings. Improves most traits of the mammary system including a rating of 106 for teat length.

**STRENGTHS NEEDED IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE PEDIGREE –**

When you study the proof of ARBBOBDOWN, there are three possible concerns: -

- ◆ ARBBOBDOWN, and for that matter his sire Botans, are below breed average for daughter fertility. There is a need to select bull dams from highly fertile cow families. It will also be helpful if the MGS has a rating of over 100 for this trait.
- ◆ Two traits of the mammary system, udder depth and fore attachment, are rated at 94. I suggest again that we look for bull dams and MGS with strengths in these areas.
- ◆ I believe the above are the two areas we should focus on. Obviously I am aware of the rating for chest width of 89 for ARBBOBDOWN. However, I get a lot of comments about the calves sired by ARBBOBDOWN. The vast majority of these comments are positive and typically include “Big Strong Calves.” I get the impression that lack of chest width will not be a problem for the vast majority of these calves. Another point is the current ABV of ARBBOBDOWN for survival, which is 105. He is in the top group and clearly the vast majority of his daughters are producing and staying in herds.

**THE FYNAKS BULL FAMILY**

**FYNAKS** (MOMENTUM [HF] X HJ BERG-R X HJ ELBO) Holstein Content 50%.

Fyn Aks performed very well in Australia. He is currently ranked No. 12 on the list of Red bulls with ABVs. His daughters are a stand out group at Beaulands and several have been used as bull dams.

I consider the best son of FYNAKS is RANDERS DAVID. RANDERS DAVID has been on this short list previously. However, we are yet to select any suitable sons for our program, so I suggest we all check him out once again.

**RANDERSDAVID** (FYN AKS X TBRUNO 907 X OJY MABRU) Holstein Content 25%.

RANDERSDAVID is in the top group in Denmark and has an outstanding ABV(i) or Interbull proof.

**HIS STRENGTHS –**

- ◆ High production – a significant improvement in the production of milk, protein and fat.
- ◆ Longevity is one of the strengths of his Danish daughters.
- ◆ They rate highly for many traits including daughter fertility, hoof health, temperament, milking speed and conformation – body, feet and legs and the mammary system.

#### STRENGTHS NEEDED IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE PEDIGREE –

- ◆ As Randers David is 25% Holstein, we would look for minimum Holstein content in the bottom half of the pedigree.
- ◆ Need bull dams with high fat composition and MGS with high ratings for fat production and composition.
- ◆ Longer teats. The current Nordic (NTM – Nordic Total Merit) rating is 90 (shorter teats). We need bull dams with teats breed average in length or longer with MGS having a rating of 100 or higher for this trait.

#### **LAMMIN LIFE BULL FAMILY**

LAMMIN LIFE was proven in Finland. He has bred a number of good sons in both Finland and Sweden. However, the son we are focusing on right now is ASMO TOSIKKO (code ATOSIKKO).

#### **ASMO TOSIKKO (LAMMIN LIFE X RISTITIEN JOHDE X SKOLE 3395)**

ATOSIKKO is ranked No. 2 in Finland with an outstanding NTM of 25. He should contribute high quality outcross genes to our program. Of course we will only know this after some of his sons have been tested in Genetics Australia's Aussie Red program.

#### HIS STRENGTHS –

- ◆ High production protein, milk and fat and he improves milk components.
- ◆ Excellent Finnish ratings for temperament and mastitis resistance (udder health).
- ◆ Good ratings for most aspects of the mammary system, particularly fore udders, rear udder height and width, udder depth, balance and centre ligament.

#### STRENGTHS NEEDED IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE PEDIGREE –

- ◆ A TOSIKKO is below breed average for daughter fertility. There is a need to select bull dams from highly fertile cow families. It will also be helpful if the MGS has a rating of over 100 for this trait.
- ◆ Prefer the bull dam to be a daughter of a calving ease sire.
- ◆ Avoid bull dams with high pins.
- ◆ Need a bull dam with good front teat placement.

#### **MIQUR BULL FAMILY**

MIQUR was proven in Finland. The son of interest to us today is VFOSKE. VFOSKE was proven in Sweden and he ranks highly as assessed by their NTM Index System.

#### **V FOSKE (MIQUR 90132 X GARDO 3666 X TUNNUS 940)**

#### HIS STRENGTHS –

- ◆ High production protein, milk and fat and he improves components.
- ◆ Outstanding Nordic rating for daughter fertility.
- ◆ High Nordic ratings for hoof health (based on data from Hoof Trimmers) and survival.
- ◆ Improves body traits, wider chests and rumps and deeper bodies.

#### STRENGTHS NEEDED IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE PEDIGREE –

- ◆ Prefer bull dams and MGS with high ratings for the mammary system.
- ◆ Need to avoid bull dams and MGS with ratings indicating short, thin teats.

#### **RANES BULL FAMILY**

#### **RANES 4939 (K REIME 3927 X F SELLEVOL 4010)**

RANES 4939 was proven in Norway. Today we are focusing on one of his sons – OYGARDEN 5848.

#### **OYGARDEN 5848 (RANES 4939 X NYLOKKEN 4581 X O.BERGE 3890)**

Oygarden is a polled bull. He actually has scurs but is considered to be a polled bull and many of his progeny are polled.

#### HIS STRENGTHS –

- ◆ High production protein, milk and fat.
- ◆ Good rating for growth rate in Norway.
- ◆ High Norwegian rating for temperament and milking speed.
- ◆ A calving ease bull in Norway.

#### STRENGTHS NEEDED IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE PEDIGREE –

- ◆ Need a bull dam and MGS with high ratings for fat composition and production.
- ◆ Need a highly fertile bull dam and an MGS with a rating of over 100 for daughter fertility
- ◆ Need a bull dam with a very good udder and a MGS with high ratings for the mammary system.

#### **SUMMARY**

I believe this is a great team of potential sires of sons. One would think that all breeders should be able to match up their top cows and heifers with at least 2-3 sires.

As always, if anyone wishes to discuss any aspect of breeding Aussie Reds, please give me a call on 07 3818 0564. I wish everyone a very successful year.

John Harle  
Red Breeds Specialist



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