HICKS BEEF

Spring 2025 Newsletter

Tom Hicks: 0448 796 124
Andrew Hicks: 0427 147 258
tom@hicksbeef.com.au
www.hicksbeef.com.au

SPRING BULL SALE:
Wednesday 3rd September 2025
1.00pm "Annandayle South" Holbrook NSW

SELLING - 98 BULLS
AUCTIONS PLUS • ALL LOTS ON VIDEO

We welcome enquiries and visits so don't hesitate to contact us.

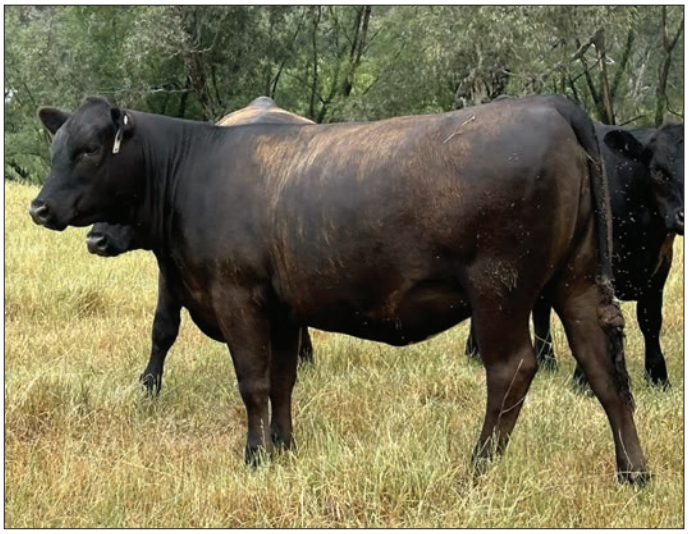
The Spring 2025 Lineup

The focus of our program is clearly stated by the bulls we have on offer this Spring. It is imperative that seedstock producers have a clear set of breeding objectives that they are heading towards.

We are always on the look out for internal and external sires that match impeccable structure, type and data into one package; all sires used in our herd must tick these boxes without fail. This is apparent in the 2025 sale line up and we are extremely happy with how this year's team has come together.

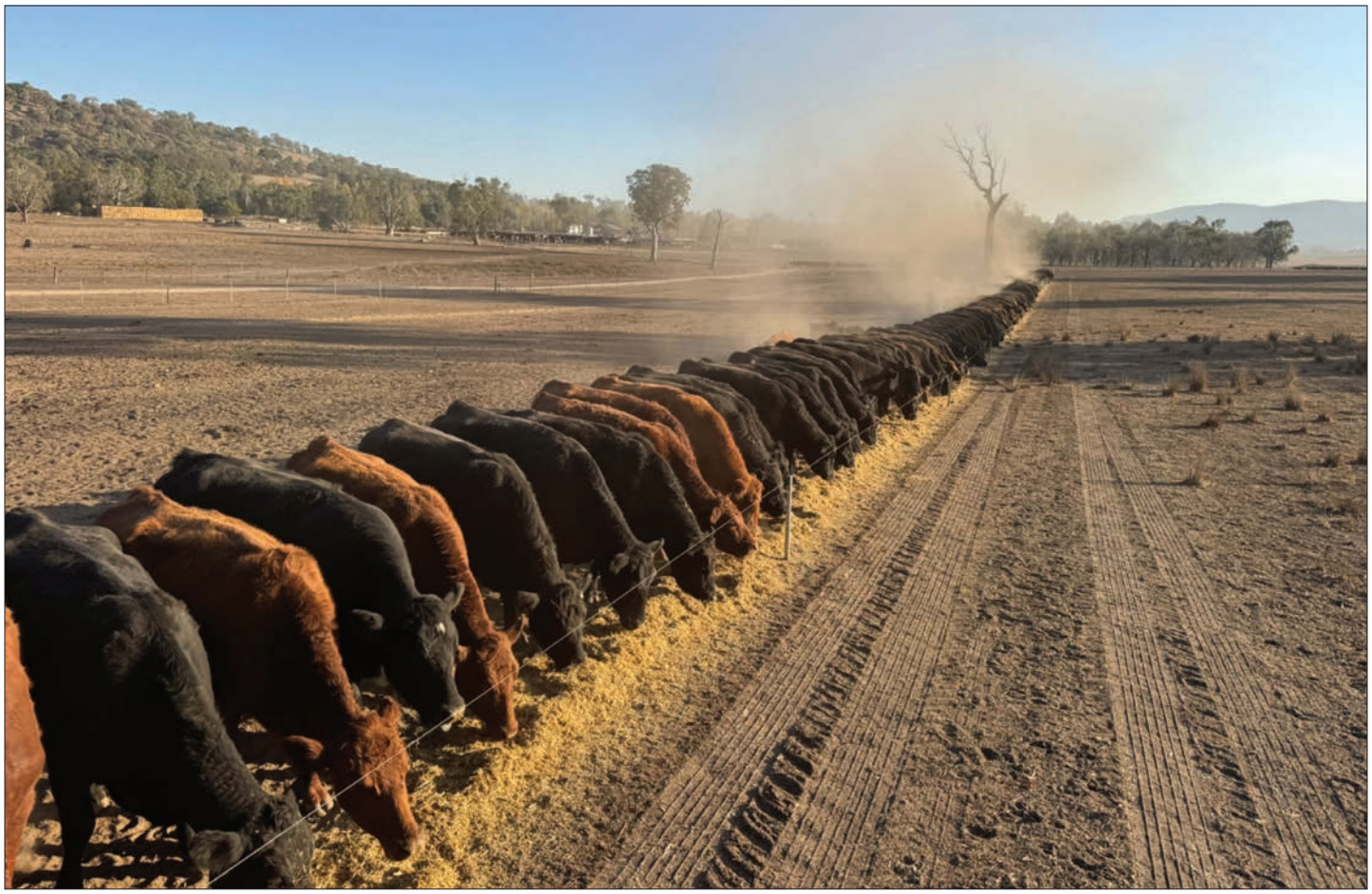
The entire sale team averages in the top 10% for the all-important API index, marbling and calving ease. As well as great performance as a team, there are some star individual sires. HRA U10 is the 10th highest ranking red bull for API in the ASA database, making him the highest Indexing red bull to be offered for sale in the country. We will also see the first of the ABC T1064 sons to be offered. This is a line we are going to see a lot more of in the coming years, with heavy use via AI and natural service over the past 2 years.

Hair Shedding



Hair shedding is an important economic trait especially for northern breeders. We have started recording hair scores on all animals with the intention of creating an EBV to help breed slicker hair typed animals.

Selling vs Feeding in Challenging Seasons



Cattle being fed under a hot wire.

It is an easy decision for us to retain stock in tough times as we have invested so much in our genetics over the years that we have to retain as many as breeders as possible. This does not mean we can't trim numbers back a bit, but we must retain most of our females.

Commercial breeders still have a lot of time, effort and capital invested in their herds, but it is more feasible to sell if needed……. Or is it? The question is not as clear cut as it may appear, there a broad range of factors to consider. Cost of feed, cost of stock, future markets, seasonal outlook and the list goes on. There are probably too many factors to be able to make much more than an educated guess as a lot of the factors are out of our control.

Both options have pros and cons, and it can be easy to look from one side to the other and think that the grass is greener on the other side. Retaining stock is short term pain for hopefully long-term gain, feeding and agistment are expensive and time consuming to undertake. The upside is that when the season turns around, the producers that retained are stocked up and ready to go. Feeding and agistment are not for everyone though it is very costly and time consuming, some producers don't have the infrastructure, access to fodder markets and time to feed. Selling is perceived to be the easier option, but there are a lot of factors to consider, like when to sell? When to buy back in?

Sunset, whilst checking agistment heifers at Bourke NSW.

It is impossible to say which option is better, it could even be a combination of the two strategies. The important thing is to make a decision that suits you and form a plan that incorporates a series of trigger points to follow. They don't have to be set in stone, but they will provide a reference point to start from, this is critical as chopping and changing strategies is fraught with danger.

Like everything in agriculture, it is a complex problem with no clear-cut answer and a multitude of pathways that can be taken and still have a positive outcome. The common theme with producers that handle tough times well is they form a solid plan early, review it at key points and implement without hesitation.

Yearling bulls back out on grass 20/07/2025.

The new $Gain subindex

The **Dollar Gain Index ($Gain**) is an economic subindex developed by the American Simmental Association (ASA) in collaboration with International Genetic Solutions. Here's a breakdown of what it is and why it matters:

What Is the $Gain Index?

The **$Gain Index** is designed to measure **economic efficiency in feedlot cattle**, specifically during the finishing phase. It combines two key traits:

- **Average Daily Gain (ADG)** – how quickly an animal gains weight
- **Dry Matter Intake (DMI)** – how much feed the animal consumes

Rather than focusing solely on biological efficiency (like feed conversion ratios), $Gain emphasizes **economic efficiency**—balancing the value of weight gain against the cost of feed.

How It Works

- **ADG is positively weighted:** More gain = more value.
- **DMI is negatively weighted:** More intake = higher cost.
- The result is a **daily profitability estimate** ($ Gain) for each animal based on its genetic potential for growth and feed intake.

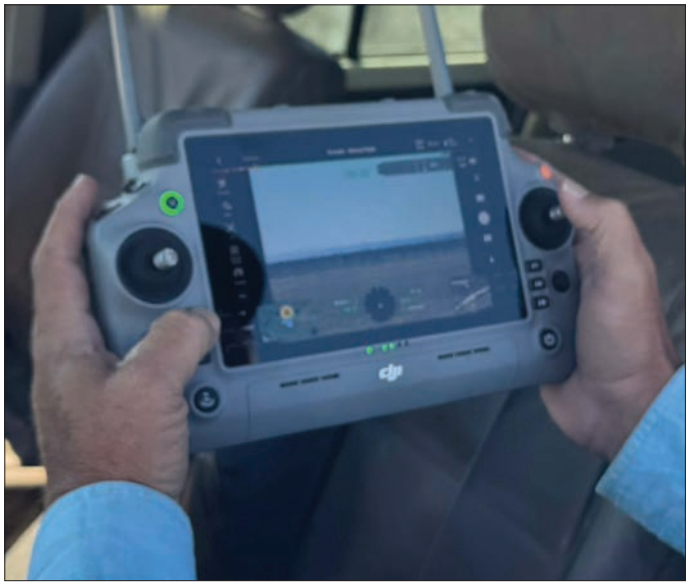
This makes $Gain a **powerful tool for selecting animals** that are not just fast-growing, but also cost-effective to feed.

How to best use the $ Gain index?

The All-Purpose index (API) and the Terminal Index (TI) have always incorporated $Gain into the analysis by using correlated traits to get a prediction of dry matter intake, the key change is that now actual dry matter intake data is being used, to get a more accurate picture. The best way to use this information is to use the All-Purpose Index (API) for maternal programs and the Terminal Index (TI) for terminal programs, as they are incorporated into this simple and easy to use index.

There are situations where it may be important to really focus in on one trait more so than usual, a good example of this is choosing heifer bulls. It is important when selecting bulls for first calving heifers to double check the potential sire has enough calving ease to produce live calves. In this situation it is still recommended that you use the index as the primary source to make your decision.

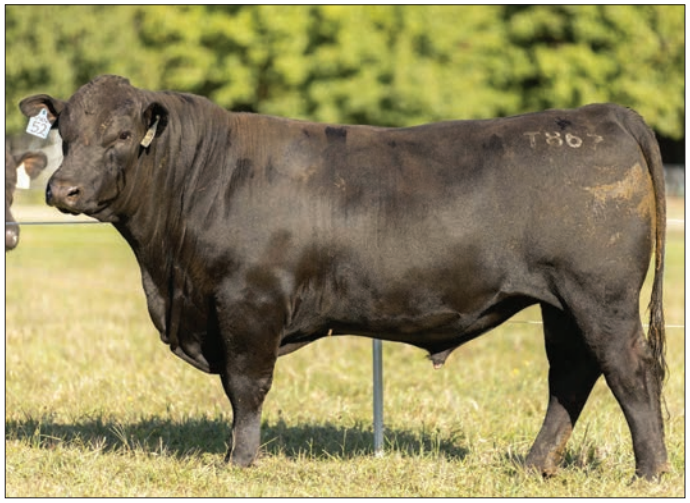
Eyes in the Sky



Drones have been around for several years now, but it is only recently that they have become common tool in the agricultural sector, mainly for spraying, inspecting crops and mustering. On a recent trip to QLD, we were lucky enough to see a drone in action as the bulls that we wanted to inspect were in a rough paddock that was impossible to drive over. Rather than walk, a drone was deployed to find and push the bulls to a watering point and the thermal camera made finding them easy. Although at this stage the technology is in its infancy, it still has a practical implication and with further development such as automation and improved battery life, it is easy to see them becoming more widely used.

ABCQ579

ABC Q579 has cemented himself as one of the leading bulls in the Hicks Beef program. He is a rare combination of type and data. He is the second highest high accuracy (above 60% accuracy) bull in the database with an API of $228. He is a very consistent performer with nearly all his son's making the sale team and his daughter staying in the breeding herd. We no longer have the bull but still have a small amount of semen available for sale, talk to Tom if this is of interest.



Son of ABCQ579, Lot 52 Autumn 2024.