HICKS BEEF

Autumn 2026 Newsletter

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

AUTUMN BULL SALE:
Thursday 5th March 2026
1.00pm "Annandayle South" Holbrook NSW

SELLING - 72 BULLS
AUCTIONS PLUS • ALL LOTS ON VIDEO

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

The Lineup

We are very proud of the Autumn 2026 line up. This draft is a reflection of the direction we are taking our herd. Balancing data and type into one animal is imperative to the success of our program. These bulls are great example of having your cake and eating it too.

In recent times we have had a swing towards using outside sires to breed bulls to then breed more bulls, we have found that this approach has led to more predictable breeding as we know how the genetics perform in our environment. This is evident in this year's draft with most of the bulls bearing a Hicks prefix. Outside sires still play a massive role within our program; the way in which we use them has just changed.

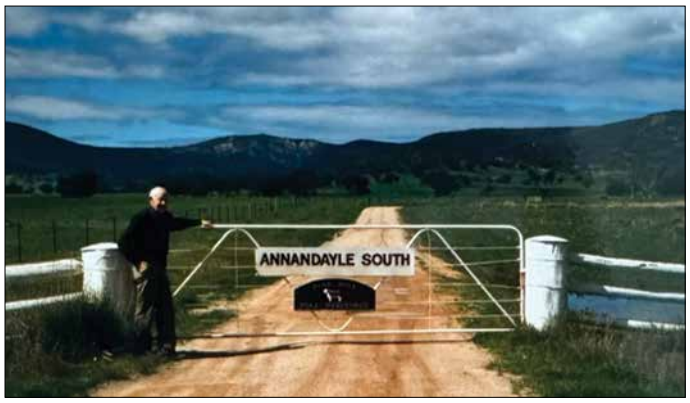
Black 2024 drop composite heifers at preg testing Jan 2026.

The All-Purpose Index average graph has been shared in many a newsletter and catalogue over the years. It is a great visual way to show the genetic gain we are accomplishing year on year. This graph shows the average of the 2025 drop calves compared to the average of the International Genetic Solutions (IGS) database. Our herd averages $168 compared to the average of $135 and this years sale bulls average $158 putting them in the top 15%.

40 Years at “Annandayle South”

This year marks a significant milestone being 40 years since the purchase of “Annandayle South” and the beginning of a new chapter in NSW.

Prior to the move north, we were located on the outskirts of Melbourne, however as the city expanded the area became more focused on lifestyle blocks and less about commercial farming. To expand the business, it was clear that moving was going to be necessary.



The original front gate in 1986.

Many properties were inspected and areas explored before Anne and Andrew came across “Annandayle South” in the Holbrook area of Southern NSW in early 1986. It was not in the best order at the time as the previous owner was battling with health problems. Most of the fences were in a bad state with very minimal subdivision. There were about 4 paddocks that were barely stock proof, with the largest paddock being over 2000 acres. In some parts of Australia that is small but a big paddock here is 40 hectares. The cattle yards were deteriorating and needed replacing and the property was in need of some perennial pasture to help hold the soil together and use more of the available moisture.

Sample of erosion looking to the west from the bull sale driveway in 1986.

Photo taken from the same spot above 40 years later in 2026.

Early days of performance recording on “Annandayle South”. Andrew getting a birth weight.

Slowly but surely, Anne and Andrew started turning things around. Paddocks were subdivided and pastures were improved and infrastructure built. They planted thousands of trees, fenced off creeks to stop erosion, and got heavily involved with Holbrook Landcare, running trials and adopting practices that improved the soil, the biodiversity, and the overall resilience of the place.

The original seedstock herd “Pine Hill” Poll Herefords made the move to Southern NSW with us. “Pine Hill” was one of the early adopters of performance recording in the 80’s when Breedplan was formed to help take the guess work out of cattle breeding. Although the original EBV’s were basic in comparison to todays genomically enhanced breeding values, at the time they were revolutionary. In 2010 “Pine Hill” Poll Herefords was dispersed and the Composite and Red Angus Herds were continued.

The original cattle yards at “Annandayle South” were past their best to say the least.

The current set of yards were groundbreaking at the time with a curved adjustable “V” race.

Anne, Andrew, Sarah, Emma and Tom Hicks in the early days at “Annandayle South”.

The first 40 years at “Annandayle South” have been full of change and development and expansion. We are proud to be a family owned business and looking to the future we will continue to look to make further improvements to production, labour efficiencies and the landscape.

The year so far

Most of 2026 to date has been spent on weaning the 2025 drop calves. We aimed to have everything weaned by the end of January this year so we could maintain as much condition on the cows as possible. This will act as a reserve that the cows can draw down on in the Autumn rather than relying on supplementary feeding. The other reason we wean in January is that a calf weighing 200kg at 6 months is only receiving 5% of their requirements from milk. This leaves 95% of its requirement to be sourced from pasture, which they must compete with their mothers for.

2025 drop weaners on feed.

Red “V” heifers at Jingellic.

Summary of the IGS Calving Ease Update

The latest IGS Calving Ease (CE) update reflects routine scientific progress in genetic evaluation. As new data, software, and statistical methods improve, the IGS system updates its models to ensure EPDs remain as accurate and predictive as possible. These updates are standard across all major breed associations.

Why the Update Happened

- Genetic evaluation improves as science and technology advance.
- The goal is always to increase the predictive power and credibility of IGS EPDs.
- This update was validated using peer-reviewed methods and approved unanimously by all 25 IGS partner associations — not just ASA.

What Changed

Three major scientific improvements were implemented:

1. **Maternal Genomic Markers**

   New software now allows CE Direct and CE Maternal genomic markers to be included simultaneously, significantly improving prediction accuracy.

2. **Refined Handling of External EPDs**

   Base adjustments for imported EPDs (e.g., Angus) were improved for greater consistency.

3. **Updated Breed-by-Decade Modelling**

   Assumptions about genetic progress across breeds were revised to better reflect real-world trends over seven decades of data.