

AUSSIE RED PROGENY TEST TEAM 2013

I BELIEVE THIS IS THE BEST TEAM OF AUSSIE RED PROGENY TEST SIRES EVER OFFERED TO AUSTRALIAN FARMERS writes John Harle

Today Genetics Australia is marketing a top team of Aussie Red Proven Sires. I regard ARBBONJOVI, ARBBOBDOWN, ARBLEX and ARBLIPPMAN as the four Premium established Red sires.

I am also very pleased with the initial proofs of 3 new graduates from team 2009 ARBFROSTY, ARBLONGBOW and ARBLEVER. If I was managing a dairy farm right now, I would include all the above 7 bulls in my proven team. These 7 bulls – The Magnificent Seven – make a great team. I am looking forward to receiving their August proofs already.

However, this newsletter is not about promoting the above 7 bulls, it is about promoting Genetics Australia's Aussie Red Progeny Test Team 2013. I believe the selectors at Genetics Australia, ably led by our Manager of Breeding & Genetics Peter Thurn has chosen a great team of young sires. I remain confident that the entire actual progeny test team, in other words those bulls that pass health tests, pass DNA parent verification and produce high quality semen, will achieve a high team average with their initial proofs. Some of these bulls in turn will become members of "The Magnificent Seven" of their generation.

The purpose of this newsletter is to give farmers more confidence in Genetics Australia's Aussie Red Progeny Test bulls – so that more farmers support Genetics Australia's Aussie Red progeny test program and at the same time some of the existing cooperators increase their usage of Aussie Red Progeny Test semen sourced from Genetics Australia.

THE BIG QUESTION OF THE DAY – HOW CAN WE GIVE FARMERS MORE CONFIDENCE, SO THAT THEY BECOME, AUSSIE RED PROGENY TEST COOPERATORS IN 2013 AND INCLUDE SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF AUSSIE RED PROGENY TEST SEMEN SOURCED FROM GENETICS AUSTRALIA IN THEIR BREEDING PROGRAM?

I consider one of the reasons why some farmers don't include semen from Genetics Australia's Aussie Red Progeny Test bulls in their breeding program is because they are not convinced the Progeny Test bulls are good enough to use in their herd. Some farmers may also consider there is a high risk in using semen from Aussie Red Progeny Test bulls.

To answer that aspect first. I don't believe there is a high risk in using semen from bulls included in Genetics Australia's Aussie Red Progeny Test Team, providing that farmers use semen from a significant number of bulls. The only farmers who are running a high risk are those who use a significant amount of semen from only one or two progeny test or unproven bulls.

I remain convinced that this team will have a high team average when they receive their initial proofs. This team will also give us some new stars – some new champions. However I cannot predict the likely winners and I spend more time than most people studying Red pedigrees. This is why I always encourage farmers to use some progeny test semen from a significant number of bulls.

Looking at things from another viewpoint – if you rear 100 heifers from a team of proven sires, you will not end up with 100 champions either.

Whatever you do in life, there are some risks involved. My suggestions to farmers are;

- Include semen from a significant number of Genetics Australia's Aussie Red Progeny Test Sires in your breeding program in 2013.
- Also include semen from a number of Genetics Australia's highly rated Aussie Red proven sires and Norwegian Red sires in your breeding program in 2013.

By doing this you will make genetic progress, increase your profits and your risk level will be very low. You are spreading your risk by using semen from a team of highly rated proven sires and a team of young sires with high genetics potential (high EGVs).

- You will achieve a low "blend" price for your semen purchases by using as the foundation of your 2013 breeding program a significant amount of progeny test semen and by using the "Genetics Check" concept to buy semen from the proven bulls at good buying prices.
- You are also "doing your bit" to ensure that you and other Australian farmers, will have access to bulls proven under Australian conditions in the years ahead.

Whilst I firmly believe in using the best red bulls in the world as sires of sons for our Aussie Red Progeny Test program – I also firmly believe it is very important that farmers have access to bulls proven in Australia. The top bulls proven here have demonstrated that their daughters can perform in the tough Australian conditions.

HOWEVER I NEED TO RETURN TO ANOTHER IMPORTANT POINT – CONVINCING FARMERS OF THE HIGH QUALITY OF AUSSIE RED BULLS INCLUDED IN GENETICS AUSTRALIA'S PROGENY TEST TEAM 2013.

POINT No.1 – CONSIDER THE GENETIC MERIT OF THE SIRES OF THE BULLS INCLUDED IN THIS TEAM.

These Bulls include:

Bulls originally progeny tested in Australia

ARBBOWDOWN (BOTANS x HUSVEG 4630)

ARBBONJOVI (ORRARYD x TORPANE 882)

ARBLIPPMAN (TMOBERG x STENSJO)

REDVIKING (CHRISTIANSBORG x PERRY)

Bulls originally progeny tested mainly in Denmark

BANGKOK (TFJEMBE x TBRUNO)

FASTRUP (ORRARYD x STADEL (HF))

Bulls originally progeny tested mainly in Finland

TOSIKKO (LAMMIN LIFE x JOHDE)

Bulls originally progeny tested in Norway

OYGARDEN 5848 (RANES x NYLOKKEN)

Bulls originally progeny tested mainly in Sweden

GEDBO (BOTANS x SYD ABRU)

VFOSKE (MIQUR x GARDO)

COMMENT:

- All of these bulls originally had top proofs in their country of origin.
- They are all worthy to be used as sires of sons.
- At the same time we are keeping risk to a low level by testing some sons from a significant number of successful, highly rated bulls.
- Our decisions are also helping to maintain genetics diversity in the red population in Australia. This should help to minimize the risk of future inbreeding concerns.

POINT No.2 – WHAT ABOUT THE GENETIC MERIT OF THE MATERNAL GRANDSIREs IN THE PEDIGREES OF THESE BULLS.

These Bulls include:

Bulls originally progeny tested in Australia

ARBEROS (PETERSLUND x HANSMOEN)
ARBLORIKEET (TORPANE 882 x SKYLLBERG 729)
ARBPATRICK (BACKGARD x TORLAND)
ARBRALPH (VPRINCE x EKES 519)
REDVIKING (CHRISTIANSBORG x PERRY)

Bulls originally progeny tested mainly in Denmark

ASCONA (TULIP (HF) x TBRUNO)
FYNAKS (MOMENTUM (HF) x HJBERGR)
SYDFREM (INGVASTA 6104 x EMORY (BS))

Bulls originally progeny tested in Norway

OLSTAD (NYLOKKEN x TORLAND)

Bulls originally progeny tested mainly in Sweden

ANDERSTA (VATTERGARD x INGVASTA 6153)
BOTANS (INGVASTA 6153 x SKOGSBERG)
OBROLIN (IPOLLO x OJY MABRU)
PETERSLUND (TBRUNO x HULAN)

All of these bulls were originally highly rated and successful sires in their country of origin. They all have a lot of strengths for many traits. Some of these bulls may now be considered yesterdays bulls because of the genetic progress being made in Australia but we are using as bull dams, successful daughters of successful sires. By including daughters of a significant number of sires we are “casting a wide net” spreading risk and at the same time making the best use of a wide range of red genetics available to us.

POINT No.3 – BULL DAMS AND COW FAMILIES.

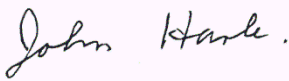
Cow families are as important to us as sire pathways.

- Our selection criteria includes searching for bulls from top cow families including at least three generations of successful cows.
- 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 a low cell count and have few mastitis problems. Sometimes it is difficult to make a point without ending up writing a book. However we want to use as bull dams, successful cows that are performing and competing in normal commercial conditions.
- I am not running a “vendetta” against cattle shows. We all have our hobbies and they usually end up being expensive, as an example consider yacht racing. However I am thankful that very few Aussie Red breeders show their cows. We all know cows in show teams frequently receive special treatment. It is much easier sorting out bull dams when all the cows in a herd receive the same feed and management inputs.
- When considering potential bull dams, I am now paying far more attention to their ASI ratings. It is really pleasing to report that the ASI ratings of the dams of bulls in team 2013 are far higher than those of bull dams of a few years earlier. This plus the genetic merit of their sires and maternal grand sires gives me additional confidence that we have selected for team 2013 a great team of bulls.
- Another change, I’m now putting less emphasis on the PIs or Production Indices achieved by the cows. These PIs may still be useful when herds consist of one breed and they all calve within a short period. However with split calving herds, I have found some instances where 99% of cows calving in a batch have PIs lower than 100. I question if that is a very accurate assessment of the genetic merit of those cows.

FINALLY A FEW RELATIVELY BRIEF POINTS.

- The bulls selected for team 2013 come from 15 strong cow families and are sourced from the herds of seven Aussie Red breeders. They also have top sires and maternal grand sires.
- All these bulls deserve their selection and a place in the team. In my opinion it is a very even team – all the bulls have a real chance of a top proof.
- I would like to thank these breeders and other red breeders for making their bulls available to us.
- However there is room for more Aussie Red bull breeders. This is NOT an exclusive club. The convener of the Aussie Red Dairy Breed Society, Progeny Test Bull Approval Committee is Sam Graham phone 0422 271 657. If you think you have some cows that may be suitable to be dams of future Aussie Red progeny test bulls, please contact Sam or alternatively give me a call on 07 3818 0564.
- I sincerely hope that all the information in this newsletter and in our sire catalogue encourages you and other farmers to support Genetics Australia's Aussie Red Progeny Test program. As always if you would like to discuss anything please give me a call on 07 3818 0564.

I wish everyone a very successful year.



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