

# Beef & Cattle

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## Coopers brewing hybrid vigour



ON-FARM

By  
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**H**YBRID vigour has long been recognised for adding more muscle, meat and weight to carcasses.

But now, employing hybrid vigor in commercial beef production doesn't mean abandoning the strengths of a purebred British herd.

Jeremy and Carmen Cooper, Circle 8, Tarcutta, NSW, will offer the first registered Australian Angus hybrid sires to seedstock producers at their March 17 sale.

"Harnessing hybrid vigor by using varying levels of European content provides the flexibility and pathways for increased profit that doesn't require large capital investment or major swings in management culture," Mr Cooper said.

The Circle 8 Angus hybrid cattle – Angus infused with varying levels of Simmental blood – are bred for commercial clients looking for all the benefits of hybrid vigour while maintaining breed complementarity.

"Angus hybrid sires will deliver optimum levels of hybrid vigour, keep the maternal strengths of the Angus and are ideal for producers who want to keep their cattle black and retain their female portion," Mr Cooper said.

It means producers can access some of the benefits of a structured crossbreeding program, with a purebred framework.

"Many clients feel that in the current climate of beef production they need something more than Angus from a growth, muscle and yield standpoint, but don't want to compromise carcass quality."

All of this year's Circle 8 pure Angus and Angus hybrid calves will be the product of flushes from nine pure-Angus bred females (and these are from just two cow families).

These nine Z series cows are being used to produce half-

### Building the real asset base

**JEREMY and Carmen Cooper, Circle 8, Tarcutta, NSW, run 500 mostly recipient cows (a co-operator runs a 100 of these in northern NSW) and have plans to outsource another 700.**

"I want to improve and develop my asset – my cow herd. I don't need to own the land, I just need somewhere to park them," said Mr Cooper, pictured with some of his Angus hybrid bulls.

blood Simmental sired Angus hybrids, as well as six half-blood Simmental-sired Angus hybrid heifers, out of an Angus

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– JEREMY COOPER,  
Circle 8, Tarcutta,

cow that is in the top 0.5 per cent of the breed for intramuscular fat pc and +123 for B3 Index.

"Our 10-year goal is to have 1000 registered Angus and Angus hybrid females, custom breeding bulls for individual production systems, not breeding bulls for a production sale."

Mr Cooper believes the theatre of agricultural primary production is changing and producers need to evolve with it.

"We have the technology to handle beef production in a

"These are being used to create 75pc Simmental-sired Angus hybrids to be used as terminal sires with the Angus advantage and carcass quality, which will be a first for Australia," Mr Cooper said.

The Circle 8 selection process is based on low birth weight and high growth rate figures, carcass data and fertility – females must rebreed within an 80-day period as two-year-olds – combined with an internal structural assessment.

While Mr Cooper admits

rain challenged environment.

"Early weaning has flow-on effects to carcass quality, cow feed efficiency, fertility and stocking rates and hybrid seedstock offer optimum levels of hybrid vigor."

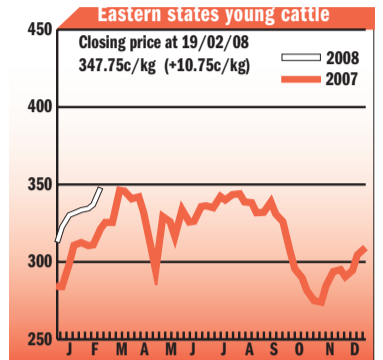
"Both are very positive changes the producer can make without blowing the budget and they will see huge benefits in production output, which will ultimately lead to more profit."

such structural assessment needs passion, ability and confidence in one's judgment, he strongly advocates a system that puts structural assessment into an independent data set.

The Circle 8 Angus hybrid sale bulls scanned an average eye muscle area (EMA) of 80 centimetres and raw IMF figure of 4.0 at nine months. The same bulls dropped at an average 38kg (compared to the 2007 Angus breed average of 36kg).

"Hybrid vigour is one of those rare win-win situations for everybody – it doesn't cost

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### The Carcase Breed **Limousin** NEWS

#### DO THE CURRENT GENE MARKERS WORK?

At the Stock and Land Beef Expo at Hamilton a presentation by Dr Hans Graser of the Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit on the value of the gene markers currently marketed by Catapult Genetics. In a project called the Smartgene project AGBU have just completed an analysis of the effect of each of the four tenderness, four marbling and four feed efficiency markers in about 10,000 animals. While AGBU are not yet able to release the results of their study, Dr Graser presented the results of a similar study by US researchers for three each of the marbling and tenderness markers.

The US research reported no significant effect of the marbling markers. The three tenderness markers were found to explain a total of 11% of the total variation in tenderness across a range of breeds including Brahman cross cattle. The effect is likely to be lower in Bos Taurus cattle than Bos Indicus cattle. This means that there are many other undiscovered genes which influence marbling and tenderness.

The Smartgene project will also report the effect of the four feed efficiency markers currently available from Catapult.

The strong message was that we need to keep measuring carcass traits by conventional methods such as ultrasound scanning and docility scoring. A docility score or flight speed measurement is likely to explain about the same amount of variation in tenderness as the four markers currently available because of the genetic correlation between docility and tenderness.

#### UPCOMING SALES

Entries have closed for the three annual Bull and female sales in Victoria. The first sale at Colac has 47 bulls and 28 females catalogued which can be viewed on [www.limousin.com.au](http://www.limousin.com.au). The Lardner sale to be held on 11th April will also be on the web as soon as it is catalogued. Entries for the National Show and Sale scheduled for 18th April at Wodonga are up on last year. Entries for this year include 28 led bulls and 22 unled bulls together with 24 led females and 17 unled females to total 91 entries. Both the led and unled cattle will be judged by prominent SA livestock agent Johnno Spence

#### TOP COW PRICES

One of the many advantages of the Limousin breed are the prices received for cull cows

Keith MacCubbin and Betty Banfield of Cliftonview Limousins sold three French Pure cull cows at Bairnsdale in late January weighing 720 kg @ 146.6 c/kg or \$1,055 per head. Not only was this the top cow price at Bairnsdale but it also topped the State. On the same day Keith and Betty sold a large framed empty Angus recipient 705 kg @ 116.6 c/kg or \$822. Andrew Cross and Jacky Kelly sold three cull Limousin cows at Wangaratta last week with one topping at 147.2 c/kg and the other two at 143 c/kg to average \$1006. One of the cows was a 14 yr old matron. They also sold two Angus cows in good condition for 120c/kg or \$670 each in the same sale.

For further details including catalogues please check out the web [www.limousin.com.au](http://www.limousin.com.au) or phone 02 6771 1648

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## 35th Bull Sale March 6th 2008

### 90 Angus Bulls

Mark Gubbins (03) 5350 5531 0428 593 913

[www.coolana.com](http://www.coolana.com)

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