



GRAEME PRETTY INSPECTING THE PROCESS AT STANLEY WHARF, THE CATTLE ACHIEVED AN MSA GRADING OF 99.3% FOR THE FIRST CROSSING.

## WATER CROSSING NO OBSTACLE TO EXCELLENT RESULTS

Greenham Tasmania's commitment to sourcing King Island cattle for the Smithton works is paying dividends. The recent crossing of 440 head of cattle from King Island to the redeveloped Stanley wharf was completed with an outstanding MSA grading compliance of 99.3%.

With the introduction of a larger 'roll-on roll-off' vessel, GO LESATH, by the LD Shipping Co, cattle avoid an extra step in the handling process between the farm gate and the abattoir. The King Island to Stanley crossing takes nine hours with a further twenty minutes

to the Smithton facility in comparison to other services which can take up to sixteen hours plus waiting time and transport.

King Island producer and Cape Grim Beef supplier, Michael Youd was very happy with his results. "We sent 114 head over and only had three that did not grade. Of course, we make sure the cattle are very well fed before they go to Greenham but the fact they are put on the trailer and stay in that trailer has to make a difference to their energy levels and keeps them calm," Michael said.

Graeme Pretty, Greenham Livestock Manager, was emphatic, "we were really happy with the results. Some producers actually recorded 100% MSA compliance for the crossing and the cattle came in as relaxed as I've ever seen in my time."

"Producers are able to earn up to a \$160 premium per head if their cattle grade MSA. The new service will deliver benefits and drive confidence for the long term, not to mention the better animal welfare outcomes that less handling assures," Pretty adds.

For producers on King Island, give Ron Crack a call for more info about the new service.



ALEPH AND SUMIKIN BUSSAN STAFF, PRODUCER VISIT.

## ALEPH TOURS NORTHWEST

In early December, the Aleph group this time with their President Mr Dai Shoji and general manager Mr Hashimoto visited the Smithton facility and conducted farm visits and supply chain audits with long time Aleph producers Matthew Lester (Lileah), Andrew Kay (Togari), Steve Pilkington (Redpa) and John Bruce (Stanley). They were able to report excellent news from Japan that their family restaurant chain, Bikkuri Donkey, has recently been awarded numerous customer awards in categories of Satisfaction, Ingredient quality (a nod to natural and clean Tasmanian beef) and also in Flavour. There are now 338 restaurants across Japan with more venues earmarked for the premium 'cut steak' offering – similar to a family steak house.

## CHRISTMAS TRADING HOURS

To all our suppliers, thank you for your support throughout the year. We wish you and your families all the best for a safe and happy Christmas period and a prosperous 2016.

### SMITHTON PLANT CLOSURE

The final day for over the hooks delivery will be Tuesday 22nd December and re-opening on Monday 4th January.

### LIVEWEIGHT SCALES

The final day of scales for Scottsdale will be Monday 14th December resuming on Monday 4th January.

### THE OSMASTON, HOWTH & BRIGHTON SCALES

Will close from Tuesday 15th December and will recommence operations on Tuesday 5th January.



Tasmanian

# MEATWORKS MESSENGER

SUMMER 2015

GREENHAM



### AGRITAS SCHOLARSHIP

We have now opened applications for the 2016 Greenham AgriTas Scholarship. If you think you have what it takes to contribute to the Tasmanian beef or dairy industry, put in an application. Remember you don't have to be in the younger student bracket to win the \$12,000 award. Even mature age students (to the age of 45) should consider applying.

### 2016 RECAP

The lack of rainfall across Tasmania has been the major talking point recently but rewind to the beginning of the year and the big news was livestock prices jumping to their highest point in history. Of course those highs were going to be difficult to maintain but pricing is still strong and should give producers confidence for the future. The unseasonably dry conditions have pushed quite a few store cattle to the mainland so I'm hoping that we can reverse the direction of stores between now and next winter to fill the gaps.

### SMITHTON DRAFT SUCCESS

I hear that local Smithton lad Ryan Gardner has been drafted to Geelong. Being a Western Bulldogs fan and sponsor, he hasn't quite made it to the right club - but we wish him all the best! Greenham Tasmania is a proud sponsor of the Smithton football club - let's hope for more club success and maybe some more local draftings to the big league from the North West.

### PRODUCER INFO DAYS

Thank you to those that attended the various information days around the state. We had over 400 attendees across the eight events with much enthusiasm for our programs and marketing promotions of your beef. Big thanks to our livestock representatives for their hard work in putting the events together.

### MERRY CHRISTMAS

On behalf of all the team at Greenham Tasmania I thank you for your support over the past twelve months and wish you and your families a very safe Christmas, and a productive and profitable 2016. Our domestic sales are strong and opportunities in the major export markets are developing even more. I hope you will continue to support us as we process and promote the best beef in the world.

Peter Greenham Jnr

## SCHOLARSHIP PROSPECTS AT THE READY

Applications are now open for the Greenham AgriTas Scholarship for 2016.

The winner will again receive an impressive \$12,000 to help him or her undertake formal study towards a career in the dairy or beef industries.

The scholarship is presented in partnership with the AgriTas Trade College in Smithton of which Greenham Tasmania is a foundation partner.

The college, which began operations in 2013, aims to provide practical agricultural training, specialising in dairy, beef as well as management and business administration.

Offered every year since 2003, the scholarship is open to applicants aged 17-45 years who are immediate family, sharefarmers or employees of farmers who have sold cattle to the company's Smithton meat processing plant any time this year.

The number of cattle sold is not important.

The winner will be expected to undertake the chosen course of study during 2016 and must complete it. The scholarship may also be used to finish a course already begun or for study which will take more than one year to complete.

AgriTas college chariman Mike Buckby said we are proud to once again work closely with Greenham Tasmania to encourage young Tasmanians to develop their skills and contribute further to our agricultural industry.

"This is a long term investment to build social and intellectual capital in rural Tasmanian communities. We are competing in a global marketplace and our businesses need to have the best information and people at their fingertips," Buckby said. In the past, the Greenham Agritas scholarship has provided young Tasmanians with the resources to further their study either within Tasmania, interstate or internationally.

"I have no doubt that this year's winner will continue that legacy and leave an important imprint with their studies."



CAPTION

Past scholarship winners have been involved in agribusiness, soil and pasture management and agricultural sciences.

This year's winner, Emily Jones, of Longford has now completed her second year of studies for a Bachelor of Agriculture at the University of Tasmania and travelled to Wagga Wagga for the 26th intercollegiate meat judging competition.

Her team received the runner up for the eating quality class and personally, Emily placed runner up for the overall highest placed individual and has been selected to go into training for the Australian team for upcoming events in the USA.

"The scholarship has been a fantastic opportunity and my confidence in what I can achieve is growing all the time. I can see so many positives for Tasmanian agriculture," Emily said.

Applications are now open and close on Friday 29th January, 2016.

Application forms and information sheets are available by e-mailing [scholarships@greenham.com.au](mailto:scholarships@greenham.com.au) or visiting [www.greenham.com.au](http://www.greenham.com.au)

Information:

Trevor Fleming – 03 96446514



BRIAN FISH, FARMER AND ONE OF TWO 'BULLOCKIES' REMAINING IN TASMANIA.

*Meatworks Messenger* recently took up the opportunity to visit one of our southern suppliers, Brian Fish of Oatlands. It's a fascinating farming operation with its head in modernity and its heart in history.

We first meet Brian in the shed, "there's just not enough time in the day", he says, explaining the process of 'wheelwrighting' and wagon restorations in his work shop. "I'm always coming across old techniques and tools, it never ends."

A beautiful property with undulating hills, the pace is steady at Mungala yet the industrious Brian Fish has managed to keep himself busier than most. "I was born just over that hill towards Interlaken. I started out catching rabbits and kangaroos from there moved onto shearing sheep for thirteen years. We also used to break-in hundreds of horses and ran lots of clinics for a time," says Brian.

To *Meatworks Messenger's* surprise, Brian explains he knows his way around a meatworks as well, having operated a small abattoir on the property for many years. Every week with a staff of just five, they would process up to 550 sheep, 25-30 cattle, 80-90 deer and 20-30 pigs but as Brian puts it, "it just got too much, we'd kill all day up to 9 or 10 o'clock at night, load the refrigerated truck and then leave at 3am to start doing deliveries in Hobart - and then

we would come back and start the whole process again."

"We realized we needed to settle down a bit and ended up buying more ground." In fact, the original farm totaled 175 acres but Brian and his family has since increased their holdings to 2,400 acres.

Nowadays, with the meatworks closed, Brian and his wife and daughter are running about 2,000 sheep with one calving of approximately 2,000 lambs. In terms of cattle, they would normally run about 150-200 head of cattle, including steers, heifers and cows but the 2015 season has been too dry to aim for numbers like that.

What it really amounts to as Brian says, "we're wheeling and dealing on the feed- I would dearly love to go back to a really great mob of Hereford cows and build up a good breeding and fattening operation but the seasons have been so unreliable, we just can't justify it."

Brian reports that up until the early 2,000's, the annual rainfall in the area was around 28-30 inches but has since decreased dramatically. "Last year we got 12 inches and then this year I don't think we've got 9 inches yet!" Pointing to the nearby hills Brian was emphatic - "there used to be hills I could see that were full of bush and trees but now look, you can see gaps everywhere - those trees are all dying - give it another



BRIAN HAS TAKEN UP LEATHERWORK AND WHIP MAKING WITH STUNNING RESULTS.

ten years of rainfall like this and they'll all be dead."

"The vegetation here is really suited to a 25 inch plus rainfall but when you get ten years of 12-15 inches, the trees can't handle it. Even the pastures are battling, you can put your fertilizers on, but you still need some water."

Brian notes he has a good sideline business of contracting hay and usually produces about 6,000 bales per year but this year he would be lucky to cut 1,000. He has been dealing with Greenhams since the changeover from the Blue Ribbon days. As he slows down (if that is possible!), he will swing the operation more towards cattle.

"It's getting harder and harder for us - with wages and costs - but it all depends on the season you know, you have to have the feed."



BRIAN HAVING A YARN WITH GREENHAM SOUTHERN REP, CADE EBDON.

"I might as well run some decent store cattle and go about it that way. In my opinion, in a good season, you don't need to be buying the absolute top cattle anyway. I don't mind them if they're a bit rough around the edges. Black, White, Red, I'll put them on beautiful clover and rye and they always do very well when they hang up at Greenhams," Brian adds.

In fact, Brian leaves it up to Greenham to source his store cattle and from thereon, after finishing in Interlaken, he has achieved 100% MSA grading results. "It's really all about feed isn't it? - And how they're looked after of course. But no doubt your cattle have gotta be quiet".

"If we get one that's a bit wild, we don't usually keep them on. It's just too disruptive for the others."

On handling, Brian is one of the few operators that still use horses to move his mobs. "I don't care who you talk to, the old blokes will maintain that your cattle will be naturally quieter if you use horses than if you get around on motorbikes."

"On the bikes, you need to be doing 10-20kmh and then you have cattle moving ahead or coming up behind too fast - but if you come in with a horse they will walk in. Times have changed - people don't take that half hour to get a horse ready."

One other area that Brian has strived to maintain traditions is his work with rearing and training bullocks which for so many years were important to and provided the 'muscle-power' for many of the colonies early industries.

"We bred draft horses for a long time but I was keen to look at something new so I did the research and tried to talk to as many old blokes as possible. I also managed to get some old yokes from all over Tassie - they're a great talking point." (possible caption)

Amazingly, Brian is completely self-taught at handling and communicating with the bullocks and he even makes his own yokes. "They were historically used to cart logs or hay but these days I only use them sparingly on the farm. They are mostly used at the

amazing strength and stamina of these huge beasts."

At the shows and Ag fairs as Brian comments, "the older people - their eyes will light up and they'll say 'I remember seeing that' - whereas the kids are just awestruck - their mouths open, yelling out 'wow'." Brian is fresh from participating at the Royal Hobart Show where he amazed another group of enthusiastic visitors. "If don't have heritage, what have you got?



HE BULLOCKS HAVE REALLY RULED MY LIFE FOR THE LAST 20 YEARS AND GETTING THE CHANCE TO TAKE THEM ALL OVER THE STATE HAS BEEN ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT.

twenty or so events I do every year throughout the state."

"It's just too slow to be using them these days. Even though I've got all the old equipment like plows, I could only plough an acre per day whereas on the tractor I could get through 50 acres, and you see, that's the real difference...it's the time."

"Some people say - gee it's like using cheap diesel but by the time you hook them all up and account of the slow speed, the tractor will always win - I do like it when people say that though!"

"Sadly, it'll never come back - I mean what union will give directions on yoking them up and how will worksafe stop your finger from getting caught in a hook?"

The heritage of bullock driving resonates with people around the state says Brian. "Bullocks played a very important role in the development of the early colony. I'm trying to continue at least the knowledge of the tradition - it's a real testament to the

You've got to know where you come from and have a sense of history," he says.

"It's tough to say but those old bullocks were sometimes more important than the convict labour. They could pull anything and then when they came to the end of their life, they provided valuable meat and protein to hungry settlers. But the most valuable part was really their hide. They worked for 16 or 17 years and then everyone was lining up for a new pair of shoes!"

*Meatworks Messenger* is indebted to Brian Fish and Greenham rep Cade Ebdon for facilitating this story.



TROPHY WALL - THE FISH FAMILY HAS ALSO BEEN INVOLVED IN RODEOS ALL AROUND AUSTRALIA.