

The Courier

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BEEF Week at the Te Mania Angus headquarters at Mortlake this year will have a record number of the autumn on-**property** bull **sale** team on display, along with reference sires, a catalogue of 55 stud females to be offered at the bull **sale** and large mobs of the Te Mania Angus breeding herd.

It will be, in the words of Te Mania Angus director Tom Gubbins, "a complete one-stop shop for cutting edge angus genetics".

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"This year, 1000 **commercial** cows will be offered in the Team Te Mania Online **Commercial** Female **Sale** through AuctionsPlus on the eve of our March 5 **sale**," Mr Gubbins said.

"At the **sale**, we have catalogued 155 bulls, as well as 55 stud females who have sons in the **sale**, PTIC to calve in spring. The females will be **sold** on the Helmsman system, finishing 30 minutes after the bull **sale**.

"The bull **sale** will again be a video auction, under cover with bulls penned outside," he said.

"The bull catalogue features 15 sons of super sire Tuwharetoa Regent D145 sons, and 13 from the \$91,000 bull Te Mania Emperor E343.

"Regent is currently the highest longfed Herdbook recorded sire on Breedplan and has matched that with the most progeny recorded on Breedplan in the past two years, highly sought after for his meat quality and growth traits.

"Te Mania Emperor **sold** for a then Australian record price at our 2011 autumn on-**property sale** and he currently ranks in the top one per cent of the breed for seven traits and is being used widely throughout the industry, as well as with semen sales to Chile, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Europe."

Mr Gubbins said at Te Mania Angus the sires used in the breeding program focused on sound structure and were commercially oriented to provide breeders next-generation genetics.

He said that was reflected in the sire list for the 2014 catalogue and its diverse range of largely homebred sires with excellent temperament, including Te Mania Flame F565, Festivity F327 and Fitzpatrick F528.

"Increasingly, the success of the Te Mania Angus gene pool is being achieved with homebred bulls and a cow herd run strictly under **commercial** conditions," Mr Gubbins said.

"That has helped us reverse the genetic flow. Instead of importing genetics, we are now exporting them with growing success," he said.

"We have always been focused on breeding Australian bulls for Australian conditions with good temperament something for which our cattle have long been recognised.

"Our genetics are exported to some of the industry's traditional powerhouse regions, and now through live export, to some of the more rapidly-emerging world markets."

In 2013, Te Mania Angus exported 120 stud heifers to **China**, 93 bulls to Russia and 29 to Kazakhstan, as well as its growing global semen markets. Team Te Mania members have also exported more than 400 breeding heifers to Russia and **China**.

The Te Mania Angus story started in 1928 in New Zealand and the same bloodline has been Australia since 1971.

Now under the management of Tom and Lucy Gubbins and Hamish and Amanda McFarlane, Te Mania Angus is a herd of 1600 breeding cows at Mortlake, 400 recipients for the embryo transfer program at Mansfield in Victoria's high country, and up to 80 lease sires at Connewarre.

From 1971, Australian founders Andrew and Mary Gubbins helped pioneer objective measurement in the Australian beef cattle industry and performance recording has been a cornerstone of Te Mania Angus.

The herd now has more than double the number of trait leaders in Angus **Group** Breedplan than any other stud in Australia.

The stud's genetic program is now computer-analysed and matched for best possible joinings.

Mr Gubbins said using the data from each animal, recorded on Breedplan, the computer was able to select sire candidates from Australia and occasionally overseas for an out-cross sire, best suited to the Te Mania Angus herd and its breeding aim of Australian bulls.

He said once potential candidates were identified, the stud used Total Genetic Research Management to pick the most suitable matches.

"It forecasts what the expected progeny will be like," Mr Gubbins said, "ensuring the progeny match our preferences, such as high final weight and low mature cow size".

"Breeding isn't a visual art, it is a science and, as the accuracies, the volume of data, the range of EBVs and the science of genomics accelerate, it will just keep getting better," he said.

"It's about having the candidates right. If you start off with bulls you don't really want to breed with, then it isn't going to work."

To fast-track genetic progress Team Te Mania was launched in 1995 and is now a confederation of 40 beef cattle herds across NSW, Victoria and SA.

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