

ALC UPDATE

It gives me great joy to report that ALC has been fortunate to receive an excellent wet season this year. We had a few early storms before Christmas, followed by consistent rainfall right through to March. While some areas received more than we're used to, or could handle, it left us with plenty of subsoil moisture heading into the dry season. The warmer weather has continued to promote strong pasture growth.

"Brides Creek" recorded 240mm during the most recent rain event, while areas just 100km away received up to 600mm in a single week, resulting in severe flooding and significant losses of livestock and infrastructure. Our thoughts are with those still recovering. "Gundaroo" had 260mm and "Tondara" 350mm, which gave the rivers a good run and brought out plenty of sandflies, but thankfully, we sustained very little damage.

The timing of this above-average season couldn't have been better. It's our favourite time of year. Weaning and pregnancy testing have both delivered very pleasing results. This is when we assess the outcomes of the past year's work and begin planning ahead. We are closely monitoring rainfall and pasture conditions, adjusting stocking rates to match carrying capacity right through until the next expected rains in mid-December.

With strong results continuing across our breeding herds, we are running at full capacity. What were once extraordinary achievements are now becoming consistent. While improved seasons have helped, much of the credit goes to our no-excuses, decades-long commitment to rigorous selection. Every breeder must deliver a weaner and reconceive while lactating, every year. Our 75-day joining period for cows and 42-day period for heifers, starting 1st October, ensures that most cows are conceiving before any useful rain, proving their functionality regardless of the season. We manage and select for the tough times, so that in the good times, the herd excels.

This year, we achieved 86% wet rebreed across all herds and properties, including two-year-old calving heifers, who alone rebred at 76%. Last year's #4 weaner heifers were joined as a mob and achieved a 79% pregnancy rate on grass alone, with no supplements, fly sprays, dips, or drenches. This is the best we've ever seen. These are adapted cattle doing the job, and when paired with a reasonable season, the results speak for themselves.



Our short, early calving period not only identifies the most fertile, consistent, and productive genetics, it greatly contributes to the overall efficiency and profitability of our business. As we wean our #5 calves this year, we are turning off our #3 bullocks, fat off grass at 2.5 years of age, making room for the next generation. A slower, drawn-out production system would create grazing overlaps and inefficiencies. Our herd must deliver carcasses or pregnancies, on time, every year, using only what nutrition is naturally available.

Another important goal is to sell all empty females in good condition by June 30, before pasture quality declines, so we carry only productive animals through the dry season. While not always achievable, we come very close most years. We've gone into detail on our management this time because, **at ALC, the production system behind the data is just as important as the data itself.** By applying the same low-input, commercially driven management system across both our seedstock and commercial herds, we test our genetics under real-world conditions. The data must reflect true production under realistic cost structures.

The ALC Standard:

- Heavy ox turned off by 2.5 years
- Weaner and wet rebreed, on time, every year
- Yearling heifers in calf
- No chemical crutches or fancy feeding regimes
- Responsible grazing and stocking rates

Without this approach, "fancy numbers" are no better than "fancy feeding" - not much use in a real-world setting. After decades of selection and performance data across large numbers, we can now make accurate predictions about both performance and cost of production.

It's been especially gratifying to receive feedback from clients across Northern Australia who are achieving serious production milestones, without added costs. One of our clients has reported an impressive 80% weaning rate across his entire herd. Additionally, another ALC client has shared that, in his group of 1,500 #4 yearling heifers, which were joined at 2% to ALC bulls, he has achieved an outstanding 90% pregnancy rate. These are adapted Brahmans doing the job under tough conditions, proving that low-input profitability is very achievable. **Top-tier management, matched with the right genetics, is a winning formula. A focus on *profit margin* rather than *sell price* is key, especially in harsh environments where cost of production is one of the few things we can control.**

Now that weaning and pregnancy testing are complete, we're deep into bull drafting for this year's sale. Structurally sound bulls with good underlines, muscling, temperament, fly resistance, and doability are our priority. We analyse four generations of cow data, age at first calf, number of calves, and tight calving intervals across dams, grand-dams, and great-grand-dams. It's all about consistent performance built over time.

EBV data plays a big role, but it must be backed up by real paddock performance. We aim for fast growth without increasing mature cow size, as our production system depends on turning off fat bullocks at 2.5 years and making space for the next draft. We want our yearling heifers in calf, and measure scrotal size at 400 days. Speed to reconceive (Days to Calving), is one of our most important profitability drivers. The goal is balanced selection, focused on maximum kg/ha, at minimal cost. This information is also used to assess our sire lines. Are they delivering what we need? The temperament of this year's mobs, both seedstock and commercial, has been exceptional, making the work more enjoyable.

The 2025 ALC Bull Sale will be held on-property at Gundaroo, Nebo on July 2nd. It will be a Helmsman auction, with on-site and online bidding through AuctionsPlus. Over 100 grass-finished, work-ready bulls will be offered. The catalogue will be available three weeks prior, via the ALC Brahmans website. Each entry will include four generations of fertility data (dam and sire lines), EBVs, \$ indexes, age of puberty, scrotal measurements and horn status. All bulls are sire and dam verified, and semen morphology tested. The 2025 ALC Bull Sale team consists of 55% polled or scurred bulls. Notably, 56% of the sale team are out of two-year-old calvers and an impressive 77% tracing back to two-year-old calving dams or granddams. For more information regarding the sale, please visit the ALC Brahmans website. A list of accommodation close to "Gundaroo" can be found on the sale page of the ALC Brahmans website www.alcbrahmans.com.au



Finally, congratulations to both our sons, Heath and Tom, for completing their mechanical trades in Rockhampton. We were delighted to welcome Heath back to Gundaroo at the beginning of last year, followed by Tom at the start of this year. Together, they make a fantastic team and work seamlessly alongside each other. In January, both boys completed the RCS Grazing for Profit School and now contribute across all three properties - managing cattle, grazing, and machinery. Having two mechanics in the team, is a great asset to the business. It's been a joy watching the next generation step up, 'passion driven' and having a clear understanding of what's important.

Looking forward to catching up soon.

Or if not, we hope to see you at the ALC Bull Sale in July.

Regards, Alf



All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them. – Walt Disney

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