

## ANGUS NEWS &gt;&gt;&gt;

## Seeking second classing opinion

HAVING another opinion when classing their cattle is just one of the tricks-of-the-trade for the Evans family.

As they have principally been purchasing Karoo Angus bulls for the past 15 years, Mr Evans said they had formed a "good relationship" and had principal of the stud, Annie Scott, class their

heifer progeny each year.

Mr Evans said having an external classer worked well as they were able to pick up undesirable traits the Evans' may not.

"We started getting Annie to help us class the heifers to get someone else's opinion, as she is dealing with cattle all of the time and has her own stud

standards," he said.

With the heifers joined at 14 months old, Mr Evans said they were looking for a female who could produce progeny with a high-growth rate and good weight-for-age.

Sam Evans (front) is pictured with his father, Mark Evans, "Netherby", Walgett, with some of their Angus cows.



# Premium Angus

By NICOLA BELL

**M**ARKET demand and extensive promotion of the breed are just two of the factors which has kept north-western producers, the Evans family, breeding Angus cattle.

Mark and Sue Evans, along with their son, Sam, run an extensive operation at "Netherby", Walgett, and while they also trade cattle, the family have been breeding a pure Angus herd for the past 15 years.

Swapping from a Hereford herd, Mr Evans said the main reasons for opting for the Angus was the premium achieved through sales, the breed promotion and thus market demand.

"The Angus cattle seem to perform well, and I figure no matter what breed, at the end of the day, a cow and its progeny costs the same to run so if you are getting more dollars per head for Angus, then there is more reward in it."

Running a commercial herd consisting of about 500 breeding cows, the bloodlines were principally Bathurst-based Karoo stud, while some Te Mania genetics were also used.

Having purchased Karoo bulls for the whole time they have been breeding Angus cattle, Mr

Evans said they got to know Karoo principal, Annie Scott, after they had some of her steers on agistment at "Netherby".

"We were impressed with the weight gain of the Karoo steers, so that's how it all started."

Now, having purchased more than 30 Karoo bulls, Mr Evans said they wanted bulls with high growth figures and low birth-weight figures for calving heifers.

Breeding larger framed cattle was also important, as Mr Evans believed it helped with higher growth rate.

"It is the philosophy we have been working towards and it has become pretty well accepted over the years," he said.

Although the bulls purchased

**Our Angus steers have been commanding a premium price from feedlots over the years**

— Mark Evans

come from southern, colder climate areas, Mr Evans said Angus cattle had adapted well to the Walgett climate.

"It can be pretty harsh here, but the cattle bred on the property seem to perform well."

With calving in July through to September, the steers were basically bred for the feedlot market.

Usually sold to the Rangers

Valley feedlot at Glen Innes, Mr Evans said their Angus steers had become reasonably well accepted through this market.

The calves were weaned at about seven months old and were put straight into the Evans' on-property feedlot where they stayed for four to six weeks.

All the husbandry requirements, including drenching and vaccinating, were carried out during weaning.

Having only yard weaned and used the on-property feedlot for the past six years, Mr Evans said it was an "opportunity" system and meant all the steers were educated on the feedlot feeding regime before they even left the farm.

"This is an attraction for the feedlot and they achieve a premium price."

Depending on the season and the market, the steers were often sold during March, but were sometimes grazed on a crop and grown out to 400 kilograms.

Mr Evans said they usually reached the 400kg mark at about 11 or 12 months old.

While the steers were sometimes sold through saleyards, Mr Evans said he found the feedlot market was much better suited to his operation.

"Our Angus steers have been commanding a premium price from feedlots over the years and if the cattle perform properly they are prepared for them."