

ISSUE

03

December, January & February
2023/2024

THE SILVER BULLETIN

Newsletter of the New Zealand Murray Grey Society



Welcome to the Third and Final Newsletter of 2023!

We hope this final Newsletter for the year finds you all well.

Here in Canterbury we have been blessed with enough rain to keep things relatively green – long may it continue!

Wherever you are in the country, I hope that you have a good summer and have a chance to relax and unwind before we hit 2024.

We have kept this Newsletter relatively short and sweet and it's a busy time of year for everyone!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

- Caitlin Brooks -
Editor



FROM THE PRESIDENTS Paddock: BARRY MACDONALD

Dear Members,

It's that time of the year when we are all busy and everything seems to be focused around the day the big Santa boy arrives or the calendar ticks over once again. So, I'll keep this relatively brief.

Mating will be well underway for most herds now and hopefully it's all going well. Those who have purchased new bulls will no doubt be full of anticipation with the upcoming results in spring. Well done to those who had bull sales over the past months and also to those who supported fellow breeders by making purchases. I believe the sales have been positive and there seems to have been a shortage of MG bulls in some areas. I've also been told that there has been increased sales of MG semen into the dairy industry so in all things are looking well for our breed.

I recently had the privilege of judging cattle at the Canterbury Agricultural Show. Well done to those who made the time to bring their Murray Grey cattle to the show and well done to George Climo whose senior cow performed well in the Interbreed and All Breeds classes. I also had to judge and assist with the junior stock judging competition. It was great to see young people putting themselves to the test of assessing animals and speaking publicly about their placings. I would encourage any of our young members/breeders to utilize any similar opportunity.

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During our most recent council zoom meeting we discussed the financial budget. Since our draft budget we've had further increases in some of our basic costs. We are also still waiting on negotiations to finalize contracts with ABRI which will also no doubt raise costs. We are however endeavoring to stick to budget as much as we can. We also discussed at length the rules and regulations pertaining to the databases of the Australian and NZ societies and how they might have to change if the databases were to be combined. Much more discussion is to be had in this area.

Members will have received their 2024 calendar orders by now and thanks again to Sue Clarke for coordinating this project.

In conclusion, I wish everyone a Merry and safe festive season and a great beginning to the New Year. See you in 2024.

Barry Macdonald

President



CA – WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Sue Clarke

“CA is a genetic defect found predominately in Angus and Angus derived breeds which can cause up to 20% deaths in newborn calves”

The Murray Grey by laws state under Herdbook regulations, (paragraph d)

A recorded DNA profile and a Contractual Arachnodactyly (CA) test is required for SIREs of all registered cattle born from 1/June 2015.

This means calves cannot be registered until their sires CA test result is lodged with the Breed Society.

The sire does not necessarily have to be clear, he can be a carrier, but he must have a test result.

CA is a genetic defect found predominantly in Angus and Angus derived breeds which can cause up to 20% deaths in newborn calves. When 2 carriers are mated they have a 25% chance of producing a dead or very disabled calf, a 50% chance of producing a carrier and a 25% chance of producing a normal calf.

It is also known as “Fawn calf syndrome” and can be seen as a defect of the elasticity of the connective tissue and muscles giving unstable hock joints, loose jointed fetlocks known as down in the pasterns and may result in longer than normal back legs as they grow. They may not be able to stand to feed and without human intervention will die.

Whilst the Society merely requires sires to have been tested, not Free of CA, beware that carrier animals when used on untested females which may also contain carriers there is a 25% chance of producing defective calves. Much better to use a CA Free sire!

DNA tests can be done via skin punch or tail hair submitted through PBB for testing via Neogen. Details on the PBB and Murray Grey Websites.

<https://www.pbbnz.com/services/genomics/murraygrey/>



CA Only
\$31+GST

It was a fantastic representation of Murray Greys at this years show. Entries were up in the MG breed classes with 3 exhibitors (4 yearling heifers) and one senior cow and calf. These classes were judged by Barry Macdonald.

Champion Junior Murray Grey and Grand Champion Junior was Stonybrook TK Magnolia T5 (Stonybrook Stud/ Caitlin Brooks)

Reserve Champion Junior MG female was Waimak MKT Gracie (Waimak Stud/ Climo Family).

Champion Senior and Grand Champion Murray Grey exhibit was Waimak SK Gabriella 32 (Waimak/Climo Family).

Interbreeds was very successful with Stonybrook TK Magnolia T5 placing 4th and Waimak SK Gabriella 32 winning the senior cow and calf class.

The highly contested Meat and Wool cup on the Thursday did not disappoint and Murray Grey's were consistently mentioned in the top 4 out of the Champions of the breed classes (best Junior and best senior winners). Stonybrook TK Magnolia T5 was 4th overall in a very strong lineup of yearling heifers and bulls. Waimak SK Gabriella 32 was runner up in the senior class (winner was a 2 year old South Devon bull).

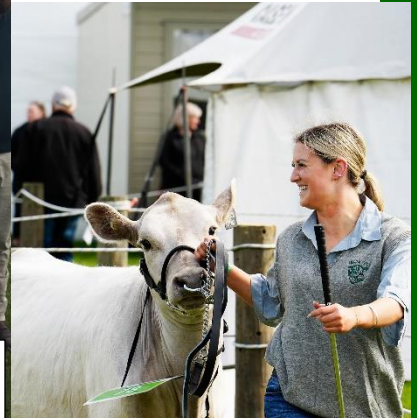
It was a great week, with good advertisement for the breed at one of New Zealand's biggest shows. Congratulations to all exhibitors for representing the Murray Grey breed so well.



Champion & Reserve MG Yearlings



George after the Interbreeds Cow & Calf win



Hannah White in MG Yearling Heifer class

MURRAY GREY COUNCIL MEMBERS

President: Barry Macdonald

Vice President: Zarah Blackwell

Treasurer: Peter Stachurski

Carolyn McIntosh

Tony Powell

Caitlin Brooks

Hayden Fletcher

Michael Gray

Keep an eye out as we introduce a Council Member each Newsletter!

NEWS & UPDATES FROM ACROSS THE DITCH



In the news from across the ditch... National Show and Sale is back on – this looks to also align the Youth Stock Show in the same weekend.

Murray Grey Beef Cattle Society
September 21 · 🌐



Murray Grey Beef
September 21 · 🌐

Don't miss out on your chance to try some award winning [Murray Grey Beef](#). At the moment we are lucky enough to have a supply of cattle from the same line as the 2023 [Royal Adelaide Show](#) champion eating quality steer.

If you would like to taste test this product for yourself please follow the link to order <https://halfacow.farm/farms/murray-grey-beef/>

Farmer to Fridge
[Murray Grey Beef Cattle Society](#)
[Moonta Gourmet Meats](#)

[#murraygrey](#) [#murraygreybeef](#) [#samurraygrey](#) [#BuySAForSA](#)

Murray Grey steer wins big at the Royal Adelaide Show from Ashvell Murray Greys. Awesome to see results from carcass competitions really cementing what Murray Greys are known for.



COUNCIL MEMBER PROFILE:

Caitlin Brooks

from Stonybrook Murray Grey Stud



Living and breathing cows is something Caitlin does on a daily basis.

While her Pedigree Registered Murray Grey Stud "Stonybrook" is really just a hobby size, she works as Regional Breeding Manager for CRV (previously Ambreed). Alongside breeding the future generation of dairy bulls, she also helps with Rushbrook Farm dairy herd of 1100 cows managing the herd records, culling decisions, and genetics side of the business with her partner Ethan and his family.

Caitlin's introduction to Murray Greys all came through an email to George Climo asking if she could help at Christchurch show in 2017. "George was the only local stud that replied, I emailed quite a few at the time!". Through helping George at the show, Caitlin started to learn the ropes and got addicted to showing cattle. In her first show as a youth, she not only won the senior novice handler class but went on to get Reserve Champion Handler Overall. "I was also very fortunate to win the Murray Grey Youth Ambassador award to travel to Australia to compete at the Murray Grey National Show and Sale Youth event and visit studs, I was over there for 2 weeks". Seeing the conditions that Murray Greys are farmed in, Caitlin was hooked on the breed. Being naturally polled, silver being more heat tolerant, good marking ability with high quality yielding carcasses what wasn't to love?

In 2018 Caitlin purchased her first heifer Yorkvale Marigold in the National MG sale who went on to be runner up junior in the meat and wool cup and junior interbreeds. As a cow with calf at foot, Marigold was 3rd in the beef All breeds competition 2 years later. Unfortunately, she was lost as a 5 year old, looking the best she has ever looked a couple of weeks before calving. It was a devastating loss however she left one daughter (Stonybrook MK Madison) who has bred on exceptionally well and the Stonybrook herd now has descendants who are carrying the family forward.

Through hard-work and determination (and the massive support of George & Glenda Climo at Waimak) the Stonybrook herd today has approx. 10 pedigree registered breeding females. Caitlin focuses on purchasing top females from studs around the country to build on strong cow families. Recent purchases from Torrisdale, Waimak and Yorkvale have all made fantastic contributions to the herd. Notably Torrisdale Tantalise N65 has bred exceptionally well also and there are 2 daughters in the herd, 1 son retained for herd use, and she has another heifer calf at foot this year. Caitlin aims to breed for structurally sound, good tempered animals that last. "For a female I want to breed for performance in both carcass/growth and maternal traits, she has to perform well and also look after herself while raising a top calf every year. I don't retain any females that are not easy to work with, they have to have a good temperament". Improving EBV's are also a key focus for the stud with scanning and recording being at the forefront. Caitlin also enjoys showing and comparing her animals to other breeds, "I enjoy the feedback from different judges and it helps get my eye in as well, I am forever learning".

The future plans for Stonybrook is to keep focusing on building the quality of the females and fine tuning the genetics. Caitlin is more focused on the quality versus numbers at this stage.

In regard to the Council, Caitlin has been a member for a couple of years now. She is passionate about genetics and improving the Murray Grey breed. "In the dairy industry there has been a flavor of the year in terms of beef breed use, I feel the Murray Grey has always been a consistent performer but has been forgotten by farmers chasing particular muscling (terminal) breeds for the past couple of years and in some instances at the expense of their cows". The proof is in the pudding with the Greys for calving ease, colour marking, polled and quality of the carcass/yield. Terminal sires have been proven in the dairy beef trials to yield out only slightly greater than a British breed, and they are behind the carcass quality traits we have been breeding for; achieving premiums is something I think we will be targeting heavily in the future; especially for dairy beef.

WANTED – CONTENT FOR THIS MAGAZINE!

The only way we can keep this Newsletter interesting and informative is to have contribution from our members – photos, articles on bulls/cows, updates from around the country – please make sure you drop Caitlin a line (and a few Murray Grey Photos!)

Deadline for the next Newsletter is February 20th for the March/April/May issue due out on the 1st March.

Email address for content – whinnie456@yahoo.co.nz

Who doesn't love some Murray Grey in their office/home?

Each member will receive one copy – there are extras available for purchase at \$23 per copy + postage costs. Please make sure you support this awesome initiative so we can cover the costs and make this an annual occurrence!

You can order extra calendars through contacting Sue Clarke yorkvale@xtra.co.nz – please bare in mind stock is limited so don't delay get in before you miss your chance!



The PBB & Pivot Design offices will be closing for a short break from midday Friday, 22nd December and will re-open again on Monday 8th January 2024.

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

