



## Your invitation to participate in Australia's largest and most comprehensive sire benchmarking program

[Revised 1st February, 2011]

### A unique opportunity to evaluate your prospective elite Angus sires

- The largest single breed progeny test program ever in Australia
- 35 bulls joined in 2010 to 1640 cows in 5 herds in NSW and Victoria
- Compare your bull(s) head to head with other top bulls in the breed
- The opportunity to discover a new 'super sire'
- Comprehensive progeny evaluation for growth, feed efficiency, carcass and fertility will generate high accuracy EBVs earlier
- Obtain widespread exposure for your stud from the publicity generated through participation in this program
- Cost is reduced through co-investment by Meat and Livestock Australia (Beef Improvement Nucleus (BIN) program) and Angus Australia
- Program is co-ordinated by Bob Dent, Angus Australia's former Extension Manager, on behalf of Angus Australia.
- A maximum of 40 bulls will enter the program this year so register your interest now!

**NB. Deadline for nominations of bulls in 2011 is Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August, with semen to be supplied by 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2011**

**For more detailed information, see [www.angusaustralia.com.au](http://www.angusaustralia.com.au) or contact Bob Dent on 0457 457 141 or email [bdent4@bigpond.com](mailto:bdent4@bigpond.com)**

Angus Australia has received funding assistance from Meat and Livestock Australia, under their Beef Information Nucleus (BIN) program, for the conduct a large scale sire benchmarking project for Angus cattle. The project provides a unique opportunity for Angus breeders to benchmark their prospective elite sires in a structured progeny test program.

The project will see around 2000 commercial Angus cows joined by AI to 40 Angus bulls per year. In the first year, 35 bulls including two from NZ and two from UK were joined to 1640 cows in commercial herds. In total, the project aims to generate approximately 3,000 progeny, with 1,500 steers tested for feed efficiency and slaughtered after feedlot finishing to contribute carcass and meat quality data. In addition, fertility and calving ease data will be recorded on about 1,500 female progeny.

All sires, and progeny, will have DNA samples collected to enable the evaluation of future DNA markers or genotype tests with Angus cattle raised and assessed under Australian conditions. This will help quantify the contribution of the DNA markers allowing them to be incorporated into Estimated Breeding Values.

All Full Members of Angus Australia will be eligible to nominate one to two bulls each year into the program. It is planned to use 40 bulls in 2011 and another 40 in 2012 giving a broad cross section of the best bulls being offered to the Australian industry.

## Benefits for Bull Owners

Nominating a bull for this project should have the following benefits for the bull owner or breeder:

1. Your bull is compared head to head with some of the top bulls available in the Angus breed in Australia. Not all of the bulls nominated will turn out to excel in all areas but hopefully we will find some that do.
2. Progeny information will be generated on calving ease, growth performance, heifer conception and calving performance, and steer feed efficiency and carcass performance. This will be incorporated into the EBVs of your nominated bull/s, resulting in high accuracies earlier for these traits.
3. Angus Australia will publicise the project widely with information on the bulls nominated. This provides you with the distinction of having a bull/s involved in an Australia wide sire benchmarking program with the results being publicised to all Australian cattle breeders through the Angus website and publications. It gives you the promotional opportunity to say that you had a bull good enough to be included in the program.
4. You will be supplied with regular updates on the program and the results as they become available. It is important to remember that it will be at least three years before the heifer fertility and steer and carcass results are compiled from progeny bred in the project.

## Requirements:

- Nominating one to two bulls in any one of the three years of the project. There is no age restriction on the bulls. They must be registered in the Angus Australia HBR, RAR or APR. There are no requirements for EBVs or \$Index range, just that the breeder considered that the bull/s are worthy of testing in a large scale benchmarking project. In selecting bulls for the program preference will be given to young Australian bred bulls with favourable EBVs and \$Index Values, representing a diversity of Angus genetics. The bulls would need to be AM, NH and CA free or free untested for all conditions.
- A fee of \$2,500 (plus GST) per bull is payable for all Australian bred bulls accepted into the program, and \$4,000 (plus GST) for international bulls. This fee is a contribution to the costs of the AI program and for collection of progeny performance information, including feed efficiency and carcass data on steer progeny (this fee represents less than 10% of the total cost per sire tested in the program).
- Collecting semen from the nominated bull/s and providing 100 doses of fertile viable semen to the project at your cost. It is strongly suggested that additional semen be collected and stored for future use. The amount and type of semen collection is your choice as the project is able to use custom collected semen.
- Samples of semen from all bulls nominated will be tested for motility and suitability for use after thawing. Semen not up to acceptable standards can not be accepted and will be returned to the bull owner. If time permits, further collections or samples from different batches can be provided but it is essential that only high grade semen be used. This may place limitations on young bulls, especially yearlings.
- All bulls will be inspected by a veterinarian and be tested negative for BVD. Bulls must be vaccinated for Campylobacter and Leptospirosis before collection. The veterinarian will also assess the bull to ensure that they are structurally sound, of quiet temperament and with acceptable scrotal size.

For further information or to nominate a bull/s please contact:

Bob Dent

Coordinator, Angus Sire Benchmarking Program

Mobile: 0457 457 141      Email: [bdent4@bigpond.com](mailto:bdent4@bigpond.com)

