



Bringing your **NEW BULL** home

When purchasing a bull, care and handling after the sale can be as important as the purchase itself. Looking after your bull well during the Initial stages of his working life may ensure longevity and success within your breeding herd.

Purchase

Temperament is an important characteristic when selecting a bull. Selecting a bull that may be flighty or aggressive will make life difficult for you each time he is handled. Note which bulls continually push to the centre of a mob, run around, or are unreasonably nervous, aggressive or excited.

At the sale, note any changes of temperament by individual bulls. Some bulls that are quiet in the yard or paddock may not like the pressure and noise of the auction and become excited. Others that were excited beforehand get much worse in the sale ring and can really perform. Use the yard or paddock behaviour as a guide, rather than the temperament shown in the ring.

Delivery

When transporting your new bull insurance against loss in transit, accidental loss of use, or infertility, is sometimes provided by vendors. Where it is not, it is worth considering. After purchase tips:

- When purchasing, ask which health treatments he has received.
- Treat and handle him quietly at all times - no dogs, no buzzers. Talk to him and give him time and room to make up his mind.
- With more than one bull from different origins, you must be able to separate them on the truck.
- Make sure that the truck floor is covered to prevent bulls from slipping. Sand, sawdust or a floor grid will prevent bulls from being damaged by going down in transit.
- If you can arrange it, put a few quiet cows or steers on the truck with the bull. Let them down into a yard with the bulls for a while before loading and after unloading.
- Unload and reload during the trip as little as possible. If necessary, rest with water and feed. Treat bulls kindly your impatience or nervousness is easily transmitted to an animal unfamiliar to you and unsure of his environment.

If you use a professional carrier:

- Make sure the carrier knows which bulls can be mixed together.

- Discuss with the carrier, resting procedures for long trips, expected delivery time, truck condition and quiet handling.
- Give ear tag and brand numbers to the carrier and make sure you have the carrier's phone number.
- If buying bulls from interstate, organise any necessary health tests before leaving and work out if any other requirements must be met before cattle can come into another State.

When buying bulls from far away, you may often have to fit in with other delivery arrangements to reduce cost. You should make it clear how you want your bulls handled.

Arrival

When the bull or bulls arrive home, unload them at the yards into a group of house cows, steers or herd cows. Never jump them from the back of a truck directly into a paddock—it may be the last time you see them. Bulls from different origins should be put into separate yards with other cattle for company.

Provide hay and water, then leave them alone until the next morning .

The next day, bulls should receive routine health treatments. If they have not been treated before, all bulls should be vaccinated with:

- 5-in-1 vaccine;
- vibriosis vaccine;
- leptospirosis vaccine (if in areas like the Hunter where leptospirosis exists);
- three-day sickness vaccine (if in areas where this sickness can cause problems).

Give particular attention to preventing new bulls bringing vibriosis into a herd. Vibriosis, a sexually transmitted disease, causes infertility and abortions and is most commonly introduced to a clean herd by an infected bull. These bulls show no signs of the illness. Vaccinated bulls are free from vibriosis, so vaccinating bulls against the disease should be a routine practice.

Vaccination involves two injections, 4–6 weeks apart, at the time of introduction, and then a booster shot every year.

Complete the vaccinations 4 weeks before joining.



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Consult with your veterinarian and draw up a policy for treating bulls on arrival and then annually. Bulls should be drenched to prevent introducing worms and, if necessary, should be treated for lice.

Plan to give follow-up vaccinations 4–6 weeks later. Leave the bulls in the yards for the next day or two on feed and water to allow them to settle down with other stock for company. A bull's behaviour will decide how quickly he can be moved out to paddocks.

Mating new young bulls

Newly purchased young bulls should not be placed with older herd bulls for multiple-sire joining. The older, dominant bull will not allow the young bulls to work, and will knock them around while keeping them away from the cows.

Use new bulls in either single-sire groups or with young bulls their own age. If a number of young bulls are to be used together, run them together for a few weeks before joining starts. They sort out their pecking order quickly and have few problems later.

When the young bulls are working, inspect them regularly and closely.

Mating new young bulls

Older working bulls also need special care and attention before mating starts. They should be tested or checked every year for physical soundness, testicle tone, and serving capacity or ability.

All bulls to be used must be free-moving, active and in good condition. Working bulls may need supplementary feeding before the joining season to bring up condition.

During mating

- Check bulls at least twice each week for the first 2 months. Get up close to them and watch each bull walk; check for swellings around the sheath and for lameness.
- Have a spare bull or bulls available to replace any that break down. Replace any suspect bull immediately.
- Rotate bulls in single-sire groups to make sure that any bull infertility is covered. Single-sire joining works well but it has risks. The bulls must be checked regularly and carefully, or the bulls should be rotated every one or two cycles.

Bulls are a large investment for breeding herds and they have a major effect on herd fertility. A little time and attention to make sure they are fit, free from disease and actively working is well worthwhile.

Northern Australia

Although the Angus breed originated in a cooler climate, they can adapt to subtropical regions with many straight-bred and cross bred producers finding success in Northern Australia. Some of the following information may also be helpful for new bulls located in more temperate climates.

Adaptation

The key to Northern success for Angus is that cattle introduced from the Southern regions of Australia be allowed to adapt to their new environment before commencing their working life. If possible, a break of 3 months is advisable before you set your bull to work.

Purchase in cooler months

Ensure your bulls are in good condition before they do commence their working life. The cooler months are an ideal time to purchase and introduce Angus cattle, allowing them plenty of time to acclimatise.

Change of feed source

When inducting Angus cattle into your herd consider their source of feed. Have you taken an animal which has been supplemented on grain straight to a dry pasture? Animals should be gradually changed over to their new feed to ensure they do not lose condition. This may involve using supplements which could include dry lick/urea blocks.

Managing Cattle Ticks

For ticky areas, bulls should be vaccinated prior to transport and given another booster afterwards. Remember males are more susceptible to ticks than females.

Information is provided by the Department of Primary Industries NSW. For further information visit the DPI web site: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au. or www.angusaustralia.com.au. Further reading - Buying Angus Bulls

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION VISIT
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