

Media Release

Island beef

5th October 2009

Having access to all available markets is one extra, but vital, challenge for beef cattle producers in Bass Strait.

On their 3,500 acre Flinders Island property 'Lackrana', Mike and Liz Grimshaw's grazing enterprise focuses on producing 380-420 kg steers for feedlots to optimise prices. "Yes, island life is unique, though we've got to be pretty focused and ensure our cattle meet all the requirements of the market to remain competitive with mainland producers."

Mr Grimshaw is currently carrying 580 Angus breeders, and hopes to increase numbers with a return to better seasons. "In recent years we've had a run of very dry spells in autumn and winter, though this winter has been a lot better with more 'normal' rainfall, and with some mild conditions, the grass is now up and growing and we'll try to rebuild the cow herd."

He says a major challenge has been the annual Pinkeye summer epidemic. "Until the arrival of a vaccine, Pinkeye plagued us. It was one of the biggest stresses on our enterprise. To have an infection rate of two to three calves in 10 was awful - for us and the stock.

"But we certainly stopped it in its tracks with the vaccine, and without Pinkeye or eye-scarring, we can choose to sell into any market."

Mr Grimshaw says Pinkeye directly affects marketing options. "Affected stock are often rejected from feedlots, and when offered for sale to the regular trade, we've seen a 20 – 30c/kg penalty.

"On one 400kg beast, that's a docking of \$80 or more; across the herd that can soon add up to a lot of money when the infection hits.

"Then there are all the other costs of treatment, labour, reduced growth rates and general hassle.

"We now vaccinate every calf on the place; it's an insurance against Pinkeye and is a standard part of the farm management cycle now."

Coopers Piliguard Pinkeye Vaccine is a unique vaccine that aids in the prevention of pinkeye in cattle caused by the bacteria, *Moraxella bovis*. Susceptible cattle should be vaccinated with a 2mL dose, 3-6 weeks before the onset of the pinkeye season.

For technical information on Coopers Piliguard Pinkeye Vaccine[®], please contact Coopers Customer Service Advisory Line on Toll Free 1800 226 511 or visit the website www.pinkeye.com.au

Inquiries: Ineke Kuiper, 02 8204 3730 or David Dawson, 02 8204 3857

[®] Registered trademark of Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health

Coopers Animal Health

ABN: 79008467034

Level 4, 66 Waterloo Rd, North Ryde

NSW 2113 Australia

Telephone: 1800 226 511

Fax: 1800 810 511

www.coopersanimalhealth.com.au