

Yearling Bulls on Highlands Station, John and Catherine Ford.





Farm Details

- 1240 ha total
- 920 ha effective
- 320 ha retired native bush
- 30 - 35% mowable, balance steep
- 20% Kaharoa Ash, 80% Rotomahana Mud
- Good fertility, average Olsen P 30
- 420 – 730 m altitude
- Winter growth rates June down to 8 Kg DM per ha per day
- 800 plus R 1 Bulls
- 4000 ewes and replacements
- Some R 2 Steers depending on season.
- 3 fulltime people, 2 part-time, plus Catherine & I.
- We feed no supplements or crops.



Why R1 Bulls? What are the Alternatives?

- Gross margins per ha for policies for this farm:
- Key Assumptions:
 - Average lamb price \$86 head.
 - Average bull beef price \$5.00 per Kg C.Wt
 - Grazing heifers \$9.50 per week.
 - Interest on stock 7.5%
 - Extra \$90 per ha allowed for fencing etc. for bulls
 - Extra \$48 per ha allowed for docking etc. sheep
 - Stocking rates based on feed budget for each policy

Gross margins:

	Margin per ha	Buy/Sell per head
Breeding Ewes	\$932	\$0
Dairy Grazers	\$1,072	\$494
Dairy G & C	\$1,148	\$620
Weaner Steers	\$1,108	\$535
R2 Bulls	\$1,560	\$591
R1 Bulls	\$1,709	\$978



Why are R1 Bulls so much more profitable?

- Natural HGP between their legs, approx. 25% more efficient than heifers and steers.
- Young animals are smaller and feed maintenance requirements are less; therefore more grass can be utilized for weight gain.

However there some challenges with bulls!

- They are potential “teenage vandals” and can damage fences, troughs, gates, each other, and dig holes,.....if not managed well.
- Therefore we combat this by minimising any stresses:
 - Having small mobs of 16 to 29 so they know their hierarchy
 - Mobs are never next to each other
 - Feed them very well and move often.
 - Keep power on all fences.

Our bull management system:

- Calves arrive through mid October to December.
- Target is to average 110 kg L.Wt on November 1 or equivalent
- On arrival all calves are:
 - Quarantine drenched – triple combo
 - Sprayed for pink-eye
 - Tickicide applied
 - 5 in 1 vaccinated
 - B12 injection
 - Weighed, any calves less than 95 Kg off the truck sent back.
 - NAIT tags read, and registered
- Drenched orally and weighed monthly till June, then pour on in July and September.
- Copper given every second month because of our soil type.



- Calves are run in mobs of 60 to 70 through summer, utilising surplus feed amongst older bulls.



- In March the calves are divided up into their mobs, usually same numbers for each block every year.
- Every mob has a different tag to sort out any mix ups quickly, backed up with their EID tags
- Each mob's block further subdivided into 12 cells with polly-wire



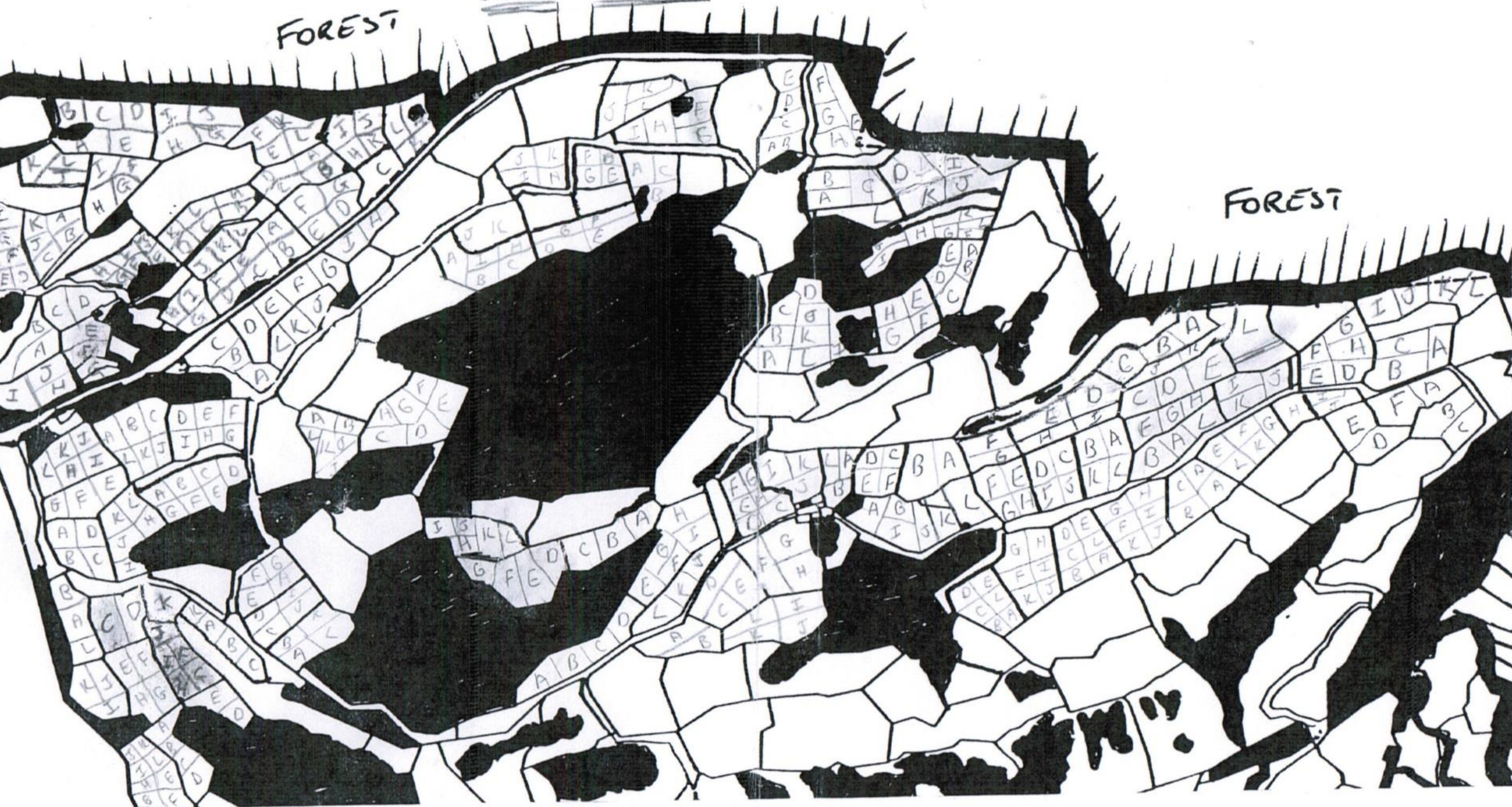
- Cell grazed April through to September
- The key to have 2,300 Kg/ha minimum on April 1st
- Use nitrogen as necessary to ensure this.
- Initially on a 30 day round, “skimming” then shorter rotations as feed levels drop.
- We try and do these shifts on Monday first thing, Wednesday after lunch and Friday late afternoon.
- However by July we have to speed up the shifts to every 1 to 2 days and weekend shifts become standard.
- Usually 1 day shifts in August, sometimes half day shifts if bad weather. This keeps bulls happier and avoids pugging, riding and mischief!
- Having the cover low (1300), by early September ensures quality regrowth, which we try and guarantee with nitrogen.



2015 Winter

FOREST

FOREST

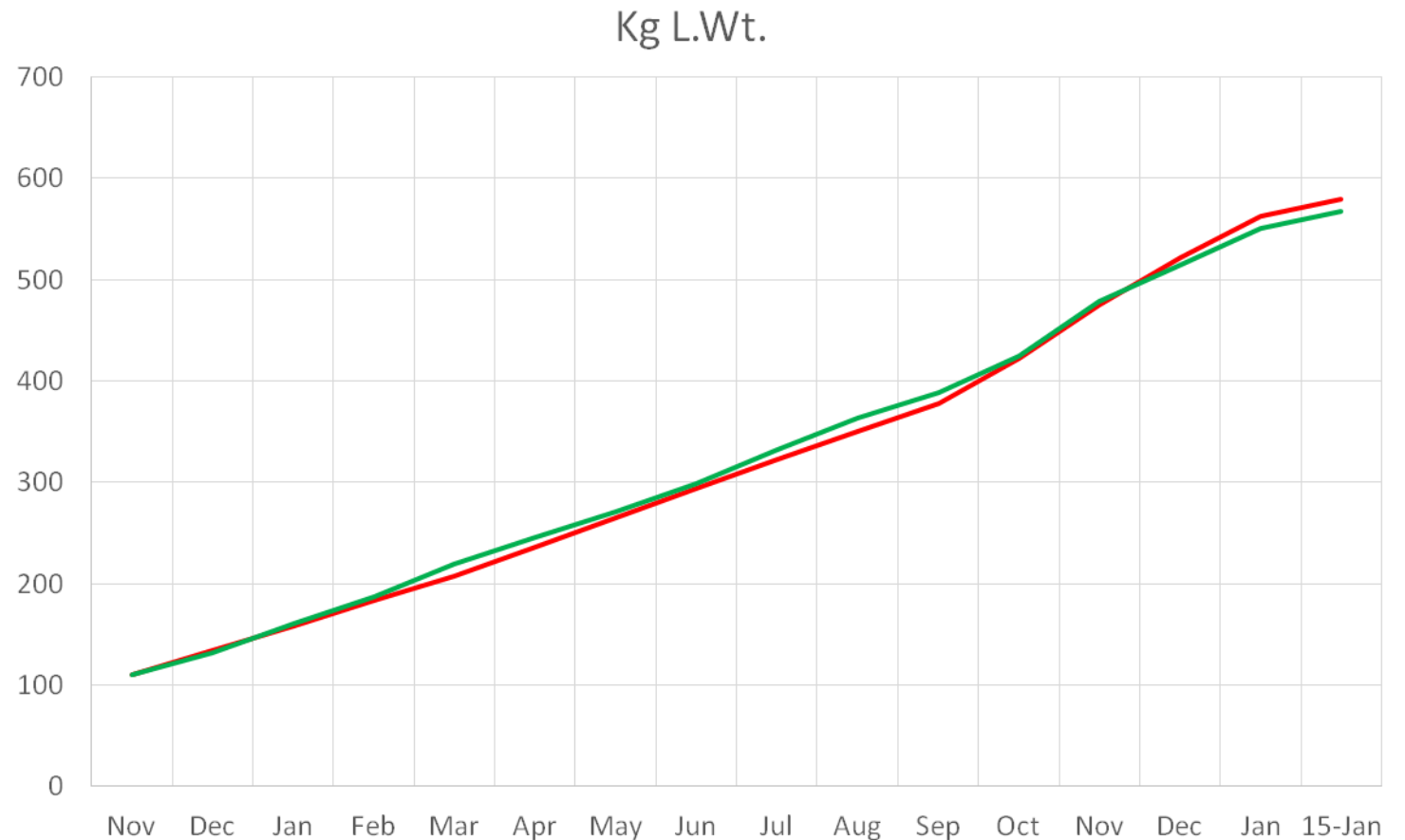


From September to January bulls shuffled around their blocks, with surplus feed used for calves, and quality maintained with steers, ewes and topping. Cells reduced to 4 to 6 per mob.



- Bulls sold in their mobs from late December through till early February depending on season. Average kill date usually January 15th.
- Overall Target is to average 1.07 Kg every day the bulls are here That equates to the following targets:

• Nov 1 st	110
• Dec	134
• Jan	159
• Feb	184
• Mar	208
• Apr	236
• May	265
• Jun	294
• Jul	323
• Aug	351
• Sep	378
• Oct	422
• Nov	475
• Dec	522
• Jan	563
• Jan 15 th	580



Monitoring

- The key to any system is the “management loop”, that is making a plan, executing the plan, monitoring the plan, and adjusting the plan.
- We monitor each mob every time they come into the yards to see how the bulls are going vs targets and if we need to alter anything either now or in the future.
- We use an excel spreadsheet.

	Bulls 2015	28-May-15		Last	Last	Last		New	New	New	New		L.Wt		
	Block		Number	Mob Wt	L.Wt	Date	Diff #	Number	Mob Wt	L.Wt	Date	Days	Gain	Prev	Ave
G	Corner Hays	Orange X	21	5697	271.3	22-Apr	0	21	6540	311.4	26-May	34	1.18	1.87	1.51
G	TF 1,2 & TF 3	White Buttons	23	5749	250.0	23-Apr	0	23	6480	281.7	27-May	34	0.93	0.50	0.73
G	CR 1,2 & CR2	Red Dot	26	6289	241.9	23-Apr	0	26	7384	284.0	27-May	34	1.24	0.62	0.95

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G	Corner Hays	Orange X	21	5697	271.3	22-Apr	0	21	6540	311.4	26-May	34	1.18	1.87	1.51
G	TF 1,2 & TF 3	White Buttons	23	5749	250.0	23-Apr	0	23	6480	281.7	27-May	34	0.93	0.50	0.73
G	CR 1,2 & CR2	Red Dot	26	6289	241.9	23-Apr	0	26	7384	284.0	27-May	34	1.24	0.62	0.95
G	Squares	White F	15	4254	283.6	23-Apr	0	15	4783	318.9	27-May	34	1.04	1.21	1.12
G	Three Cysterns	Blue Blank	28	7806	278.8	23-Apr	0	28	8414	300.5	27-May	34	0.64	1.07	0.84
G	Wet Hays,LR2	Orange B	23	6251	271.8	23-Apr	0	23	7155	311.1	28-May	35	1.12	1.11	1.12
G	Old Lane 1,2,& 3	Blue Buttons	28	7204	257.3	23-Apr	0	28	8538	304.9	28-May	35	1.36	0.85	1.13
G	Big Roughs	Red -	28	6651	237.5	23-Apr	0	28	8126	290.2	28-May	35	1.51	0.38	0.99
	Big Bull		1	532	532.0	23-Apr	0	1	582	582.0	28-May	35	1.43	0.00	0.77
G	LHS 1,2 & 3	Brown Blank	26	6473	249.0	23-Apr	0	26	7739	297.7	28-May	35	1.39	0.77	1.10
G	Cedar	Blue X	19	4854	255.5	23-Apr	0	19	5436	286.1	27-May	34	0.90	1.09	0.99
G	Wally's & MBF 2	Purple Triangle	17	4074	239.6	23-Apr	0	17	4767	280.4	27-May	34	1.20	0.71	0.97
G	ER Hay	Blue A	29	7320	252.4	23-Apr	0	29	8265	285.0	27-May	34	0.96	0.97	0.96
G	Top EOR, white tanks	Green Buttons	23	4966	215.9	23-Apr	0	23	5836	253.7	27-May	34	1.11	0.64	0.89
G	View 1,B2Trig1&2	White Blank	23	5795	252.0	22-Apr	0	23	6452	280.5	26-May	34	0.84	0.92	0.88
G	Top 2nd Trig &Hole	Brown Button	23	5229	227.3	22-Apr	0	23	5961	259.2	26-May	34	0.94	1.26	1.08
G	Top,Mid F Burn H Rock	Pink Blank	21	5128	244.2	22-Apr	0	21	5749	273.8	26-May	34	0.87	1.00	0.93
G	Cysterns & Square	Black Blanks	25	6705	268.2	22-Apr	0	25	7673	306.9	26-May	34	1.14	1.64	1.39
							0								
B	Big Hay	Orange Buttons	20	4792	239.6	22-Apr	0	20	5335	266.8	26-May	34	0.80	1.07	0.92
B	Little Hay/Rewarea, qua	Red Blank	25	6396	255.8	22-Apr	0	25	6841	273.6	26-May	34	0.52	1.22	0.85
B	Macracarpa	White +	24	5788	241.2	22-Apr	0	24	6493	270.5	26-May	34	0.86	0.71	0.79
B	Top Rocks H2	Pink Blank	25	6075	243.0	22-Apr	0	25	7069	282.8	26-May	34	1.17	0.65	0.93
B	D Long & L Bush	Green A	17	4592	270.1	22-Apr	0	17	4985	293.2	26-May	34	0.68	1.55	1.10
B	Barbary Hedge	Purple Dot	20	5249	262.5	22-Apr	0	20	6054	302.7	26-May	34	1.18	1.34	1.25
B	Below Road	Brown B	25	6341	253.6	22-Apr	0	25	7182	287.3	26-May	34	0.99	1.32	1.14
B	Doneys		25	6337	253.5	23-Apr	0	25	7121	284.8	28-May	35	0.90	0.99	0.94
	Behind home yards		6	1101	183.5	22-Apr	1	5	1138	227.6	28-May	36	1.23	0.90	1.07
							0								
D	Y2k Strip NP's etc	Yellow Buttons	22	5773	262.4	22-Apr	0	22	6530	296.8	28-May	36	0.96	1.53	1.23
D	Bruces 2 & 3	Blue Buttons	23	5831	253.5	22-Apr	0	23	6611	287.4	28-May	36	0.94	0.87	0.91
D	Nicks 1,2,3,4	Orange Dot	28	7463	266.5	22-Apr	0	28	8188	292.4	26-May	34	0.76	1.39	1.07
D	Pa 4 & Pa 1	Green Blank	23	5984	260.2	22-Apr	1	22	6309	286.8	26-May	34	0.78	1.11	0.94
							-1	1	252	252.0	26-May				
D	Pa 2 & 3	White J	17	4475	263.2	22-Apr	0	17	5059	297.6	26-May	34	1.01	1.16	1.08
D	Lane Ponds	Red Buttons	24	6454	268.9	22-Apr	0	24	7368	307.0	26-May	34	1.12	0.97	1.05
D	Long 3 & 12 Acres	Green Buttons	23	5839	253.9	23-Apr	0	23	6586	286.3	27-May	34	0.96	0.78	0.87
D	RHB	Red X	29	7505	258.8	23-Apr	0	29	8555	295.0	27-May	34	1.06	0.78	0.93
D	Long 1 & 2	White Blank	18	4818	267.7	23-Apr	0	18	5267	292.6	27-May	34	0.73	0.93	0.83
D	Kaik Hays	Orange Blank	21	5355	255.0	23-Apr	0	21	5840	278.1	27-May	34	0.68	0.80	0.74
D	RHS 1,2,6	No Tags	19	4782	251.7	23-Apr	0	19	5536	291.4	27-May	34	1.17	0.43	0.82
		Total & Ave	833	211927	254.4	22-Apr	1	832	240199	288.7	26-May	34	1.00	0.99	1.02
					Target	Difference				Target	Difference	Days	0.97	Target	Ave
Calf Wt	alf to March weight gain	Calf Wt March		Weight	256.2	-1.8			27-May	290.3	-1.6	Perday	0.03	Total Gain	
114.8	105.2	223.4	399	253.1	George			399	115880	290.4	34	1.090	37.35	175.6	1.02
110.6	117.0	229.2	247	260.2	Daniel			247	72101	291.9	34	0.924	31.67	181.3	0.96
117.8	96.4	219.0	181	251.8	Bronwyn			186	52218	280.7	34	0.854	28.97	162.9	1.00
114.1	104.8	222.0	827	254.4				832	240199	288.7		Gain	34.29	174.6	1.02
									Over all the time here average wt gain is :				0.84	1.07	
												Total Kg Gain is:		470	

Actual Performance

Bull Performance Highlands Station

Year Ended	Average L.Wt Gain Per Day	Ave Sale Date	Ave Kg.C.Wt.
	Arrival: Sale		
1996	0.90	25-Feb	279
1997	0.97	22-Feb	297
1998	0.91	15-Feb	287
1999	0.89	10-Feb	267
2000	0.94	29-Jan	267
2001	0.92	17-Dec	259
2002	0.96	15-Jan	278
2003	1.00	13-Jan	286
2004	1.02	19-Jan	287
2005	1.01	14-Jan	280
2006	1.02	31-Jan	298
2007	0.98	11-Jan	281
2008	1.03	26-Jan	291
2009	0.99	28-Jan	289
2010	1.00	25-Jan	287
2011	0.98	23-Jan	276
2012	1.01	18-Jan	291
2013	1.01	13-Jan	287
2014	1.01	16-Jan	291
2015	1.04	15-Jan	292
Target	1.07	15-Jan	300

