

THORNHAM FARM



October 2016

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Spring Arrivals	2
Exodus (PP)	2
Young Bulls	3
Sanjika Honey Biscuit	3
Rocket	4
Conestoga Pepper	5
Shearing	6
Farming Operations	7
Veldt Surfing	8



WINTER ENDS - SPRING IS HERE



RA11119 Missy is one of the original Thornham commercial cows and has calved with her third calf in our operation. This year it's a bull calf from our Conestoga Simmentaler bulls!

IT'S THE END OF A LONG HARD WINTER!

Its half way through October and the winter surely closes and spring is in the air. We need the rain to replenish our streams and under ground water. Our two hill seepages have dried up for the first time since anyone can remember and this poses a serious challenge watering cattle on the three hill camps. We had a bull frost

here this week and this seemed to propel us straight back into winter. Our winter fodder flow was spot on with almost overkill on the feed bunkers. We still have our entire maize crop stored neatly in bags in the old Thornham sheds. This was another outstanding job from Eileen and her Thornham team, reaping, bagging and

neatly stacking row upon row of corn on the cob to make into snap corn. The calves are coming thick and fast now and its shearing time. The lambs are to be weaned and fed lot also for the Christmas festival markets. Spring is the most optimistic time for all of us and a grand summer awaits.

SPRING ARRIVALS



CONESTOGA RAIN DROP AND MARIA KALLIS

All our stud cows have names and its great fun following the blood lines and building female blood-lines that stretch back many generations. Two of the latest calves are Rain drop and Maria Kallis! Rain Drop, so named by Sarah Kate is from Sanjika Rainne who in turn was bred from Mont-Beau Regina that we bought from Ken Baxter. Regina was bred from Rickardstown Jumbo an imported British simmentaler bull. Rain Drops sire is the well known German imported bull called Exodus and she is naturally polled.

Maria Kallis 2nd is from Conestoga Maria Kallis 1st that is the only Diana's Enrico Carruzzo daughter we have and I think the only one in South Africa as Carruzzo is a Namibian imported bull. Karen Herrigel named her for me when she was born here at Conestoga and hails from the Haley blood-line. MK2 is sired by our very own Conestoga Dante bred from Salerika De La Rey and Alvos Lindaz.

Both these calves are polled and are carefully and highly bred. They will make for beautiful breed-ing females and I wish that I had a hundred of them.

EXODUS PP



Exodus PP is an imported German super sire and I have long admired and hank-ered to have a piece of this genetic masterpiece! He is double polled which greatly increases the chances of polled progeny.

Exodus made big waves two years back breeding many legendary bulls such as Salerika Excellent and its amazing that though Artificial Insemination we have calves of this great bull running around at Thornham.

Very Exciting!

CONESTOGAS BEST BULL CROP YET!



Our young Simmentaler stud started from just four females and slowly we have been accumulating females and slowly building numbers. However we have strictly culled anything bull or female that has not fitted into our template! We now have thirteen young two year old bulls for the market next year and these will front up this breeding season and sire the Conestoga stud and commercial calves for next year. This group is sired by Leeupoort Zagreb (The current SA Champion bull) Jacatt Mocca (Namibian Super Sire) Salerika De La Rey, Herbi Kevin and Vlensburg VLB1165.



SANJIKA HONEY BISCUIT INA1225



Honey Biscuit is a full brother to Sanjika Honey Smack with both been bred from one of my Dads best cow lines the Hand line. Biscuit is a Kyksim Honeymoon son.

Uncle Jack would be smiling at this bull as the Hand line was bred at his Intsizwa Simmentaler stud combining the Bulk en Brul Marloe and Intsizwa Billy bloodlines.

Its fantastic to see this bull in Kokstad three kilometres from where his grand sires and dams made big waves in their time!

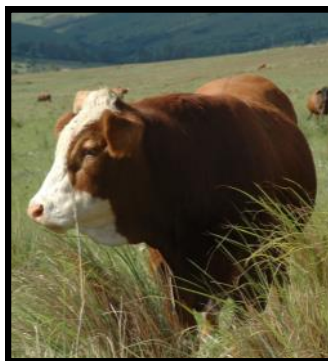
SIMMENTALER! THE CROSS BREEDING KING!



This is one of the older original Thornham females that breeds a good calf year in and year out! See her calf this year bred from Pepper and his cohorts! Immediately we have hybrid vigour and a calf to be proud of!

These Brahman crosses are ideal for the type of extensive farming we and our clients do and make the most beautiful Simbra calves! Our first FI cross heifers will be bulled in June next year!

GATHERING HORSEBACK



CONESTOGA HEIFERS CROSSING THE DRIFT

These are the second bunch of heifers to be bulled at Thornham and the first to be raised here from calves. Here is the future of our stud herds and these are our pride and joy. If the Conestoga herds both stud and commercial can look like this in five years we will have achieved a really fine goal. The Simmentaler heifers are sired by Salerika Browser, Rivervalley Era, Boswald Kevin, Kyksim Honeymoon, Sanjika Honey Smack and Honey Bear. Our first three stud Simbra heifers are from Excelsus Pine, Pioneer and Aegean,

We have bulled them to two of our top young studs namely Conestoga Zuraine and Conestoga Matteo. Zuraine is a Leeupoort Zagreb son from Sanjika Rainne who is also the dam to Conestoga Rain Drop. Matteo is one of a twin birth and is a Jacat Mocca son from the Taaiboshspruit Vula bloodline. Vula was a beautiful female that also bred a bull called Marula that sired many calves.

Vula also is the granddam of the Conestoga V bloodline that has bred the Viv and Vivian Lee females. Matteo was raised as an orphan by Ian, Tay and Se Se and was also nursed back to health by Eileen after a nasty brawl to become one of our finer bulls. Matteo is the second bull raised by the kids after Excelsus Vernon made it into the Sale String.

LRX HP ROCKET 23Y (PP)



We have used Rocket for the first time this season and he rates as one of the top breeding bulls in Canada.

His main strengths are that he is a proven herd sire, he is double polled, is unrelated to the South African Simmentalers, is easy calving and in the top 2% of the breed for milk!

I cannot wait for these calves!

KRAAL TOE!



CONESTOGA PEPPER GC134 (P)



An injury has kept this fine bull from being sold and this has increased our bull battery tremendously! Pepper is bred from the top selling Odensim Paul AG0850 from Anrho-da Leben.

I have it on good authority from the Thornham Staff that Pepper was the dominant bull siring in our commercial herd last breeding season. Pepper will join the two Honeymoon sons Honey Biscuit and Hunter heading up the commercial bull battery this summer!



BLUE TONGUE INNOCULATION



I told the kids the other day that if one dreams of sheep or cattle and they are thin then you are having a nightmare!

If They are fat then it's a sweet dream!



SPRING MEANS SHEARING TIME

The sheep season never really ends with these creatures needing constant supervision and care! The season just changes and with careful planning, a good fodder flow, up to date inoculation programs these can be a very rewarding and satisfying enterprise. There is nothing nicer than seeing fat ewes dropping healthy lambs! I told the kids the other day that if one dreams of sheep or cattle and they are thin then you are having a nightmare! If they are fat then it's a sweet dream!

We didn't see the burs coming this year! This is perhaps not as bad a nightmare as thin sheep but it stays a nightmare! We deburred for three weeks solid and still had to mop up again on the classing table! We will wage war incessantly on these foul plants this year!

We also didn't see the Sinecea and lost a few lambs to this plant!

However the sheep are in good shape and we are ever increasing our breeding flock! Danie Schoeman once again ran through each ewe and our breeding rams and culled what he deemed necessary to set up the next breeding season!



ANOTHER EXCITING YEAR AT THORNHAM!

It is difficult to farm successfully from such a great distance and we would have been much worse off if it were not for our "Farm Manager" Eileen Adam who is surprising all and sundry with her enterprising farming! The Sheep Clinic every Monday with her great friend Minnieval Black is a huge hit with the sheep at Thornham molly coddled and always in great shape. The Free State cattle also were nursed through their first summer and a long hard winter with typical enterprise! This involved a protracted war of attrition against the savage Red Water sickness that all new and un-immune live stock are particularly susceptible to.

Thornham farm is a beautiful and enchanting place but like all beautiful things can be gives up her treasures dearly!

We also had the kind help of Eileen's "other son" Terry Rust who really meets with her approval. Terry stays for weeks on end helping and fixing and devising new things for us!

We had our first brush of violent crime at Thornham when after a long hard days work Eileen sat talking on the telephone to her neighbour Jill Bastard when unbeknown to her an intruder was hiding in the cupboard behind her. When she opened the door she thought an ironing board had fallen on her. It turned out to be an intruder bent on robbing the house. After a brief struggle Eileen chased him down the passage and again cornered him in the lounge from where there is no escape. Another struggle ensued where Eileen was hit by a dining room chair. The man then made his getaway and all the neighbours came baling out of the hills. We got very lucky that the fellow seemed more intent on robbery and getaway than on violence. The security has now been heightened with more cameras, a marnet radio, additional lights and extra supervision on all fronts. The house also has alarms and panic buttons. We would like to thank all neighbours and friends and all involved and thank the Lord the Eileen came out safe and sound.

The farming carried on at a good click and we reaped a good tonnage of maize, our greed feed was excellent and we cut silage from our Sugar Graze. This worked out at excellent feed for a third of the cost of hay! Its also much more nutritious! We over wintered the cattle on a mixture of silage and Equifern lick from PSP feeds and our post winter condition is marvellous. This helps tremendously with the re-conception of the cattle.

The sheep were on PSP Winter Lick 36 and also came through fine. They were also on our green feed mixture of Oats, Stooling Rye, Turnips and Jap Radish. We also had maize stover for them and this is where we picked up all the blasted burs!

Our cattle have now had ten months at Thornham and hopefully should be more salted and adapted. We have had to utilise a winter breeding season to compensate for the adaptation and also for a poor conception last summer. I am super chuffed to now have an eighty five percent conception over the entire herd to all calve before April next year. The long term plan is to have them all calve in the spring, but Rome wasn't built in a day!

At least we have calves a coming !

The old timers say that it takes at least five years to get a farming operation off the ground and making ends meet and we have been going now for two years only and farming without overdraft. In February next year we will have paid off two of the centre pivots and then can look at a cash crop or such to help speed things along. We will plant our first Teff and Eragrostas crops this year in an attempt to retake all of our leased out lands for our own use. We try every year to double our cropping for the previous year and after year three we should be able to tackle one or both of our centre pivots!

It is very difficult to start farming with no cash! We have to pull ourselves up by our boot straps and be prepared to take risks but not such that it will sink the entire battle ship if it fails. Slowly, slowly catch the monkey!

As Kit Pharo Says "For every man that has climbed the ladder of success there are ten waiting for the Elevator!"

A Quote from one of my favourite books that in turn quoted an Italian Called Virgil

"There comes a time when the corn is blighted: when this-tles spring up everywhere: when no crops grow but wild tares and wild oats, beggar weed and spikey cal-trops. You must therefore wage war on the weeds unceasingly: cut down the trees that darken your land: shout the birds away from your crops and in the summer pray for rain. Otherwise, though your neighbour's granary is full, you will have to shake the acorns from the Oak to stay your hunger."

The Two Farms by Mary Pierce.

Another Quote from another of my favourite books:

"Too much is excepted from the farmer. He is a judge of many kinds of stock, he is a veterinary surgeon, a botanist, a chemist, an engineer, an architect, a surveyor, a foreman, a meteorologist, a buyer, a vendor and an advertising manager. And in the only job he really fails at is the last!"

I Bought a Mountain by Thomas Firbank.

This is set on the farm Dyffryn 1930's in rural Wales, which gets up to 3000mm rain per year.

THE KIDS “VELDT SURFING”

A ROB ADAM FAVORITE PASTIME!



There is nothing better for me than being surrounded by kids of all ages farming or looking at nature! This last week we had both Chris and Nicolas Adam at Thornham.

Both with our three kids had an adventure filled holiday, assisting cows calving, feeding lambs, inoculating both sheep and cattle, pushing sheep down the sorting shutes, fishing, hunting and playing imaginary games.

There is no TV at Thornham and phones and such are banned!

They don't miss them!

Sarah and Nicolas explored the Faraway tree, the emperors garden and the enchanted forest! Chris helped with all the cattle and asked a million questions! Ian and Tayla were at their most industrious selves and are growing to be fine young people.

I woke up early and walked up the Thornham road and thought that I had bumped into Rob Adam himself! It was Nick with an old pellet gun that a city slicker would have scoffed at but for the two freshly shot doves in his left hand.

You can come to Thornham at six thirty pm and find the whole house asleep, tired but happy!

THE BULLS COMING HOME!

