



The blue ear tag shows this animal is registered in the Aleph program.

ALEPH PROGRAM EXPANDING WITH HIGHER RETURNS TO FARMERS



You may have seen Aleph signs appearing on your neighbours' gates, or noticed blue tags on their cattle, and wondered what it's all about.

Aleph is a very successful Japanese chain of restaurants specialising in beef. We have an agreement to provide them with Tasmanian grass fed beef that qualifies as the best of the best. At present we are processing 80 cattle each fortnight and expect that to become 80 per week over the next six months.

About 20 farmers are participating in the program and receiving a premium of 20 cents per kilogram above our base price.

Aleph's requirements are quite strict. A maximum of two drenches are allowed up to the age of 12 months. One additional drench is allowed between 12 months and slaughter, but it must be a nil ESI drench. No antibiotics are allowed at any time and HGP's are banned. No genetically modified feed is permitted.

Cattle are processed between 18 and 27 months and at a carcass weight range of 220 - 350 kg. All cattle must be registered for the program and tagged by the age of 12 months.

Participating farmers need to have LPA quality assurance and MSA accreditations.

Aleph require total life trace back (the value of NLIS becomes very evident) and proudly tell diners they know which property every steak came from.

Livestock manager, Graeme Pretty, believes the Aleph program is a real winner. "It's good for farmers, good for Tasmania and good for the industry."

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TASMANIAN GRASS FED - A NEW EXPERIENCE FOR JAPANESE CHEFS

In Japan grain fed beef is traditionally perceived to offer a better flavour than grass fed. That changed for a delegation of Japanese chefs after they experienced the pleasures of our Tasmanian grass fed product during a recent visit.

Through an interpreter they freely admitted to never having tasted such flavoursome grass fed beef.

The delegation visited a number of our farmer suppliers before a dinner in Smithton where Peter Greenham explained the careful selection criteria that underpins our Cape Grim and Tasmania Natural brands.

Leading Japanese chefs made up the delegation. One delegate purchases meat for 160 restaurants.



Peter Greenham, right, describing the cuts to the Japanese delegation. They had never previously tasted grass fed beef with such flavour and tenderness.



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM ALL THE TEAM AT GREENHAM. WE HOPE YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES ENJOY A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS 2009.

Christmas Opening Hours
Greenham Tasmania's Smithton processing plant will be closed as of December 22, re-opening on January, 5, 2009.



Tasmanian

MEATWORKS MESSENGER

DECEMBER 2008

GREENHAM



RIDING THE ROLLERCOASTER

The last few months have been something of a rollercoaster ride. Climatic conditions have been quite variable, although the picture is somewhat brighter as we approach year's end. Movements in the Australian dollar have been erratic and occurring faster than at any time since it was floated. And now there is the worldwide financial meltdown.

I reported in the last newsletter that we had been working hard to build brand recognition for Tasmanian grass fed beef. Branding helps to take meat out of the commodity category and provide protection against the vagaries of the market. It can't provide total protection but certainly helps considerably in difficult times like these.

Our efforts have continued in recent months. We worked with well-known chef, Neil Perry, to produce a video that talks about the advantages of our branded products and shows consumers how to retain maximum flavour and tenderness when cooking their meat.

We conducted another video and photographic shoot to provide more raw material for use in promoting our Cape Grim and Tasmania Natural brands. We also hosted a delegation of Japanese chefs who were very surprised to discover the wonders of our local grass fed beef. They had never tasted grass fed like it and admitted their views had changed completely.

Our Aleph program continues to grow. While not strictly a branding exercise, it builds a strong linkage with the Japanese restaurant chain that also helps insulate us from market fickleness. It also puts more money in the pockets of participating farmers.

Over on King Island we have appointed Ron Crack as our resident buyer, and have been very pleased to hear so much positive feedback from farmers welcoming the competition we are providing.

And don't forget the Scholarship. It's been immensely helpful to previous winners. Please encourage suitable candidates to apply. Last year's winner was nominated by her employers. Without their encouragement she may well have missed out on the opportunity of a lifetime.

Finally, thank you for your ongoing support. Happy Christmas to you and your families and I hope that 2009 is a great year for farmers.

Peter Greenham Jnr



TIME FOR SCHOLARSHIP ENTRIES

Applications are open for the 2009 Greenham Tasmania Scholarship which encourages motivated Tasmanians to build a future in the Australian dairy and beef industries.

We've been providing an annual Scholarship since 2003 to help participants undertake formal study leading to a career in the dairy or beef sectors. It provides \$10,000 to the successful applicant to help them improve their skills and knowledge.

The Scholarship is open to people aged 17 to 45 who are immediate family, sharefarmers or employees of farmers who supply cattle to our Smithton processing plant.

Applications close on Friday, January 30, 2009.

Managing director, Peter Greenham, says ongoing education of this type is crucial to the future sustainability and development of the dairy and beef industries.

2008 winner Melissa Wheeler worked at 'Woodbourn', near Cressy, for three years before commencing an Agribusiness degree at the University of New England at Armidale. Upon completion of her degree she hopes to work within agribusiness as a consultant.

The 2009 Greenham Tasmania Scholarship entries will be judged on a range of criteria including:

- How the applicant will use the money to improve their skills and knowledge
- How important the scholarship is for them to be able to realise their ambitions
- Potential benefits to the dairy industry or farm enterprise and
- Previous academic, industry and/or personal achievements.

The winner will be selected by an independent panel comprising representatives from the Tasmanian farm, community and education sectors.

Greenham Tasmania Scholarship application forms and information sheets are available online at www.greenham.com.au or by phoning Jenny Andrews at Rivergum Marketing on (03) 5445 6103, faxing a request to (03) 5442 5301 or e-mailing to greenham@rivergummarketing.com.au



Peter Greenham Junior with 2008 scholarship winner, Melissa Wheeler.

WALLABIES INTO VALUE

You would normally expect us to see the establishment of another abattoir in Tasmania as competition. But when its main purpose is processing plague wallabies that would otherwise go to waste we are more than happy to stick to what we have been doing for six generations and encourage an entrepreneur in his endeavours.

North east farmer Gerald Nicklason is a man of many talents. His 700 acre property at Pyengana is well up the North George River Valley and surrounded by steep, dense bushland. It's great country for wallabies and he needs to shoot around 2000 every year to keep numbers under control.

He goes shooting every week and more often if the farm is being overrun.

Waste into value

Until now they have gone to waste and Gerald thought there had to be a better way. So he decided to convert his disused dairy into a small-scale abattoir and process the wallabies for both human consumption and pet food.

The Bennett's Wallaby is suitable for human consumption but the Rufus goes to pet food.

It was no small undertaking. Apart from the stringent building requirements that apply to an abattoir, there was also the need for various government approvals, and Gerald also had to study for and obtain various meat safety certificates. He found the DPI very helpful throughout the process.

The overall plan is to turn a waste product into value and provide the farm with another revenue stream. The emphasis is on small scale, but with all approvals in place there is also the opportunity to process a few head of sheep and cattle each week for bulk delivery to local households. It's more of a wholesale rather than retail operation.

Gerald and his wife Tara run 140 Angus breeders and 100 crossbred ewes. Calving starts in early August and he sells the heifers off at 380 - 420 kg from February through to March, while the steers go to a feedlot.

Live weight on your own place

The Nicklason's have been selling to Greenham since our representative, Danny Sinclair, moved to the north east last year. During our visit Danny hooked up his computer to Gerald's scales and bought a few head. He printed off the invoice, sorted out the vendor's declaration and handed over a cheque on the spot. "You can't get fairer than that," Gerald



Gerald Nicklason aboard one of his prized Walers. He's been selling cattle to Greenham since Danny Sinclair moved to the north east.



Danny Sinclair hands over the cheque. Gerald believes selling live weight on your own farm is as fair as it gets.

says, "live weight on your own place. I like the fact that Greenham are substantial enough to pay their bills. That's very important to us because we've been burnt in the past - effectively, it was theft of meat. But Greenham are good payers."

"We also really appreciated the field day where they told us what sort of stock they were looking for. We haven't been getting that sort of information from stock buyers."

Straight shooter

Gerald recently gained MSA accreditation and likes the idea of the 10 cents per kilogram premium. He describes Danny as a 'straight shooter'. And any man who shoots 2000 wallabies a year should be able to recognize a straight shooter when he sees one!

But there's more to the Nicklason's than cattle, sheep and an abattoir - the couple and their sons, Darcy 14 and Reuben 6, are also very involved in horse breeding and endurance riding.

There were draught horses on the farm when Gerald was a kid and he's been interested in horses ever since. Since getting out of dairying he's had more time and started breeding Walers three or four years ago. He describes them as great stock horses and ideal for endurance work.

Family involvement

The family competes on the Tasmanian circuit and plans to compete in Victoria in future. Gerald also harbours an ambition to ride in Australia's premier endurance event, the Tom Quilty Gold Cup.

Tasmania is now home to about 50 Walers with the breed increasing in popularity. Last year he brought three horses back from Maree in northern South Australia. The owners said he would have to be careful when he got them home because they had never seen rain!

It's certain they have seen plenty of moisture since because Nicklason's farm enjoys an annual average of 1350 mm. Gerald doesn't believe their rainfall has reduced in recent years but he feels the pattern is changing with more intense falls over shorter periods.

Snow and sleet are common in winter at the higher elevation but stock cope quite well provided they are properly fed. Gerald cuts his own hay and silage, and also does a fair bit of pasture renovation.

He sprays out old pastures and drills in new with a coulter opener and Baker boots, and does enough local contracting to justify ownership of the equipment.

OUR MAN ON KING ISLAND

We were delighted when King Island's well known livestock buyer, Ron Crack, joined the Greenham team recently.

Livestock manager, Graeme Pretty, describes Ron as a great asset. "He's lived on the island all his life and knows everybody, and he's a very experienced cattle buyer."

Ron and his wife, Joy, own a small farm at the north of the island and run 160 cows and calves. He worked at the local abattoir before taking on the role of livestock buyer when it became available around 10 years ago.

He describes the farm as a bit of a hobby that got out of control. He is also involved in horse racing and breeds 200 to 300 pheasants each year as part of a breed and release program.

"We release the birds at maturity to give them a better chance against the feral cats. King Island is about the only place in Australia where shooters can experience pheasant as a true game bird. They're wild and come off the ground at full speed."

"The season is open for two days during the June long weekend and we get around 120 shooters from Tasmania, Victoria and even New South Wales," Ron said.

King Island's racing season runs over December and January. Ron has started off well this year with his three horses chalking up a win, and a second and third at one meeting.

He says farmers are reacting positively to Greenham's presence

on the island. "A lot are telling me their prices have never been better and see the competition as very positive. We're sending a boat load off about every two weeks."

Graeme says Greenham had been very happy to offer Ron the job when he found himself in a difficult situation following the local abattoir's change of ownership.

"Their policy doesn't allow a livestock buyer to own cattle. We don't have a problem with that. In fact, it can be an advantage because Ron understands both sides of the game."



Renowned chef, Neil Perry from the Rockpool restaurants in Melbourne and Sydney, is a strong supporter of our Cape Grim Tasmanian beef. He dry ages it for up to 35 days in temperature and humidity controlled cool rooms.

He is pictured here during the taping of a video in which he talks about the qualities of our Tasmanian grass fed product and tells consumers how to cook the perfect steak.

We are constantly searching for opportunities to promote Tasmanian beef and differentiate it from other Australian product.

Visit www.capegrimbeef.com.au or www.greenhamnaturalbeef.com.au to view the Neil Perry video on how to cook a steak.