

SCOTS ALL SAINTS COLLEGE CATTLE SHOW TEAM

Facts relating to students wanting to bring in their own steers

I often have several lovely students and their families come to me and say mum and/or dad are going to donate a steer to the cattle team. This becomes a little difficult and I want to explain why or why not we will accept donations of family steers. Here are some facts:

- I have been exhibiting steers at Royal show level for 28 years and have a very good idea of what makes a good 'show' steer.
- A good 'show' steer is VERY different to a good paddock steer – it is hard when we are offered a steer and then I look at it and it is not of the quality we need for a Royal show – it often causes offense of the breeder – please understand that many exceptional paddock steers are still not good enough to be 'show steers'.
- It costs as much to feed a good show steer as it does a paddock steer.
- We have done very well in the past – in the past 25 years steers I have managed (via schools) around 500 show steers and in that time we have never had a year without a broad ribbon/s and we have received around 10 grand champions (hoof or hook) with many many champions and 'most successful exhibitors' – to continue this success there needs to be control of the 'type' of the steer we prepare.
- I strongly feel that it is my job to ensure the students end up with an appreciation of what a 'good' steer is and that we show appropriate types of steers for the show scene.
- My breed passion lies in the Limousin breed – I realise some of our family breeders disagree with this passion but it is the breed that is the most competitive in hoof and hook competitions (and this is based on strong evidence). I therefore have a preference for Limousins. I am also happy to show other European breeds such as Charolais. I am happy to make teams up with British bred cattle but they must be at least B+ muscle score and need to fit into lightweight or middleweight classes. The steer show scene has become very competitive and the standard of steer has improved greatly over the past 25 years. It is a game we play (not a reality in the commercial sense) and there are many breeders that now breed steers for the steer show scene and are said to 'cut' a good bull to make a good steer. I do appreciate it is not all about winning but the advertisement and joy our school gets from our success is phenomenal.
- All calves must be from a stud registered bull – they can be out of commercial cows. (this is obviously for the purebred classes.) They must be a minimum weight of 350kg at the show with a max of around 650kg. All lightweights and middleweights must be milk tooth; heavyweights can have 2 teeth. The steers must have good confirmation and be well muscled (prefer A muscle scores but will take B) and must have the ability to make fat specs.
- Trade steers can be crossbred but must meet the Woolworths specifications set. I will only accept Euro crosses for this class or particularly well-muscled British bred cattle. They need to be around 400-450kg at the show.

- The best age for calves (at the show) are around 10-18 months – this means Autumn calves or very early spring calves can meet specs.
- When a steer is donated to the school, we work on the following arrangement – the breeder donates the steer, we feed it, prepare it, enter it, transport it and then on sale the school goes 50/50 on money received. Some breeders are kind enough to donate the steers outright which is very generous!!
- When steers are donated they become the ‘teams’ steers NOT the ‘individual students’ steer. Yes, the individual student who the steer came from will be allocated that steer with another student BUT if the other student is a senior or mentor then that other student will be the main leader at Sydney Royal.
- All steers that come in come in on the feedlot – they WILL NOT be fed individually on the breeders own feed. I know the rations that work and have the results (both live and carcase) to back this.

With all of this said I am hoping no one is offended. Please if you are wanting to look at donating a steer chat to me but please keep in mind that I must view the animal (preferably live but photos work) and please don't be offended if it is not accepted. It must meet all requirements above - but please discuss it with me as it is fabulous to see our own families exhibit their own steers with their own children and they joy that that brings.

Yours in cattle



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