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13th October, 2018

Hi All,

I am sorry for the delay in getting what should have been September's newsletter to you but we have been a bit busy. We have not long come back from the World Galloway Congress in Melbourne that was hosted by our cattle group, the Australian Belted Galloway Association. There were just under 100 delegates from around Australia and (I think) about 9 other countries. We all had a fantastic time, revisiting old friendships and making new ones.

Average Weights for a side of beef for the last quarter was 80 kgs whilst a whole trimmed lamb was 21 kgs.

This is a slightly depressing newsletter and I have agonized over it for hours hoping to get the wording right. I can't apologise for it as these are the facts.

We have been hearing a lot about the devastating drought struggles on the eastern coast, but quite a few South Australian's don't realize that a lot of regions in this state are suffering as well. Unfortunately, here at Bonnibelt in Murray Bridge the paddocks aren't as great as they should be. Our average rainfall is about 320 to 350 mls a year, we have had about 82 mls so far this year with the germination being poor and the feed not there. Hay prices have been on the increase, especially due to what has been desperately needed in the eastern states. We were fortunate to buy what hay we could 10 weeks ago at twice the normal price. This season's hay will be at least triple the price of last years and we have to get more in. This is making it difficult to viably feed our animals. Over the last 3 months, we have kept the bulls and rams away from females, decreasing the number of mouths to feed and therefore also decreasing the beef and lamb that will be available next year.

The very tough decision to downsize has had to be made. It is a difficult one as we have spent years in breeding up to the standard we have wanted and loving our girls along the way. We are hoping that we will be able to sell them live but realize it will be difficult as there are a lot of others in the same or worse predicament. We have friends in the ACT whose numbers are smaller than ours and it is costing them more than \$2000 a week to feed. We are fortunate that we do have some feed in the paddocks but are needing to supplementary feed and continue to do so for months yet to come.

As a result, we have been left with no choice but to increase the price of our lamb by 30 cents a kg to \$9.30 and our beef by 50 cents a kg to \$9.50 and \$9.70 depending on whether they are sides or quarters. This price rise is effective immediately. If you have beef or lamb booked in for late November, I will contact you shortly and discuss further.



Hello Summer

We do have more beef and lamb going off in January and if we have to be paying up and over \$330 a ton for hay, we unfortunately, will have to increase our prices again. It is not a decision we have taken lightly and we are just grateful we have outside paying jobs to cover the cost.

Wherever you are, we hope you are getting the rain that you need and if you are getting plenty - blow some to those that desperately need it 😊

Take care and look out for each other.



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