

ARTISTRY AND VALUE, **REDEFINED.**

TRIAL SHOWS \$149/HEAD PREMIUM

GROWTH in the Speckle Park breed continues to gain momentum, and a recent trial will add weight to the breed's claims of superior yields, marbling, and ultimately premiums.

The trial saw 76 F1 Speckle Park/Angus heifers go up against 61 Angus heifers – all of similar quality and randomly selected - that were custom-fed together for 100 days at Conargo Feedlot, Deniliquin, and then processed on April 16 at Kilcoy Global Foods in QLD. The trial resulted in the Speckle Park-cross heifers returning an average carcass price that was \$149 per head higher than the comparison group.

Of note, 17 of the Speckle Park-cross heifers marbled 3+, with one scoring a five. Only one Angus heifer marbled 3+. Of all heifers in the trial, 89% had zero dentition. The Speckle Park-cross heifers had a hot standard carcass weight (HSCW) of 291kg, an average P8 fat of 15.67, and returned an average of \$6.90/kg carcass weight, or \$2010 per head.

The Angus heifers had a HSCW of 289kg, average P8 fat of 16.61, and averaged \$6.44/kg cwt or \$1861/head. The Angus heifers entered the feedlot 20kg heavier than the F1 Speckle Park/Angus group, and exiting the feedlot the Angus heifers were 17kg heavier – yet the Speckle Park-cross heifers yielded 2kg per head carcass weight more.

At the processor, fat samples were taken from each carcass and sent to Murdoch University in Western Australia for more in-depth analysis into fat melting temperature.



Speckle Park International (SPI) Technical Subcommittee Chair, Paul Guy (pictured, above), said the results at both the processor and science lab had piqued the interest of many in the industry.

“For MSA (Meat Standards Australia) marbling, 51.3% of the Speckle Park heifers scored 400+, while 22.4% scored 500+,” Mr Guy said.

“Of the Angus heifer group, 21.7% scored 400+ for MSA Marbling, while 1.7% scored 500+.

“At the end of the day, it’s dollars into our back pocket that pays, and in this trial, the Speckle Park heifers performed really well, ranging from \$6.65/kg to \$6.95/kg cwt, while the Angus heifer price ranged from \$6/kg to \$6.60/kg cwt.”

My Guy said the fat melting temperature trial indicated very little difference between the two groups, with both groups “right up there” at the desired end of the scale.

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FROM THE SPI BOARD

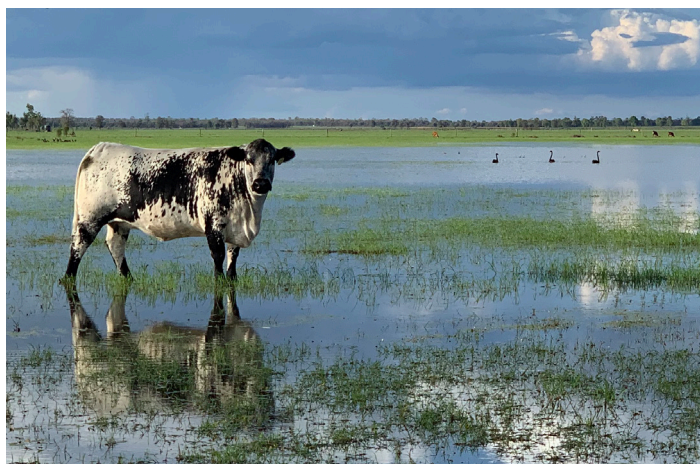
To say the past five months have been challenging, would be an understatement. We have all of a sudden become very familiar with video conferencing, online auctions, social distancing and isolation. For those on farms, daily life may not have changed a whole lot! Some suggest the COVID-19 pandemic has even potentially had a positive impact on “brand ag”, and the reputation of our industry in the broader society.

The SPI Board has continued with our regular monthly (now fortnightly) meetings, and they have very successfully been held via Zoom video conferencing. Our sub-committees have also continued with their monthly meetings via Zoom, with some great outcomes coming from those volunteer efforts, so thank you to our sub-committee members.

World Congress postponed due to pandemic

We announced on May 13 that we had made the difficult decision to postpone the 2021 World Congress, originally scheduled to be held in conjunction with the 2021 Sydney Royal Show. The Speckle Park breed will remain as Feature Breed of the 2021 Sydney Royal Show, and there will be an elite Speckle Park sale, youth events, and a Speckle Park feature steer competition with significant cash prizes.

SPI Chairman, Wayne Munt, said at the time that due to uncertainty around recovery from the pandemic and resumption of international travel, it was unclear when



REFLECTIONS: February, 2020 - when the drought broke at “Monivae”, Tara, QLD. Photographer: Rebel Wormwell.

the World Speckle Park Forum would now be held. “We were looking forward to having the global Speckle Park community come together for the World Speckle Park Congress, with significant participation from Canadians and New Zealanders,” Mr Munt said. “Postponing was a difficult however prudent decision to ensure the efforts of organisers, and sponsorship support, is rewarded through maximum participation in the event. Speckle Park International is grateful for the hard work already completed by the SPI World Congress Sub-Committee, and look forward to our breed benefiting from their contribution when the World Speckle Park Congress proceeds.”

“THE SPECKLE PARK BREED WILL REMAIN AS FEATURE BREED OF THE 2021 SYDNEY ROYAL SHOW”

Two-week moratorium at SPI Office, staff changes

Members were informed on July 29 that the SPI Office would be uncontactable for a two-week period due to staff absences. Additionally, Steph Grills has resigned from SPI, effective immediately, and we are working with our service provider, Agricultural Business Research Institute (ABRI), to ensure a level of service will be available in the short to medium term.

Unfortunately, several members have ignored the moratorium and have continued to contact the SPI office, leading to a situation where we now must extend this moratorium. **The SPI office will be uncontactable on Tuesdays and Fridays until further notice** to allow more time for DNA/registration processing. We thank you for your patience during this transition period. If you have any urgent queries, please contact a SPI Board Member, and do not contact the SPI office.

SPI AGM and Election of Six Directors

Members were sent an email on July 3 containing details regarding the upcoming SPI Annual General Meeting (AGM), which will be held at 3pm (AEST) on Friday, September 11, via Zoom video conferencing. This email also contained a Director Nomination Form, and nominations closed on July 31. As there were fewer



nominations than board positions available, all eligible nominees will automatically become directors of Speckle Park International following our September 11 AGM. The new SPI board members will be announced at the AGM. More information on the AGM will be released soon.

SPI Sub-Committees working on logo, website, trials

The SPI Sub-Committees have been continuing their good work, and we thank them for volunteering their time and expertise for the betterment of our breed society. Here is an update on what they're working on:

Marketing Sub-Committee:

- Social Media Management Guidelines finalised
- New SPI logo currently being designed
- New SPI website
- SPECKLE PARK Magazine, for a November release
- Media relations, including story writing

Technical Sub-Committee:

- Completing of side-by-side trial at Kilcoy Global Foods and fat melting temperature testing
- Working with Breedplan to increase uptake
- Sampling and liaison to develop a genetic test for gonadal hypoplasia (GH)

2021 Sydney Show Feature Breed Sub-Committee:

- Organising of classes for the show
- Planning for a welcome function, industry event, sale, and formal dinner for all SPI members.

Changes in the SPI Technical Committee

We would like to welcome the following new members aboard the SPI Technical Sub-Committee:

- Phil Collis, Royal Valley Speckle Park, New Zealand



OPPORTUNITY: SPI's new SPECKLE PARK magazine will be released in November. Book your ad before September 4.

- Paul Meade, HTR Speckle Park, Barongarook, VIC
- Matthew Webber, Elevation Speckle Park, Denman, NSW

Phil lives just near Cambridge on the north island of New Zealand. He has a passion for using technology in agriculture to help underpin constant improvement. He looks forward to being able to contribute to the improvement of the breed and also to learn from others. Paul has been breeding Speckle Park for a year and half, and his family have bred stud limousin cattle for more than 20 years. Matthew was previously Chair of the Youth Committee and now as a qualified veterinarian, he has opted to utilise his unique skillset in the Technical Sub-Committee. We wish to inform that former SPI Technical Sub-Committee Chairman, Dallas Coben, has vacated his position, in conjunction with a career move to Far North Queensland, resulting in Paul Guy, Te Mooi Speckle Park, Benalla, VIC, becoming the new Chair of this sub-committee.

“POOR CONDUCT IS BEING MONITORED AND REPEAT OFFENDERS WILL BE DEALT WITH”

Member conduct with SPI office staff

The Board has received some very unfortunate feedback recently about some members who have taken it upon themselves to speak very poorly and be unreasonably demanding of our SPI office staff. Members may be keen to see their jobs prioritised in order to meet their personal deadlines, however SPI staff who are not treated with common courtesy by members have been asked by the Board to put that member's job to the bottom of the pile!



REMINDER

Neogen Australasia announced early last year that they will be discontinuing microsatellite (MiP) DNA testing from 1/1/2021. Please keep this in mind and continue to transition your older animals across from the MiP system to the 50K SNP system. Otherwise, parent verification to those animals may prove difficult in the future.



FROM THE SPI OFFICE

Female Inventory fees due August 31

Members have been invoiced for their annual female inventory fees, with the due date for payment being the end of this month. Please note that the assessment date for the female inventory list is 1/1/2020. Any female assessed to be two years old or older at this date, or has had a calf, should have been on your inventory list. Please email the SPI Office or contact a board members should you have any queries or concerns.



R-DROPS FOR 2020: Spring calving is getting underway. The year letter for animals born in 2020 is 'R'. Next year is 'S'.

Membership renewals due at the end of August

All SPI members should have received their 2020/21 financial year membership renewals by email. Please contact the office or a board member if you have not received yours as membership renewals are due by the end of this month, and only financial members are able to access the services of SPI.

Late animal registration fees now on a tiered system

In addition to the standard \$27.50 (including GST) ET calf registration fee, all animals registered after 16 months of age will be subject to a late registration fee. Animals registered at 16-24 months of age will be subject to a \$22 late registration fee, while the fee for animals registered at over 24 months of age is \$220. These fees are in place to discourage members from leaving the registration to the last minute, and often right before they wish to sell those animals. This applies unnecessary pressure on the SPI office, and often leads to unhappy members when their expectations cannot be met. We encourage members to register their animals as early as possible. Please regularly review the Downloads page of the SPI website for changes to the Rules & Regulations, SPI Policies, and Schedule fo Fees.

Pestivirus (PI) testing not a standalone test

We wish to inform members that they are unable to access the PI-test for persistently-infected (PI) pestivirus (aka bovine viral diarrhoea virus, BVDV) carriers through Neogen Australasia, unless it is ordered in conjunction with the Speckle Park Bundle tests. If you are looking to have the PI-test done by itself, other laboratories that offer this service in Australia include State Government-owned facilities (eg: NSW DPI Laboratory Services), and Swans Veterinary Services in Western Australia, who pioneered the use of ear notch tissue for the diagnosis of PI animals.

Quick! Quick! If there's only a MiP, get a SNP!

Time is running out for members to have their animals upgraded at Neogen Australasia from the microsatellite (MiP) DNA system to the now widely-recognised SNP system. Neogen Australasia announced early last year that they will be discontinuing MiP DNA testing from January 1, 2021. Please keep this date in mind and continue to transition your older animals across from the MiP system to the SNP system. Otherwise, parent verification of progeny to those animals will prove difficult in the future.

"TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR MEMBERS TO HAVE THEIR ANIMALS UPGRADED FROM THE MIP TO SNP SYSTEM"

How do you know if your animal only has a MiP?

To determine whether your animal has a MiP or SNP DNA profile on file - or both - bring that animal up on the SPI Animal Register. Animals that have an older MiP DNA profile on file will have a unique combination of numbers next to the heading "DNA Typed:", as in the below example. This animal does NOT have a SNP DNA profile on file and so parent verifying progeny of this animal after January 1, 2021, will not be possible through Neogen Australasia.

ET Donor:	Yes
Polled/Scurred:	Polled
DNA Typed:	360562
Progeny:	[7 - View]

In the next example, we have an animal that has been tested in both the MiP and SNP DNA systems.



After January 1, 2021, sires and dams will need to have a unique DNA profile number next to the heading “SNP Typed:” in order to parent verify their progeny.

AI Approved: Yes
Polled/Scurred: Polled
DNA Typed: 678785
SNP Typed: 678785
DNA Horn Tests: Hetrozygous Polled (HPc)
Genetic Tests: RGF , NT821F
[\(Click for Explanation\)](#)

Do your part to speed up registration/DNA services

The SPI Office has reported an increase in the number of batches being sent to the office without paperwork. This paperwork is critical for processing. Members who require excessive assistance from SPI Staff will be charged a Miscellaneous Data Processing fee of \$66 (including GST) per hour.

However, if members send in samples for DNA testing without any paperwork at all, they can expect those samples to be returned to sender. Please follow this following six-point check list to help ensure smooth workflow, and faster turnaround times.

- 1 Member completes DNA Test **Request** form AND SPI Registration Form. Excel version preferred
- 2 Member emails **both forms** to specklepark@abri.une.edu.au
- 3 **Print** hard copy and send with sample to the SPI office
- 4 SPI office will **process** your regos and DNA test request
- 5 Once processed, SPI will send member a tax invoice. Please **pay on receipt** to ensure all charges are correct
- 6 SPI will forward your samples to the lab for **testing**.



IN DEMAND: New Zealand dairy farmer, Anita Syben, South Waikato, will be profiled in the SPECKLE PARK Magazine.

SPECKLE PARK magazine due out in November

The SPI Marketing Sub-Committee is producing an annual coffee table-style magazine at present, and are taking bookings for advertising. Thank you to those members who have already booked their advertising. The magazine - to simply be called 'SPECKLE PARK' - will be an ongoing annual publication produced by SPI, and the first volume will be released in November. To book advertising, please email speckleparkmarketing@gmail.com, or call +61 (0) 401 733 230. Advertisement booking deadline is September 4, so get in quick!

DNA profiles must meet ISAG minimum standards

Some members who have imported genetics from Canada have found themselves unable to parent verify progeny to the Canadian sires and/or dams due to DNA profiles having an insufficient number of markers for the parent verification process. DNA profiles submitted to Neogen must meet the minimum number of SNP markers, as set out by the International Society for Animal Genetics (ISAG). It is recommended that 50K SNP profiles for AI Sires and ET Donor Dams be sought from Neogen Canada BEFORE importing genetics.

AI Sire and Donor Dam Permits ... Who's responsible?

There has been some confusion of late around who is responsible for application and payment of AI Sire and ET Donor Dam Permits, and associated pedigree import fees for Canadian animals. It is responsibility of the animal's owner/vendor- NOT the often- unsuspecting purchaser. In addition, the current owner of the animal must sign the application form for an AI Sire or ET Donor Dam Permit. Please familiarise yourselves with the SPI Tip Sheet for Buying and Selling Speckle Park, which is available on the SPI website. AI Sire and ET Donor Dam Permit Application forms can be downloaded via the SPI website.



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Trial shows \$149/head premium, better yields

“A lower fat melting point makes beef healthier,” Mr Guy said.

“It has less saturated fat making it more like olive oil, and is better for cardiovascular health.”

The trial was conducted in conjunction with the CY O’Connor Foundation based at Murdoch University, and led by the foundation’s research director, Dr Sally Lloyd.

“The tremendous performance of Speckle Park animals in feedback trials like the Taste and Tenderness competition in Calgary, Canada, and the Paddock to Palate feedback trial here in Australia, made us curious as to why Speckle Park beef eats so well,” Mr Guy said.

“So, SPI wanted to investigate this, and this became a task for the Technical Sub-Committee.

“Given the great work Dr Sally Lloyd has done in the past, it was the ideal place to start.

“The results of our first trials were interesting as the average fat melting temperature of the Speckle Park-cross animals and the Angus control group were quite

similar, although the animal with the lowest fat melting temperature was a Speckle Park-cross, and the animal with the highest melting temperature was an Angus.

“There was significant variation in the groups and further investigation and DNA studies look to be warranted.

“Both feed regime and genetics play a role.”

Rise in Completeness of Performance rated studs

We have observed a rise in the uptake of Breedplan performance recording by Speckle Park seedstock producers, and would like to acknowledge and commend those member studs. There are 15 SPI member studs who now have a Completeness of Performance Rating of three stars or greater, and of these five are from New Zealand. Information about the Completeness of Performance ratings for studs can be found - and searched for - via the Member Enquiry section of the SPI Animal Register.

Wildtype coat colour carriers - a work in progress

We wish to advise that the board is working with the Agricultural Business Research Institute (ABRI) to have the SPI animal pedigrees report on wildtype coat colour carriers. At present, wildtype carriers appear as RGF (red gene free), when in fact they can produce red-coloured calves when joined to a red-gene carrier. In genetic testing results, a dominant black/wildtype appears as ED/E+, while a homozygous wildtype appears as E+/E+. We are working with ABRI on this.



DISCOVER MORE SPI CONTENT ONLINE

The SPI website is a fantastic resource for members to access tip sheets, how-to videos, contact details for board members and more!

YOUTH IN FOCUS - Emily Trainor, Gingin Speckle Park, Bambun WA

What prompted you to begin breeding Speckle Park?

We started breeding Speckle Park cattle nine years ago, after we started researching cattle that yielded well. When we started researching, the fact the speckles had won the Calgary carcass competition so many times is what sealed the deal for us.



What is your favourite cow or bull in your herd?

My favourite cow would have to be Gin Gin Lucy L14 (AST L14) - she’s just a complete package for me.

She’s got the fertility as well as the conformation to make an ideal female. She has also proven herself in her progeny. Gin Gin Hulk (AST H1) would also have to be another one of my herd favourites. He was one of our first embryo calves on the ground here and we also went on to show him successfully, including two Perth Royal Show Supreme Exhibits.

What are your goals for your herd going forward?

In the near future, I can see us continuing our growth and providing the best genetics we can to Australia and overseas. We also hope to make the trip across with a small team for the Sydney Royal Show Feature Breed next April.



MEMBERSHIP SNAPSHOT

as at 11 August 2020

More DNA markers for NZ tests

New PBB Speckle Park Bundle test now available

Speckle Park breeders in New Zealand have for some time been able to have their animals DNA tested on a 10K SNP chip, but now a 100K SNP is available. Performance Beef Breeders NZ (PBBNZ) recently released information about their new Speckle Park DNA Bundle Test which includes a 100K SNP DNA profile, parent verification, myostatin, horn/poll, coat colour, leptin and tenderness testing. The announcement to upgrade from a 50K SNP to 100K SNP profiling was made last month.

Members in New Zealand can send DNA samples to PBBNZ who hold an export licence to send DNA material overseas for testing at Neogen Australasia. Several New Zealand SPI members have recently sent their Q-drop TSU samples to PBB, and have reported the service offered by PBB to be very efficient with a reasonable turnaround time. The results were sent back to both the member and the SPI Office. They paid a fee to GenomNZ to send their existing animal profiles on their database to Neogen Australasia, so they could be used for parent verification of their offspring. PBB is the New Zealand distributor for Neogen Australasia. For more information, email dna@pbbnz.com or phone PBB at +64 (0)6 323 4484.

Stud-use and commercial-use semen is not the same

We have had a couple of members bring to the board's attention that some Speckle Park semen is being purchased for commercial-use only - and at commercial-use prices - and are electing to use this semen over stud females, with an intention to register the progeny in the SPI herdbook. This is highly unethical and will undoubtedly lead to future issues - potentially legal - between the owners of these sires and those members intending to register progeny from commercial-use semen. Please maintain ethical business practices.

Sale toppers at Mortlake, VIC

Charles Stewart Nash Mcvilly sold a small pen of Speckle Park-cross calves on behalf of MG & LE Hunt on August 18 at the Western Victoria Livestock Exchange to top the entire market at 423c/kg, weighing 337kg.

Full, Associate and Life Members



293

+35

TOTAL

in 2020 (so far)

Junior Members



16

+0

TOTAL

in 2020

Commercial Members



47

+16

TOTAL

in 2020

Animals Registered, 1/7/19 - 30/6/20



1020

MALES



1147

FEMALES

Animals Transferred, 1/7/19 - 30/6/20



142

MALES



407

FEMALES



How can we help?

Contact the SPI office:

+61 2 6773 3056, or email

specklepark@abri.une.edu.au



'STEAKING' A CLAIM



Anita Syben

Dairy farmer and Speckle Park breeder
South Waikato, New Zealand

We previously joined Jersey, Angus or Hereford bulls to our replacement dairy heifers and their newborn calves were generally sold as bobby calves with little or no value to the business. We bought our first Speckle Park bull in late-2017 and out of his 30-odd calves born first season, the calves were of a low birthweight. It was super quick to teach them to drink from the feeders, and they remained healthy, strong, and grew fast. We easily sell our Speckle Park-cross calves, and many of our previous customers return to buy more, as they have been very happy with the quality of the calves. We have nearly 100 Speckle Park-cross calves this year.

Meet the Team of SPI Directors



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UPCOMING EVENTS 2020

We congratulate all members on their contribution to the promotion and expansion of our great breed. SPI wishes all members with upcoming sales the very best.

If you have an upcoming sale that you would like to promote, please let us know at the office. We have an events calendar on the SPI website too.

Don't forget that you can gain valuable exposure to promote your upcoming sale by purchasing advertising banner space on the SPI website.

AUGUST

31 Waratah Speckle Park Sale, Guyra NSW

SEPTEMBER

4 Minnamurra Speckle Park Sale, Coolah NSW

25 Maungahina Speckle Park Yearling Sale, NZ

OCTOBER

1 Premier Speckle Park Sale, New Zealand

17 Wattle Grove Speckle Park Sale, Oberon NSW

31 Southern Success SP Sale, Wodonga VIC

Data Submission Deadlines



The 26th day of the month is GROUP BREEDPLAN data submission deadline day. To learn more about BREEDPLAN, contact Catriona Millen from SBTS at (02) 6773 3357.