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Chinchilla property purchase will drive Belmont Red herd expansion



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THE recent purchase of a substantial grazing property near Chinchilla on Queensland's western Darling Downs will drive a significant herd expansion for Australia's largest Belmont Red seedstock producers.

In an off-market transaction initiated by the buyers, Seifert Belmont Reds principals **Jeanne Seifert** and **Ian Stark** have purchased Flag Springs, a versatile and well-regarded 5575ha grazing property 115 km north of Chinchilla on the Auburn River.

The transaction with vendors Guy and Lucy Devenish settled on January 31.

Flag Springs comprises about 50 percent well-developed spear grass country and Auburn River flats, 30pc brigalow and softwood developed scrub sown to buffel and bluegrass, and 20pc timbered hills.

The walk-in, walk-out sale included full working plant and about 700 Santa cows and progeny.

The buyers and vendors have chosen not to disclose the price, but similar developed country in the area has transacted recently in the \$1200-\$2000/ha range.

The sale was put together by **Broc Winten** of Winten & Co, Toowoomba, with Seifert Belmont Reds being advised by Toowoomba consultant **Shane Blakeley**.

The Devenish family has owned Flag Springs for 50 years, steadily developing the property to carry more than 1000 breeders plus progeny to feeder turnoff weights. The holding is securely watered with seven large dams and nine bores reticulated to numerous watering points throughout.

Expansion plans

The purchase will form the foundation of a substantial breeding herd expansion for Seifert Belmont Reds, the nation's largest Belmont bull breeder.

Principals Ian Stark and Jeanne Seifert currently operate the bull breeding and commercial operations, comprising around 1200 registered cows, from three adjoining properties at Jandowae and another three in the Emu Creek district near Crows Nest, north of Toowoomba.

Seifert Belmont Reds bought Jandowae property Wonga three years ago, before aggregating two other adjoining holdings, all on good quality brigalow soils, over the following 12 months to establish a footprint covering around 8000 acres (3300ha). The Jandowae properties include about 700 acres of leucaena, and substantial areas currently used for hay production.

Last year, Seifert Belmont Reds sold about 100 bulls at an average price of \$7500 to a strong buyer clientele across central, northern and southern Queensland, the NT and Northern NSW representing both corporate and private cattle producers. They expect to sell around 150 bulls this year via private sales and at their on-property bull sale to be held at Wonga, Jandowae on Monday 22 July.

The collaborative and cooperative sale process that has unfolded for Flag Springs has enabled the Mr Stark and Ms Seifert to join the purchased Santa females to their Belmont bulls over summer, to kick-start the herd conversion to Belmont Red genetics.

They will also relocate about 400 Belmont registered cows from their smaller Crows Nest properties over the next couple of months.

The acquisition of Flag Springs has added scale to the Seifert Belmont Reds operations, with the intention to expand breeder numbers to produce more than 200 sale bulls per year within the next few years. The couple may also explore the possibility of producing bespoke bulls to meet individual clients' specific market requirements.

A secondary consideration after expansion is to explore ways to moderate production cost in growing and presenting bulls, moderating the use of grain and expensive feedstuffs through improved pasture, forage and leucaena.

Crows Nest block to be divested

As part of the transition to breeding operations at Chinchilla, Seifert Belmont Reds intends to market one of its Crows Nest properties, Roslyn, via an auction in May. While the business's Crows Nest country is highly productive, it is limited by capacity, hence the decision to invest in larger-scale country further west.

Comprising 2362 ha of developed forest country with double frontage to Emu Creek, Roslyn is 180km from the Brisbane CBD. The property has consistently run 800 cows and calves to weaning. A Queenslander homestead has been completely renovated and the livestock infrastructure is described as first class.

The marketing of Roslyn will be handled through Ray White Rural and Winten & Co in conjunction. More details closer to auction.