

Transcription details:

Date: 04-May-2015

Input sound file: 20. Ian McCorkindale Gilmore Braes Heritage Beef V3

Transcription results:

[music]

My name's Ian McCorkindale. We have a farm here in Batlow on the western edges of the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales. We breed ancient breed cattle, Scottish Highlands and Welsh Blacks. We trade as Gilmore Braes Heritage Beef. We market our beef directly to the public at Canberra Region Farmers Market. We actually purchased the Batlow butchery so that we have local butcher working in the shop there. The meat's cut up here locally and my wife Mandy she works beside the butcher telling him what to cut up and how to cut it and then the meat is all cryovac which is vacuum packaging and branded, weighed, priced, everything. Mandy does all that in the shop and then she actually does the face to face selling of the beef in Canberra.

Your work can spread from feeding hay, checking fences, checking the cattle's health. You could be mustering cattle and weaning calves at any given time of the year. We leave the bulls running with the cows so we calve all year round if at all possible. That means that you're handling the cattle a little more regularly than a conventional breeding operation. It's really interesting looking at the different cows and their different reactions to each other within the mob. Once you put two or three of those groups together, you've got two or three different hierarchies working together and that was hilarious when we first got them because there was push and shove from every angle and they've balanced themselves out now.

We don't run a high-pressure situation here where I'm observing every cow, every year to make sure it's had a calf, or it's off the place. These cows will die here of old age. They are relatively slow growing to most other breeds. The end result of that is that the texture of the meat is very fine. The muscle fibers are very fine. They're very close together and with these very fine-textured meats, if you get it right, it is unbelievably good.

We have no economy of scale on a small place like this, but we have the advantage of selling our product direct to the end user. We take all those people out of the middle and it just streamlines our operation. It gives us a better return per kilogram to us. It's called niche marketing basically. Don't be afraid of stepping outside the square. Don't be afraid of trying something different. If it doesn't work the first time, just have another go. Have a look at it, try and work out where you went wrong, but it can be very satisfying to do something different and make it work.

If I was 15-16 years old now and wanted to be on the land eventually, I'd certainly be looking at working for some of the bigger properties, doing jackarooing anything like that, anything to get some experience. You get a great sense of achievement when you see people coming back and we mainly get repeat customers coming back every week and saying how good their beef was, what an enjoyable barbecue they had. Just the reaction from people coming back to buy it again and again and again so that's rewarding. You know you're doing something right when that happens.

[music]



[silence]