

NILB Limousin Bull Trial Bulls Beef Up Iwi Farming Training Trust



Limousin bulls over Angus/Hereford Cows

Maniapoto Marae Pact Trust has extensive sheep, beef, deer, dairy and forest farming activities in the King Country. Based on the Maniapoto Marae, the trading arm of the trust provides the opportunity to train young people in primary industry skills. CEO of 25 years, Dennis Astle says that the Trust provides local solutions for local people. Dennis arrived at the Trust 30 years ago as a volunteer, wanting to contribute to his community while farming, along with his wife Esmee, in his own right.



Dennis Astle (CEO) of Maniapoto Trust for 25 years.



Maniapoto Trust Training Agency is the single biggest purchaser of Limousin bulls from the NILB Bull Trial. He has been buying NILB bulls for a long time. Dennis says the trial provides a range of genetics across tested and proven bulls. It provides the opportunity for potential purchasers to see the breeding from a wide range of studs all in one place. He looks for bulls that suit his needs as they cross with his base Angus/Hereford cows.

Top Criteria for Bulls

1. Calving ease of the Limousin breed is a given
2. Docility is number one criteria, especially with young trainees involved
3. Good growth rates of the bulls are vital
4. Good structure which will carry and put on beef as well as good feet
5. Not too big, for the type of country which he farms

Dennis says the use of Limousin bulls have increased the productivity of his herd over the years. The Trust farming model culminates in the Trust selling its 15 month steers and heifers through the Te Kuiti Saleyards each January. The young



Limousin cross always sell well. This year they were all cleared. In 2017, Richard and Diana Maxwell (Limax Enterprises) travelled from Matamata to purchase some 15 month heifers. They really wanted the first pen but came home with the second pen because the top pen was too expensive for them. Nevertheless, the essentially Limflex heifers were impressive.