

Rosemead Prince H824 – Reserve Supreme Champion at Alton Show 2010



One of the most exciting sales of pedigree Aberdeen Angus cattle for decades is taking place in May – not in Scotland but just outside Godalming in Surrey.

Angus Stovold, of P C Stovold & Son, is selling a number of high quality animals to mark the 75th anniversary of the Rosemead Herd and is expecting buyers from Europe as well as from across the UK.

"This sale really will be something special," said Angus. "It has sparked huge excitement in the Aberdeen Angus world and I am confident that we will have many of the top breeders here on the day."

Special show is set to attract top breeders

The show is so special that top auctioneer David Leggett, from United Auctions, has agreed to wield the gavel at the on-farm sale, which will be held under the auspices of the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society and starts at noon on 7 May.

For David to conduct the sale, Angus had to guarantee 100 lots, which means that alongside 85 top cattle from the Stovold

herd, based at Lydling Farm, Shackleford, Surrey, the sale will include 20 or so from other top breeders.

All will share the same high health status as the Rosemead cattle and will be accredited free of Johnes's Disease, BVD, IBR and leptospirosis. Bio-security will be as important on the day of the sale as it is gen-

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erally at Lydling Farm, where herd health is critical and the P C Stovold reputation second to none.

The fact that the sale is on-farm is itself unusual and will add to the traditional feel of what Angus described as "a very special event that is designed to celebrate 75 years of the Rosemead herd in a big way."

The idea of a traditional sale among friends and colleagues celebrating such a major achievement is bound to create a party feel on the day – but Angus admits that there will almost certainly be a touch of sadness, too.

"I will be selling some animals that I really would rather hang on to, but at the end of the day I want to make this event really special and so I am offering other breeders a chance to buy some very fine Aberdeen Angus cattle," he explained.

"There hasn't been this many pure-bred, registered pedigree females for sale on one occasion for a long time," said Angus, adding: "I really don't think there has been a sale offering this quality and this quantity for 50 years."

With David Leggett lending the sale his support, and buyers already confirmed from Scotland, Wales, Ireland and across Europe, the anniversary sale looks set to be a winner.

Stock manager Tom Beadle explained that the sale would help to confirm the South East's role as a major player in the development of a breed that most people tend to associate with its Scottish origins.



Angus Stovold



Tom Beadle

"The main benefit of breeding Aberdeen Angus cattle in this part of the country is that they spend their time outdoors and are raised on grass, which is what suits them best," he explained.

"Although the breed originated in the north, the climate in Scotland means that most of their animals spend a good deal of time indoors, and that's not where the breed likes to be. It seems strange, but many of the best animals are those that come from this part of the world – as visitors will discover. All our cows are calved outside, too."

Animals on sale include all of Rosemead's show team from last year, including the Reserve Champion at Newbury, Rosemead

Bright Maid H880, with her heifer calf at foot.

Also on sale are Rosemead Jaffa Erica H884, which was shown as a calf and now has a calf of her own at foot, and Rosemead Bellmaid J898, a show heifer from 2010, also with a calf at foot. Buyers can also choose from a string of heifers shown as calves and that have calved to Netherallan Peter Pershore.

Those that Angus will be particularly sorry to let go include heifers from the Karlotta, Empress and Queen Mother lines. "This is a really good opportunity to buy some exceptional breeding animals from lines I wouldn't normally sell," he commented. "I may have to turn away when some of these animals are sold."

With female lines including Ekim, Black Petal and Jessica also going under the hammer, Angus is looking forward to a successful sale and one that represents a year's worth of heifers. "We wanted a special sale to celebrate the anniversary and this will certainly be special, but it will be difficult to let some of these animals go," he admitted.

Rosemead's success over the past 75 years had an unlikely start, with the first Aberdeen Angus cattle on the farm being kept hidden for two years in what is now the Refectory Restaurant in nearby Milford.

"Lydling Farm was first owned by my great, great grandfather Frederick, who then passed it on to my great grandfather Ernest," explained Angus.

Ernest's son Percy – Angus'

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Rosemead Bright Maid H880 – Reserve Champion at Newbury 2010



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grandfather – farmed at nearby Hurst Farm and was particularly keen on showing cattle, something he did all over the country. He expressed an interest in buying Aberdeen Angus cattle but was warned by his father that no good would come of the plan.

Unable to resist, Percy bought a herd from the Perth bull sales in the mid 1930s, brought them down to Surrey by train and then walked them from Guildford before keeping them hidden from his father for two years.

In 1938 he showed his hand and took the new herd on a tour of English shows. "To the amazement of his father he won many of them, including the Royal," Angus concluded. It was the start of the historic Rosemead Herd that still traces its lineage back to 1936.

"Aberdeen Angus were special then and they are still special now," said Angus. They are renowned for their taste and have a denser flesh with excellent eating qualities." The farm was then passed to Angus' father Robert, who still takes an active interest in the cattle, before being handed on to the fifth generation.

While most of the cattle on sale will be heifers, the event will include 22 bulls, all of which are known for their easy calving characteristics as well as their closely-monitored, high health status.

The priority given to bio-security at Lydling Farm came into its own in 2007, when foot and mouth disease came within a mile of the farm. "We twice had scares but we kept it at bay by maintaining the highest possible level of precautions," said Angus.

Today all the animals sold from the Rosemead Herd are accredited disease free, and

any animals sold by consignees will be pre-tested if they are not already accredited.

"We do everything we can to make sure that whenever we sell cattle, either at auction or privately, they are as good as they possibly can be," said Angus. "We take a

huge amount of pride in our animals and we see this anniversary sale as a way of giving other breeders a chance to buy into some top Aberdeen Angus lines."

The sale includes 25 cows with calves at

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foot, 25 in-calf and 20 maiden heifers, with most of them having been shown in the past season. "They exhibit all the best characteristics of this wonderful breed and they include some real winners."

Remarkably, Rosemead cattle have won every herd competition in which they have taken part, including the Bank of Scotland Suckler Herd Competition in 2002. P C Stovold has never lost the South Eastern Aberdeen Angus Herd Competition.

His support for the breed is reflected in the fact that Angus has been named as next year's president of the Aberdeen Angus Society in what will be the herd book's 150th year. He is also chairman of the Royal Smithfield Club, set up in 1790.

Although the sale is exciting enough to have attracted a number of top buyers as well as a top auctioneer, Angus added that there will be plenty of well-priced cattle on sale too. "There will be something for everyone, as well as the excitement of an old-fashioned, on-farm auction," he said.

Alongside the sale, refreshments and a celebration atmosphere, the day will feature displays and demonstrations from supporters including the Westpoint Veterinary Group and Kent Wool Growers.

Although this is a big sale for Angus and his team at P C Stovold, the drop in herd strength is destined to be a temporary dip as the longer-term plan is expansion. Part of the plan is to invest the proceeds of a successful auction into expanding the operation and improving the farm in order to make sure the Rosemead Herd continues to go from strength to strength.



Tom Beadle



Bank helps bull sales to Europe

Lloyds TSB has helped Surrey farmer Angus Stovold set up a euro bank account.

"This will help us manage a growing number of bull sales to Europe," said Mr Stovold, whose family has banked with Lloyds TSB for many generations.

Until last year, Mr Stovold's regional agricultural manager was Brian Gilbert. But he was promoted and the new East Grinstead based regional agricultural manager is Graham Sanders.

He has worked with Lloyds TSB throughout East and West Sussex for nearly 12 years. Lloyds TSB says that developing a new generation of agricultural bank managers is essential. The bank recently appointed Michael Lord, a 27 year old farmer's son, as agricultural business manager to the new Petersfield office.



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