



Anthony & Chantal Winter

MACQUARIE DOWNS FEEDLOT & WAGYU, LEYBURN, QLD

Anthony and Chantal have been managing Macquarie Downs for the last 12 years after previously working on beef cattle properties in north Queensland.

The business includes 700 full blood wagyu breeders and a 3000 head capacity feedlot supported by ~8000Ha of improved and 1300Ha of irrigated systems

When Anthony and Chantal took over the management of Macquarie Downs they didn't have too many herd performance records to work

with. As a result, they decided to approach the business with a clean slate. From previous experiences they understood that pestivirus had an impact on production and reproduction. With this knowledge they decided that whole herd vaccination program with Pestigard was their best form of protection.

In the first few years of overseeing the Macquarie Downs operations they noticed a visible tail in their weaners. Their suspicions of the underlying issues resulted in a disease investigation and testing

for pestivirus and persistently infected (PI) cattle. Through this process they were able to identify several legacy breeders who were PI's who were producing PI calves each year. They gradually removed these animals from the herd as they had no place in the high quality, final product they are aiming to produce.

Macquarie Downs is a high value and high performing Wagyu herd. Anthony and Chantal aim to create an environment where performance potential can be met. Pestigard vaccination is critical part of this.

"We want to give them every opportunity we can to get in calf and stay in calf".

"Macquarie Downs is a high value and high performing Wagyu herd. Pestigard vaccination is critical part of this".



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Cattle within their system need to meet the performance criteria to be retained.

"If they don't perform after we have done everything we can, they are filtered out of the system".

"The cost of the vaccine is a minimal expense for how Pestivirus can hurt you herd for both breeding and feeding systems".

"A significant reason for this is that the Wagyu is the genetic pool is so small we can't afford the loss of a calf as that calf could be the next best thing".

Anthony and Chantal have also witnessed BRD in their young stock in recent years. As a result, they now incorporate Pestigard, BoviShield and Rhinogard at branding and weaning. They also boost with Pestigard before joining as well as feedlot induction.

"If we mix our steers in a pen with other vendors cattle we want to make sure they are protected from potential carrier animals and perform to their potential".

They are also aware of the increased issue of responsible antimicrobial usage. "This is where vaccine plays a part in the prevention of the disease rather than curing with an antibiotic".

"The cost of the vaccine is a minimal expense for how Pestivirus can hurt you herd for both breeding and feeding systems".

"Even in the tough times there is true value in vaccination".

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