

East Geelong Butcher Shop – Selling Certified Lowline Beef

# Local farmers produce top cuts

By GAIL THOMAS

**E**AST Geelong's butcher Adam Trezise keeps the food miles to a minimum, with his farming operations lying less than 20 kilometres from his retail outlet.

Marketing his own locally grown meat under the Bellarine Lamb and Bellarine Beef banners, Mr Trezise has found immediate customer acceptance for his products.

"The consumers love the idea of a locally produced product and supporting their local producers," he said.

"We are a small shop in a strip of shops so you have to give them a reason to come.

"We're only 18 months into it and we've gone from zero to where it is now, surpassing our expectations with both the cattle and sheep."

Mr Trezise said the goal was "... to control everything from the minute the animals are born right through to processing so we can ensure premium products exclusively for our brand, and by having experienced farmers involved we get the results we do.

"The animals are well-bred, well-looked-after."

He said he was looking at expanding the premium, locally-produced ranges which also

include sausages, including by getting them into local wineries and restaurants.

## Reaching highs with Lowlines

Bellarine Beef is produced from Lowline Angus cattle farmed in Drysdale by Adam Gleeson.

Mr Gleeson got started with the breed with the help of breeders Peter and Jeanette Stebbins of Androssan at Princetown.

When he built the herd up, he bought another farm at Inverleigh.

"The cattle are in a stress-free environment and are nice quiet, placid animals, docile around the kids, and are so efficient," Mr Gleeson said.

His support for the breed was given a boost by carcass competition results.

"At the Lardner Park steer trial the Lowline breed was placed first and third for taste – an excellent endorsement," he said.

Mr Gleeson is a certified Lowline breeder and to be certified, animals have to be 50 per cent Lowline, but about 90pc of his stock are pure Lowline.

He crosses them with Angus, Murray Grey and some F2 Friesians but said while the latter had good

flavour they took a bit longer to finish off.

To evaluate the different breeds and bloodlines' performances, he weighs animals each week.

"We're not trying to breed the best show animal; we're trying to breed the best-tasting meat animal," Mr Gleeson said.

"I am finishing a lot of the steers, always on grass, plus they also have ad lib hay.

"I buy good-quality lucerne and grass hay from two properties so I know what I'm getting."

The animals also get a sheep and cattle mix feed, as well as a daily portion of a grain mixture called beef finisher from Heytesbury Stockfeeds at Simpson.

Mr Gleeson is also working to improve pastures by having animals intensively graze a paddock, and then he runs the harrows.

Mr Gleeson's herd currently numbers about 50, having recently dropped by about for meat supplied exclusively to Mr Trezise as the only certified Lowline butcher in Australia.

"We finish them off at about 18 months at 400-450kg liveweight with a yield of 54-56pc and carcasses of more than 200kg, which is a good size," Mr Gleeson said.

"The Lowlines carry the fat



■ Adam Gleeson, Drysdale, with his Lowline Angus cattle which are supplied to Bellarine Beef.

through summer and winter and carry that condition, whereas I've had crossbreds in with them that lose condition and I think that affects the meat quality.

## Bellarine Lamb

Although he has been a butcher since the mid 1980s Mr Trezise took over his business in East Geelong only a couple of years ago to enable him to sell his own branded meat.

"We lease land around the Bellarine and I have been running

my own sheep for about 10 years, mainly Suffolk and Suffolk cross breeds," he said.

"We have our own transport facilities so they are stress-free.

"They are processed locally at Herds and then come to the shop here, as our focus is putting all out lambs through the shop.

Mr Trezise said the numbers varied from week to week but he tried to keep a minimum of 50-60 animals ready all the time and he aimed for a carcass weight of 22-plus kilograms at about eight or nine months of age.

