

# The Real Benefits of Hybrid Vigour Revealed

**HEREFORD BANK OF NEW ZEALAND**

**\$100\***

Using Hereford bulls over other pure bred breeds will produce an additional increase in production worth \$100 based on direct (first cross progeny) heterosis gains of 8.5%. If first cross replacements are kept the maternal heterosis gains equate to 14.5% or an advantage of \$170.

**Hybrid Vigour**

**the forgotten advantage**

\*Value calculated on an average local trade schedule price of **392.42¢** (net) for a P2 Steer @ 300kg (June 2012-Jan 2013)  
Source: NZX Agrifax

**\$100\***

**NZ HEREFORDS**  
SPECIALISTS IN GRASSLAND GENETICS

The financial benefits of using registered Hereford bulls over black cows is the focus of a new hybrid vigour campaign just launched by the NZ Hereford Association.

Calculations show that the first cross progeny will provide beef farmers production gains of \$100 a head based on direct hybridvigourgains of 8.5%. If those first cross progeny are retained the advantages lift to 14% or a whopping \$170/head. These figures have been calculated using an average price of 392.42cents (net) for a P2 steer at 300kg for the period June 2012 to January 2013.

The NZHA have designed their very own beef currency to convey the message simply and quickly.

The Hereford Angus cross is one of the best beef animals around, so not only does it make financial sense for commercial beef farmers to use a registered Hereford bull it also opens up a world of marketing options with the first cross Hereford Angus being eligible for a number of quality beef programmes, including Hereford Prime.

Other performance gains include superior fertility, reliability, longevity and docility.

Because the cross bred cow lives longer she produces more calves and therefore produces more kilograms weaned per cow.

When cattle farmers with predominately black cow herds use a registered Hereford bull those farmers are the recipients of what is referred to as the white face advantage, thanks to the influence of Hereford genetics.

North Canterbury beef farmers Dave and Jo McKenzie have experienced the benefits of Hereford hybrid vigour first hand on their 2400ha property.

Dave is adamant that the white face cross is an important animal for New Zealand beef breeders and believes hybrid vigour has been integral in the performance of his cattle.

Dave and Jo's beef herd includes 605 MA cows; comprising 135 Herefords, 50 Angus and 420 cross bred cows. Another 145 heifers are calved as two year olds; 100 of which are crossbreds and 45 Angus. On top of this there are 125 R2 steers and 350 rising two year heifers.

To maintain the cross, the couple put all Angus cows to Hereford bulls and all Herefords and other cattle with white heads go to Angus bulls.

"You don't have to chase exotic breeds to get hybrid vigour when you can use traditional breeds," says Dave.

[Click here to read more about Dave & Jo McKenzies farming business](#)

[Click here to read about Maori owned Te Hape Station](#)