Good Bulls app streamlines choices

Dairy farmer: Con Glennon

Region: Western Victoria

Topic: Good Bulls App

DataGene's Good Bulls app is streamlining bull selection and cutting out the hype when it comes to identifying the best dairy genetics.

And its proving to be a be valuable tool for herd improvement advisors, resellers and dairy farmers.

Rodney Brooks from National Herd Development at Terang believes the Good Bulls app is invaluable in helping sort out groups of bulls for clients.

"There are more than 20,000 Australian and overseas bulls with detailed ABVs on the Good Bulls app – there's a lot of information out there and this app helps me sort through all the data and find the best bulls for my clients which match their breeding objectives," he said.
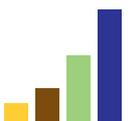
"You can sort bulls on Australia's three breeding indices; Balanced Performance Index (BPI), Health Weighted Index (HWI), Type Weighted Index (TWI) then apply further selection pressure using any of the 50 filters available to produce a shortlist.

"Recently I was working with a farmer to develop a list of bulls and we set some parameters and had an initial report of 750 bulls.

"We then started applying filters which put emphasis on daughter fertility and teat length – which cut the list back to 92 bulls.

Leading Jersey breeder, Con Glennen (right) and Rodney Brooks, NHD, use DataGene's Good Bulls app to exchange bull lists and debate the strengths and weaknesses of potential sires to use over the White Star herd.

"I can put a group of bulls together using the Good Bulls app and get it to email the client a bull list which covers the traits they want as well as pedigree details, availability and price.

"The more I use it the more confident I am that it is a fantastic tool.

"One of the best things about it is that you can be with a farmer, talking to them in a paddock, and you have all the information you need on the phone.

"I can access everything on the mobile – you don't need to be carting around a heap of printed catalogues.

While the app can be used to compare bulls or view an individual bull in detail, it also allows bulls of interest to be saved to a customised short list.

Rodney has been using the Good Bulls app with Noorat dairy farmer Con Glennen in selecting suitable bulls for his 400 cow split calving herd, White Star, which ranks joint number 1 in Australia for Jerseys for BPI (August 2017).

"Con and I both use the Good Bulls app and will be looking at bulls throughout the year – we send information back and forwards to each other using the app because it is so easy."

Con has been using the Good Bulls app for a couple of years and was involved in trialling the app during its development.

"It's a great app that works really well and I love having all the information I need in my pocket," Con said.

"The ability to set parameters and then apply filters takes away all the marketing hype and makes sure you are dealing with honest facts when it comes to choosing bulls.

"There are a lot of bulls out there and not everyone marketing a bull has the best bull. The beauty of the Good Bull app is that the information is impartial and makes bull research easy.

"If I'm talking to someone about bulls, then I can get my phone out and know exactly what they are talking about.

"I generate files on bulls I like based on the parameters I want, which I send to Rodney and then he can come back to me on availability and price as well as other suggestions."

Con said his bull selection placed a heavy weighting on BPI, but also involved applying filters on a range of characteristics such as feet angle, chest width, udder traits and somatic cell count.

While the Glennens' farm support block has very poor mobile phone reception, the Good Bulls app does not require phone coverage to operate, once it has been updated with the latest ABV data.

The Good Bulls app is available free of charge from the app Store and Google Play.

DataGene
Solutions for Herd Development