



RED MEAT UPDATES

TASMANIA

Managing our beef business

Alison Napier
GH Napier and Son

My business philosophy

“For me ...my business is about managing my people, my grass, my livestock and my budget.

But at the end of all that, I have a very strong sense of passion and pride in what I do — I am committed to operating at a level of industry best practice because I aim to be here for the long haul.”



Business snapshot

- **Location:** St Mary's, Tasmania
- **Property size:** 3000ha (grazing and blue gum plantation)
- **Average annual rainfall:** 1000mm
- **Soil types:** Brown sandy loam, duplex soils, alluvial black cracking soils
- **Topography:** Valley floor rising to native bush hills
- **Enterprises:** Self-replacing Angus beef herd with opportunistic trading (2300 head)
- **Pasture base:** Improved perennial pastures (perennial ryegrass, cocksfoot, phalaris and white and red clover), native bush country
- **Stocking rates:** 2.2DSE/ha/100mm rain (2015–16)
- **Kilograms of beef per hectare:** 1200kg/ha (four-year average)

Developing a strategic approach

- **Executive Link:** a focus on clear business goals and objectives and clear personal goals and objectives.

This clear focus and strategic approach proved crucial when I had to take the reins.

Filling the gaps — garnering support

- **Network of support:** formal and informal
- **Asking the right questions:** getting the right advice
- **Business blueprint:** crucial for keeping all the balls in the air

Benefits of a business blueprint

- **Consistent messages:** inside and outside the business
- **Consolidation:** supports decision-making
- **Filter:** provides a filter for information coming into the business
- **Personality type:** fits with my approach to life

The process of strategy

- **Business strategy:** a long-term process NOT a single event
- **Commitment, time and energy:** business-wide
- **Regular reviews and updates:** businesses are dynamic — change is constant
- **Relevant to day-to-day decision making:** big picture strategy guides operational decisions

My approach to business strategy

- **Start with the big picture:** look at the business as a whole
- **Understand the business:** be honest about current and potential performance
- **Develop a plan:** a roadmap to achieve your goals
- **Consider the future:** the goalposts will change
- **Be organised:** administration is important

A learning process

- **Professional development:** supports effective business skills
- **Meaningful information:** supports evidenced-based decisions
- **Regular business health checks:** avert crises and take advantage of opportunities
- **Clear communication:** supported by written goals, objectives, plans and policies — everyone involved with the business is on the same page

Managing the people

- **Policies and procedures:** supports clear communication
- **Job descriptions:** clearly define roles
- **Induction processes:** set standards and expectations

Natural resource management

- **Education and training:** everyone in the business needs to be on the same page speaking the same language
- **Responsible resource management:** best practice across all resources — including human resources (safety)
- **Measure to manage:** evidenced-based decisions

A strategic approach provides:

- **Flexibility:** allows me to identify opportunities and supports decision-making in variable seasons and markets
- **Clarity amidst complexity:** clears my head
- **Time out:** confidence to spend time outside the business
- **Navigate the roadblocks:** a solid point of reference when roadblocks arise — big or small

Top three take home messages

1. Understanding my goals and objectives and reviewing them regularly
2. Developing a plan to achieve my goals
3. Basing my plan and implementation on evidence-based information

Tools, resources & training

- MLA Business Edge
- Low Stress Stockhandling (LLS)
- ATV training
- Pasture Principles
- Professional support and advice



RED MEAT UPDATES

TASMANIA

Managing our beef business

Alison Napier

E: office.harefield@gmail.com