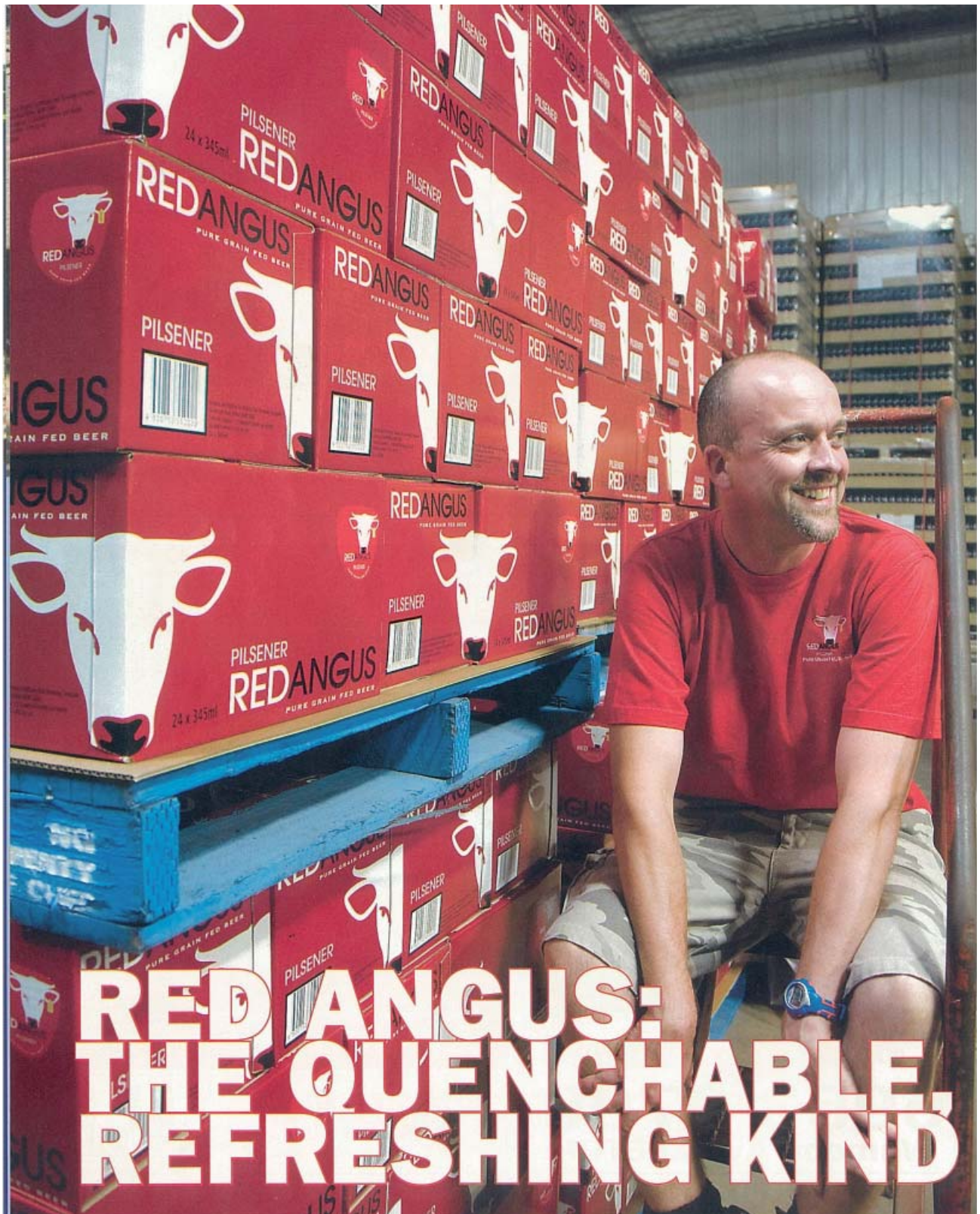


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GO Farmer
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**RED ANGUS:
THE QUENCHABLE,
REFRESHING KIND**

WILLIAM BULL BREWERY

LAUNCHING a premium beer into a growing market already teeming with boutique beer varieties comes down to good timing, researching the market and producing a top brew - and if sales figures are anything to go by Griffith's newest beer Red Angus produced at William Bull Brewery at De Bortoli's could be a knock out.

De Bortoli first acquired the micro brewery in 1998 and at the time was brewing beer for kegs for local distribution, although the brewery was not producing enough quantity of beer to make it a viable operation.

The brewery has been lying dormant since until renewed interest in the boutique beer market with market research indicating that boutique beer sales are soaring in Australia at a growth rate of 20% per year.

Rob Glastonbury (formerly of Carlton United Breweries) and Sharon Adams (previously from Boags) joined the De Bortoli team along with Neal Cameron, who was to become the Head Brewer & Brewery Manager at William Bull Brewery (named after the pioneer William Bull who founded Bilbul and was the first in the area to put a bore down). Whilst Neal admits he had very little practical experience as a brewer, he did have a Diploma in Brewing Science combined with his interest in beer appreciation, a long career in operations management, enthusiasm and the columns he was writing in the Go magazine was a good platform to begin training himself so that he could attain his dream job.

“Now Griffith has its own brewery it has a certain cache to it - the people have really got behind the beer as Griffith people do - it's brilliant.”

It took two years and an investment of \$2.5 million to get the William Bull Brewery operational once again. Materials were sourced from all over the world and Neal put together an international tasting panel from every demographic imaginable in the beer market. Neal and his off-sider Adam brewed 60 beers for the panel to taste and as time went on their feedback identified the top brews.

Armed with this information, and their natural intuition, Neal and Rob put together a business plan to implement major improvements to the brewery and a brand new bottling line. The distribution had already been established. De

Bortoli's have 80 sales staff domestically and distribution overseas. The long term goal is for Red Angus is to have a presence in every part of the world.

The process of brewing a boutique beer or any beer is relatively simple - create a sugar source and ferment it. Red Angus is quite different. Red Angus has a slower brewing time than most conventional beer and is not pasteurised, instead the beer is sterile filtered.

The first process is to add water to the five milled grains (sourced from Germany and Australia) and heat to 65 degrees. The enzymes in the grain cut the starches into sugars making a sugary solution called wort.

The wort is boiled in a huge kettle for an hour with hops to create the familiar dry bitter taste people associate with beer. After this, the wort is cooled and put into a fermentation tank with brewers yeast and fermented for over a week. The green beer as its called (although its not green) is then moved to another tank, more hops added and cooled to 2°C degrees for 4 whole weeks to mature and develop a range of subtle flavours. The beer is then filtered, carbonated and is ready to be bottled. The whole process takes between 6-7 weeks to brew and once bottled is sent off for distribution (compared to 5-6 days at the larger breweries)

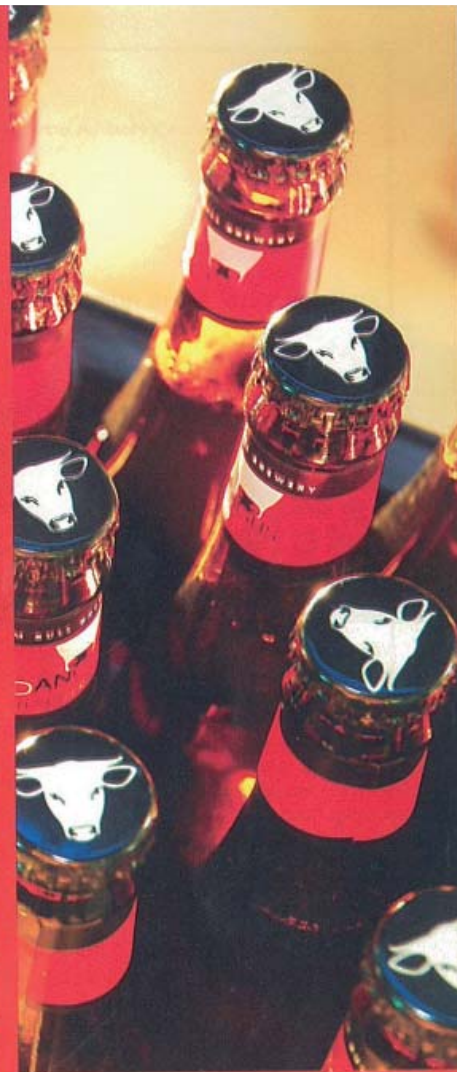
Red Angus is not pasteurised like most commercial breweries. Rob and Neal were adamant that the flavour of this brew was to be retained at all costs, so instead the beer is sterile filtered.

Every batch of Angus Bull is named (look on the back label) and according to Neal some are quite humorous, strop, BXXXXR - after a bad day, one batch was named after a sales rep and the first brew was named after Angus in SA on the day of the launch - the family was sent a case!

“It's the best job in the world. I've wanted to do it for years, it's an enormous opportunity knowing that when De Bortoli's invests in a new product, they do it right,” said Neal.

Sales of Red Angus are doing very well locally in Wagga and Griffith with many of outlets stocking the beer. There are 40 stockists in Wagga alone. Neal says that they have sold over 6,000 cases in total since the launch of William Bull Brewery in October last year, which is very encouraging.

William Bull Brewery will be receiving five more tanks this month and currently produces 30 - 40, 000 cases a month. The extra tanks will push this figure up to 50 - 60, 000 cases per month.



Neal says the best way to appreciate Red Angus Pilsener is to drink it at between 6° - 8° degrees. If Red Angus (or any beer for that matter) is consumed straight from the fridge, it freezes the taste buds so the flavour does not register (you are tasting very little of the beer.)

“To really appreciate it, take it out of the fridge for a few minutes before opening it. You can always pick a well brewed beer and this one is clean, refreshing, quite a bitter pilsener with a light to medium body. It's not a heavy beer but has a lot of fruity aromas and a spicy grassy hoppy body. It's quite moreish,” enthuses Neal.

Beer has between 300 - 400 flavour compounds, more than wine. Not all of these can always be defined by our taste buds, however, Neal believes if you are more particular about the raw materials and quality of the water, you can produce flavours on flavours, which may not be defined but certainly have appeal.