Belted Galloway Grading Up – A Guide

Introduction

The origins of the Belted Galloway breed go back to around 1690 when the Dutch Lakenvelder was initially crossed to a Galloway in England, most likely in Norfolk.

The UK Belted Galloway Society was founded over a 100 yrs ago and has almost always had a closed Herdbook i.e. 100% Belted Galloway. It is one of the older breed societies of the world. Galloway and Shorthorn Societies are older. The UK Belted Galloway Society has had its Herdbook Belted Galloways exported to many parts of the world including Australia and New Zealand.

Galloways Australia considers, as a point of reference, Belted Galloways from the UK Belted Galloway Society Herdbook and those animals directly descended from that Herdbook without other breed introductions to be Fullblood Belted Galloways i.e. 100%. That is the Galloways Australia basis for calculating Belted Galloway genetic percentages. Many Belted Galloway societies/associations use the same basis.

All associations in Australia registering Belted Galloways allow or have allowed grading up to varying degrees. Historically, this achieved a more rapid increase in the number of animals based on Belted Galloways at the expense of the percentage of Belted Galloway genetics in individual animals.

Each association has different rules regulating Belted Galloway grading up. This can cause confusion and disappointment if, when transferring a Belted Galloway from one association to another, the animal is ruled ineligible for registration in the new association.

Association Rules / By-Laws

The rules/by-laws relied upon are:

Australian Belted Galloway Association (ABGA)

For the Australian Belted Galloway Association, By-Laws 5, 5.1, 5.2, 9, 9.1 and 9.2 are relied upon.

ABGA Bulls

To register an ABGA Belted Galloway bull, the sire and dam must have 4 generations of known breeding, the Registered Belted Galloway bull then is the 5th generation. The dam has to be a registered “A” grade female and the sire a Registered Belted Galloway bull.

ABGA Females

ABGA Females progress through a series of grades.

D grade – 'base breeding animals' – registered stud Angus, Red Angus, Galloway or Red Poll animals that are true to their type with no Belted Galloway genetics. Note the by-law uses both "pure bred" and "registered stud" in reference to D grade animals.

C grade – the progeny of a D grade female and a registered Belted Galloway bull.

B grade – the progeny of a C grade female and a registered Belted Galloway bull.

A grade – the progeny of an A or B grade female and a registered Belted Galloway bull unless mis-marked.

ABGA Overseas animals

All ABGA animals from overseas have the letters POIS (Progeny of imported stock) added to denote their status.

When imports were from the UK Belted Galloway Society this was an indication that the animal was of 100% Belted Galloway genetics. However, imports from other overseas associations may be graded up and not 100% Belted Galloway genetics depending on the overseas association's breeding rules and purity requirements.

Australian Galloway Association (AGA)

For the Australian Galloway Association, By-laws Section 4 are relied upon.

AGA Bulls

All AGA sires must be a minimum of 93.75% Belted Galloway genetics to be registered (July 2022). The bull must not be mis-marked or from a mismarked female. The percentage used by the AGA is based on original UK Belted Galloway Society genetics although this is not explicitly stated.

AGA Females

All AGA dams must be a minimum of 93.75% Belted Galloway genetics. Concessions are allowed for undesirable mismarking.

All AGA 93.75% Belted Galloways bred up from Fullblood Galloways shall be called "Fullblood Belted Galloways" with an ancestor code for Galloway.

Note: Most international and Australian breed associations use the term purebred to indicate animals that achieve 93.75% of breed purity. Fullblood is reserved for animals being 100% from original sources, such as the UK Belted Galloway Society Herdbook. Allowing a Belted Galloway/ Galloway cross to be called "Fullblood" contradicts the internationally recognised term and will lead to confusion. It also conflicts with AGA's

Purebred and Fullblood definitions; AGA By-laws 1.7 and 1.19, that are in accordance with industry definitions.

AGA Overseas animals

Overseas animals are required to provide documentation that supports their achieving at least 93.75% Belted Galloway genetics.

Galloways Australia (GA)

For Galloways Australia, Rules 3,6,7 and 13 are applied.

GA Bulls

All conforming Belted Galloways bulls with a percentage of at least 93.75% can be registered in the Galloways Australia Belted Galloway Stud Register. The percentage Belted Galloway is related back to animals from the UK Belted Galloway Society being 100%.

GA Females

All conforming Belted Galloway females with a percentage of at least 93.75% can be registered in the Galloways Australia Belted Galloway Stud Register.

Non-conforming (mismarked) animals that have achieved 93.75% can be registered in the Belted Galloway Appendix Register.

Non-mis-marked progeny of mis-marked animals that achieve at least 93.75%, can be registered in the Galloways Australia Belted Galloway Stud Register.

GA Overseas Animals

Overseas Belted Galloways need to demonstrate their percentage based on the UK Belted Galloway Society Herdbook and progeny.

If an overseas animal cannot demonstrate 93.75% Belted Galloway genetics it is ineligible for registration.

Note: Belted Galloway based animals having percentages less than 93.75% are accommodated in the Galloways Australia's Successor Register where their grading up can be recorded. Once a Belted Galloway based animal achieves a percentage of at least 93.75% it is transferred to the Belted Galloway Stud Register.

Only Belted Galloways listed in the Belted Galloway Stud Register can be shown. Mismarked animals can't be shown.

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Why care about the percentage of Belted Galloway genetics

Breed preservation is a basic tenet of most cattle associations. This is also the case with Galloways Australia. Breed preservation requires maximisation of Belted Galloway percentages and acknowledgement of fullblood i.e. 100% Belted Galloways. That is why every Galloways Australia Belted Galloway Registration Certificate shows the animal's percentage Belted Galloway i.e. members know their animal's percentage.

Galloways Australia bases registration on scientific genetic principles. It is not the easiest option but it ensures that Galloways Australia can maximise the genetics and the genetic traits that make Belted Galloways the breed they are today.

While breed preservation is a basic tenet, a 100% or high percentage Belted Galloway is not imparted with a magic bullet when it comes to success in showing and carcase competitions. Show results rely on animal preparation and the eye of the judge who may or may not be familiar with Belted Galloways. Carcase competitions rely on more objective measurements of the Belted Galloways carcase, but carcasses are influenced by genetics, feeding regime and stress of handling and condition of the animal at the event. Both Fullblood and eligible percentage Belted Galloways can do very well at shows and carcase competitions.

Once a gene is lost it is unlikely to be replicated naturally. Belted Galloways are a remarkable breed with specific traits based on over 300 years of breeding in Scotland and the UK. Preserving genetics is the only way of ensuring the unique traits of the Belted Galloway continue to exist.

The aim of breed preservation does not devalue commercial production of Belted animals which support many farmers through cross breeding programs and hybrid vigour. Having a reliable and strong genetic base is important not only to maintain the breed purity but to support commercial production of commercial belted animal herds.

Example Sire Based Breeding up Progression

The below tables illustrates 3 breeding up scenarios:

(1) a known fullblood 100% bull and a 0% dam
(2) a known purebred, 93.75% bull and a 0% dam
(3) a 96.875% bull and a mixed percentage female

It demonstrates the complexity and importance of applying the genetic principles.

All Galloways Australia Belted Galloway registered in the Galloways Australia Belted Galloway Stud Register are assessed by the Registrar – providing you certainty of the genetics of Galloways Australia Registered Belted Galloways.

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Belted Galloway Grading Up Breeding table

Example 100% Sire – 0% Dam

Generation	Sire Known to be 100% (Fullblood) Belted Galloway			
	Dam		Calf	
1	0%	D Grade	50%	C grade
2	50%	C Grade	75%	B Grade
3	75%	B Grade	87.5%	A Grade
4	87.5%	A Grade	93.75%	A Grade
5	93.75%	A Grade	96.87%	A Grade
6	96.87%	A Grade	98.43%	A Grade

Note: 100% (Fullblood) status **can never be achieved** but Purebred status can.

Example: 93.75 Sire and 0% Dam

Generation	Sire Known to be 93.75% (Purebred) Belted Galloway			
	Dam		Calf	
1	0%	D Grade	46.87%	C Grade
2	46.87%	C Grade	70.31%	B Grade
3	70.31%	B Grade	82.03%	A Grade
4	82.03%	A Grade	87.89%	A Grade
5	87.89%	A Grade	90.82%	A Grade
6	90.82%	A Grade	92.29%	A Grade

Note: Purebred status of 93.75% **can never be achieved** and animal cannot be shown at many shows.

Example 96.875% Sire and known part belted Galloway dam

Generation	Sire known to be 96.875% Belted Galloway; Initial Dam known to be part Belted Galloway	
	Dam	Calf
1	46.87%	71.87%
2	71.87%	84.37%
3	84.37%	90.62%
4	90.62%	93.75%
5	93.75%	95.31%
6	95.31%	96.09%

Note: 100% (Fullblood) status can never be achieved but Purebred status can.

- The only way to achieve a Fullblood (100%) status is to breed a 100% Sire with a 100% Dam.
- Where the grades are shown in the table it represents the ABGA 'grade' as applied by the stated by-laws .A 'D' grade dam has 0% Belted Galloway genetics. Could be Galloway, Angus, Red Poll, Red Angus. **Galloways Australia does not use grades**.
- Knowing Belted Galloway genetic percentages is important for breed preservation and for activities where a known percentage is required including many shows and for selling and marketing.