

Red Poll



The Red Poll was produced by crossing the milky Suffolk Dun with the meaty Norfolk Red in the early part of the 19th century. The Red Poll Breed Society was established in 1888 and the breed was a popular milking cow and beef animal right up until the middle of the 20th century. The Red Poll could not compete with the Friesian as a milking animal and the arrival of the continental breeds triggered its decline as a beef animal. The modern Red Poll is used mainly in suckler herds although there are still several milking herds around the country.

Key Characteristics:

Size- Medium- Cows- 550kg, Bulls-850-1000kg

Looks- A classic dual purpose breed with a characteristic deep red colour. Similar in appearance to several of the "English Reds" (Lincoln Red, Devon, Sussex etc.) but the most slender of them all reflecting the Red Poll's dairy origins.

Use- Dual-purpose- Beef and milk

Long lived, fertile and maternal- good suckler cows

Milking ability- The average milk yield is around 5000 litres at 4.2% butterfat and 3.5% protein although milk records from various herds have some cows averaging 7-8000 litres per lactation. Most milking Red Polls average around a 300 day lactation with a steady yield throughout. The breed is known for its longevity

and provided the management is right cows can last for upwards of 10 lactations.

Performance recording- The Red Poll Cattle Society actively promotes performance recording within the breed using EBVs and this has helped develop the breed as a viable beef animal:

- 200 Day Growth Rate EBV (kg)-
1990- 3.2
2002- 6.8
2010- 8 (50%)
- 400 Day Growth Rate EBV (kg) -
1990- 7.0
2002- 11.2
2010- 11 (50%)
- Muscle Depth EBV (mm)-
1990- 0.025
2002- 0.09
2010- 1.2 (50%)

Beef- Can finish intensively within 12-14 months or extensively within 24-30 months.

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust is the leading national charity working to conserve and protect the United Kingdom's rare native breeds of farm animals from extinction. We rely on the support of our members, grants and donations from the public to raise the £700,000 a year needed to maintain our conservation work with rare UK native breeds of farm animals. Visit www.rbst.org.uk to see how you can help.

More information available from the
Red Poll Cattle Society -
www.redpoll.org or 01245 600032

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