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Meat Promotion Wales

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Cattle Farming in Wales





Glossary of Terms

| Term | Explanation |
|-----------------|---|
| Suckler Cow | Female Beef Cow |
| Bull | Male Cow |
| Heifer | Young female cow |
| In Calf | Pregnant Cow |
| Replacements | Cows bred or bought-in to replace the old cows in the breeding herd |
| Herd | A group of cows |
| Weaned | The calves no longer require milk – eating pasture |
| Finished cattle | Cattle which are ready to be sold for meat |



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Let's take a closer look at the Beef industry in Wales...

Agriculture in the UK

- Livestock farming for meat production has been an established industry for centuries.
- Significant contributor to the UK economy - £8.5 billion.
- Agriculture provides 475,000 jobs directly, and an extra 30,000 through goods and services.
- Over 50,000 people employed directly in agriculture in Wales
- Cattle can graze steep hills and poor quality land such as moorland which is unsuitable for growing any other food sources.

MEAT INDUSTRY IN WALES

HAS PRIMARY PRODUCTION OF...



EMPLOYS

5,000



PRODUCES...

2,400 TONNES PIG MEAT



62,900 TONNES SHEEP MEAT



40,600 TONNES BEEF



£621M TURNOVER



Facts & Figures

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Wales has 166,600 beef COWS | 23 = average beef only flock size |
| 7,202 farms in Wales | Producing 42,900 tonne of beef |

5% of beef from Wales is consumed in Wales, approximately 80% is consumed in the rest of the UK, and 15% is consumed in export markets.

Animal Welfare

Wales also boasts...

- High standard of animal welfare
- We care for our animals which results in tasty, nutritious and high quality meat.



Welsh Beef + PGI Status

- Welsh Beef has PGI Status.
- PGI = Protected Geographical Indication
- It's a way of recognising a specific geographical area that produces high-quality food and drink.
- PGI Welsh Beef is different and has special characteristics that are unique to Wales and cannot be replicated anywhere else.





Cattle Breeding Systems

Farmers decide to keep purebred cattle or crossbred cattle, or a mixture of both.

This decision depends on:

- land type the farmer has and the quality of the grass;
- The location of the farm and the weather
- Market- whether the farmer is producing cattle for breeding or for meat or both.

Crossbreeding means you get the best attributes of different breeds to improve animal performance such as milk quality and calf growth rate.

Native Breeds of cattle

There are 33 breeds of cattle which are native to the UK including:

Welsh Black

Hereford

Galloway

Beef Shorthorn

Aberdeen Angus



Attributes:

Native breeds have been farmed for centuries in the UK. They are hardy, easy calving and can utilise poor quality grazing well. These are slower growing than continental breeds.

Cattle Breeds – Continentals

There are also breeds in the UK which originate from Europe, known as continental:

- Charolais
- Limousin
- Simmental
- Belgium blue
- Blonde de Aquitaine



Attributes

Continental breeds are fast growing and well muscled animals which maximises meat production.

Often continental and native breeds are used together in crossbreeding systems.

Lifecycle: An overview

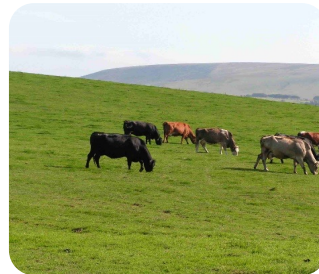
Suckler cows have one calf per year.

They must be healthy and in good physical condition to have a calf every year.

Milk is the main source of nutrition for young calves.



A cow gets in calf (pregnant) by a bull or artificial insemination (AI)



Pregnancy, will last for 9 months



The cow prepares for pregnancy throughout this time, known as the 'dry period'

Lifecycle: An overview

Depending on the farming system along with breed and feed available, the cattle will be sold for beef aged 12 – 22 months old.



The calves are now adults, fully grown and ready for sale

Some females are kept for breeding or sold at market in breeding sales

Their mothers will be ready to calve again soon

Typical Breeds in Wales



Welsh Black

Wales' only native breed of cattle, they are equally at home in craggy uplands or lush lowland pastures. This hardy breed provides high quality meat and milk.



Limousin

These golden-red cattle originated in South West France in harsh climatic conditions and poor granite soil. As a result of their environment the breed is known for sturdiness, health and adaptability.



Charolais

Originating from France this breed tends to be large muscled. It was known to produce beef animals that had more red meat and less fat. The coat is almost pure white.



Hereford

Herefords originate from Herefordshire making them a native breed. They are generally docile and with good beef quality.



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**What more is there to know about beef
cattle ?**

Did you know?

- There are over 1 billion cows in the world
- Cows are herbivores so they only eat plants, mostly they graze grass. Silage and hay will be provided in Winter when grass quality is poor. Sometimes they are also fed fodder beet, kale, clover, straw and grains.
- They have 4 stomachs whereas we have 1
- Animals with 4 stomachs are called Ruminants like sheep, giraffes, deer and antelopes
- Cows are red/green colour blind
- The average cow makes over 40,000 jaw movements in a day.





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In conclusion...



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- Allowing cattle to graze the pastures of Wales plays a key role in maintaining species-rich habitat
- Cattle have the ability to convert plants into healthy and nutritious food
- Food in Wales and the UK is produced to some of the highest health and welfare standards in the world