

The Ayrshire Breed

Originating in South-west Scotland, the Ayrshire Breed was first recorded on an official basis in the 1870's, with formation of the Ayrshire Cattle Society Herd Book in 1877.

The typical Ayrshire cow is an alert, vigorous animal showing strong character and mild temperament. This classic cow is any shade of red or brown including mahogany and white, although either colour may predominate. Her body exhibits dairy strength with femininity about the head, cleanness through the neck and shoulders but with strength in her chest. She has depth and openness of rib, an indication of her production potential, the skin is pliable and soft with fine silky hair and her bone structure is fine and flat being proportionate to body weight.

The Ayrshire is noted for strong udder formation. Ideally the udder is long, wide and capacious with a silky texture. It is firmly attached with a well-defined central ligament and strong fore attachment blending smoothly into the body. Teats are uniform and evenly placed, being about 6.5cms long. Her feet and legs exhibit bone quality with hard feet and heel depth enabling free flowing movement.

True Type Model

The Classic Ayrshire has balance while exhibiting style and breed character for which she is famed.

The Ayrshire is the ultimate, economic dairy cow - characterised by high quality, longevity, ease of management and overall good health. Now found in all continents, the ability to thrive in climatic extremes makes the Ayrshire the ideal cow for African heat or a Scandinavian winter.

The breed can efficiently produce large quantities of high quality milk from forage, and is renowned for foraging ability. Ayrshires are now becoming very popular in organic systems.

Top herds in the UK are averaging over 8,500 litres of milk per lactation, while in some countries yields exceed 10,000 litres. The milk has a high yield of butterfat and protein - which contributes to taste - and is sought after for processing.

Economic milk production is the principal aim of any dairy farmer where the inputs to the herd have to be in balance with the milk each cow produces, and the Ayrshire breed produces margins that keep the business performing profitably.

Ayrshires offer:

- Good yields of high quality milk
- Efficient forage conversion
- Excellent functional type

- Economic and profitable milk production
- Healthy long lasting Ayrshires are profitable Ayrshires