

The Short Horn Breed

Fertility, locomotion, longevity — the one breed that has it all.

Milk yields of up to 10,000kg, combined with all the superior attributes of a native breed.

- Excellent mobility
- Excellent milk quality
- Excellent fertility and longevity
- Excellent converters of forage to milk
- Excellent temperament and adaptability

Suitable for all types of production systems, particularly extended grazing and organic systems.

The breed was used in the early part of the 20th Century, primarily as a dual purpose breed, but specialisation for beef and milk led to the beef breeders starting their own section of the herd-book in 1958. Since that time the Beef Shorthorns have been developed as a separate breed, and in 1976 in an effort to improve the muscling in the breed, the Directors of the Beef Shorthorn Cattle Society sanctioned the use of Maine-Anjou blood into the breed. The Herd Book was then closed again to outside blood in 2001, except by introduction through the Grading Register.

The dairy breeders also sought to improve the 'dairyness' of their animals, and a blending scheme to introduce outside blood from other breeds was introduced in 1970. Some breeders did not wish to participate in this scheme, and so there is now quite a diversity of type within the Shorthorn breed. This diversity of type means that the Shorthorn can be used in a variety of different systems. In Ireland, the majority of Shorthorns are used for their suckler/beef capabilities, whereas in the UK the milking qualities of the breed have been developed.

The importance of the Shorthorn breed in the development of other cattle breeds is enormous, and Shorthorn genetics have been used worldwide in the development of over 40 different breeds. The breed has a very long and distinguished history, and developments on both the beef and dairy sides have ensured that the breed also has a very bright future.