



THE ROYAL
COUNTY OF
BERKSHIRE
SHOW

at
Newbury
Showground



Farming & Countryside Education



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Livestock
Identity Chart

Royal County of Berkshire Show Pigs



Berkshire

Three hundred years ago—so legend has it—the Berkshire hog was discovered by Oliver Cromwell's Army while in their winter's quarters at Reading. From then the news of the quality flavoursome large Berkshires spread.

The original Berkshire was reddish or sandy coloured sometimes spotted this accounts for the sandy hair still sometimes seen today on a predominantly black animal.



British Lop

The British Lop is one of the white, lop-eared pig breeds once associated with the Celtic regions of the British Isles, and is closely related to breeds such as the Welsh and Landrace. It was first recognised in the Tavistock area, where it was called the Devon Lop, or sometimes the Cornish White pig. It spread throughout the south west of the country, as far as Somerset and Dorset, but was rarely seen beyond that vicinity. Up to the 1960s it was called the National Long White Lop-eared pig, but its name was then changed to the British Lop.



The British saddleback

The British Saddleback is a striking animal being black with a white unbroken band over the shoulders and down to both front feet. They may also have white hind feet, a white tail tip and white on the snout but this is not necessary. They have lop ears over their heads. Belted pigs of this type occur around the world and it is a standard colour pattern that occurs in certain genotypes of the domesticated pig. Just because this pattern occurs in different breeds in different countries, does not mean that they are necessarily related. The body is both deep and long reflecting its advantages both as an excellent breeding animal and as a producer of high quality meat.



Gloucestershire Old Spots

Among the largest this black and white breed is predominantly white in colour with a heavy dropped ear. Often known as orchard pigs because they were partially raised in windfall apples and whey waste they are good foragers and grazers. The sows produce large litters making them prized by producers.



Hampshire

Hampshire pigs have now firmly established themselves as a British breed. Introduced from America where they have a long record for high lean content.

They were first imported breed to be released in this country from ministry control.



Kune Kune

The Kune Kune pig is smaller than other breeds they have a short turned up snout and most have pike pike (tassels) hanging from their lower jaw. Their legs are short and their bodies are short and round. The colour range includes: black, black and white, white, gold, tan brown. They are placid, very friendly and thrive of human company.



The Landrace

The Landrace breed was developed in Denmark by crossing the native pig with the Large White. This cross was then improved on during years of testing and breeding under strict government control. The Danes refused to export live pigs until World War II, when the best specimens of the breed were exported to Sweden. The progeny from these pigs eventually reached England and Ireland.

Landrace have white skin and are free from black hair. They are a lop-eared pig with a long middle, light forequarters, and excellent ham development. The major faults with the original Landrace were leg weakness, splay legs and nervous disorders such as porcine stress syndrome (PSS). PSS still occurs in some strains.



Middle white

Originally from Yorkshire the Middle white has many general characteristics of the large white except for size and a much more dished face. It matures earlier than its larger relative making it more valued when the objective is to produce lightweight marketable pork in a relatively short time. Despite their smaller size the sows rear an average of 8 pigs per litter.



Oxford Sandy Black

The exact origin of the breed is lost in antiquity but the original Oxford Sandy & Black is believed to have developed some two centuries ago in Oxfordshire. The breed declined in numbers dramatically in the 1940s when only one or two boars were licensed.

The breed is noted for its many qualities, particularly its excellent temperament and mothering abilities. Generally prolific, the Oxford will function well under most management systems, and produces meat of very high quality and flavour (the markings do not go through to the meat). When crossed with white breeds pure Oxfords produce highly commercial white hybrids.

There can be no more visually attractive breed than the Oxford, with its good nature and ease of management making it a great favourite with all who have ever kept these pigs.



Tamworth

This breed exhibits an elongated head shape and a long narrow body. The ears are erect and pointed, while the face has rectilinear lines as well as the snout. Colour range from a pale gingery to dark mahogany red. Early in the breed history, colours were red and black, but breeding has been conducted to remove the black colouration. The bristle density protects their skin from ultraviolet harm from the sun; nevertheless, when they moult between June and August (in the northern hemisphere), shade is sought along with copious mud coating to prevent sunburn.



Large Black

The Large Black Pig can be found throughout the British Isles. They are mainly kept in small herds, a few of which date back to well before World War 2.

Large Black sows are renowned as excellent mothers with exceptional milking ability. They are able to rear sizeable litters off simple rations and a placid temperament ensures they can be contained behind a single strand of electric fencing. Current demand for meat produced from traditional breeds of pigs raised extensively is now promoting a growth in the number of breeders keeping Large Blacks as from this particular breed's meat, it is much appreciated for its succulent taste and eating quality.



Large white

The Large White is regarded as a rugged and hardy breed that can withstand variations in climate and other environmental factors. Their ability to cross with and improve other breeds has truly made them a factor nearly everywhere commercial pigs are produced. They have been known for decades as a favourite market animal where high quality bacon and pork are sought. Their tendency to grow and not lay down excess fat have made them favourites, not only when pigs are marketed at relatively light weights, but also when they are carried to heavier weights.



The Welsh pig

The Welsh pig is white; with lop ears meeting at the tips just short of the pig's nose. It has a long level body with deep strong hams and legs set well apart. George Eglington acknowledged as the founder of the modern Welsh breed described the perfect Welsh pig as "pear shaped" when viewed from either the side or from above. They are still known for their hardiness and ability to thrive under a wide variety of conditions, both indoor and outside.

Royal County of Berkshire Show Sheep



Black Welsh Mountain

The Black Welsh Mountain is a small, black sheep with no wool on the face or on the legs below the knee and hock. The rams are typically horned and the females are polled (hornless).

Although it is bred today perhaps as much for decorative value as for its commercial importance, it nevertheless grows wool which is sufficiently fine, soft and densely stapled to be regarded as a specialty type and the fleece is used to good effect in combination with other wools. Always black, it can be used undyed for many cloths.



Bleu Du Main

The Bleu du Maine originated in western France and was first introduced into the United Kingdom in 1978. Since this time, the breed has won Interbreed titles at both the Royal Show and Royal Welsh Shows.

Ewes and rams from this breed are both specially noted for being highly prolific. Purebred flocks have high lambing percentages. Ram fertility gives a considerable boost to commercial flocks and independent field trials suggest that the Bleu du Maine cross females are more prolific than their traditional counterparts and, at the same time, leave progeny with much improved conformation.



Charollais

The Charollais is a medium to large sized sheep, long, well muscled with thick, deep gigots. The body is long with a well muscled broad loin and wide deep chest. The head is free from wool, pinkish/fawn in colour sometimes with spots. The line of the shoulders should retain a wedge shape which is so important for ease of lambing. The legs are clean, quite short, coloured but never very dark. The front legs should not be set too wide apart and the animal must be well balanced. The gigots are well developed, thick and deep. The breed is primarily a terminal sire and the fleshing quality is of the highest importance. Excessive bone is undesirable in the breed. The fleece is white, fine and dense, the staple length quite short.



Clun Forest

A clean open dark-brown face, free from speckles, top of head nicely covered and free from dark wool. The ears are not too long, free from speckles and carried high. The body has a strong muscular neck, lengthy good back, deep rib, strong loin, good hock, deep and well rounded thighs, good through heart, strong bone, Standing Square on its legs. The legs are free from speckles, fairly free from wool, hock and knee down.



Dorset Down

Developed in the middle of the eighteenth century in the county of Dorset by John Ellman, through the crossing the Southdown, Hampshire and local Dorset breeds. It was officially recognized in 1906. Like the Hampshire down the breed is suitable for folding on arable land, especially the chalk downs of the south-west. A characteristic of the breed is its ability to lamb down in November-December.



Dorset Horn and Poll Dorset

The Dorset Horn and Poll Dorset is a medium sheep, hardy and very active. It boasts capacious stomach and is an excellent "doer"; a ewe in good condition tends always to look as though she is in lamb. It is the only British breed which can lamb any time of the year. The fleece is of medium length, fine and very white, and the face and legs, clear of wool, are also noticeably white and show another of the Dorset Horn's distinguishing features – a pink nose and light coloured hooves. This pink and white look is particularly marked in lambs where it appears to be intensified; a young Dorset has hoofs of mother-of-pearl and a nose like a fresh raspberry.



Hampshire Down

Face and ears are a rich dark brown, approaching black, with wool over the poll and forehead. Wool is white with an average staple length. Body deep and symmetrical with ribs well sprung, broad, straight back, flat loins, wide rump and deep heavily muscled hind legs and breast. Legs being strongly jointed and powerful are set well apart.



Jacob

Slight of build, with a narrow, lean carcass Jacobs are easily recognized by their black and white fleeces, which are prized by hand spinners and weavers. Both male and female are horned, with two, four and occasionally six horns. A sheep with goat-like agility and curiosity- a real personality.



Oxford Down

The Oxford Down ram has a bold, masculine head, well set on a strong neck; the poll is well covered with wool, and adorned by a 'top-knot'. The face a uniform dark, colour, the ears of good length, the shoulder broad, with a broad breast well forward. A full, level back, the ribs well sprung the barrel deep, thick, and long with straight underline. The legs are short and dark coloured, standing square and well apart. The mutton is firm, lean, and of excellent quality. The whole body is covered with wool of close texture, good length, and fine quality.



Shetland sheep

The Shetland is one of the smallest of the British Sheep. Fine boned sheep belonging to the Northern Short-tailed group that has evolved in relative isolation in Shetland Islands since the late 8th century.

The high quality wool the finest of any British breed, forming the basis of the world renowned Shetland woolen industry.



Soay

Soay sheep are fine-boned and late maturing, with a prominent ridge between the shoulders. The tail is short and thin. The texture of their wool can vary, from soft fine wool to more coarse hairy fibres (or "kemps"), and mixtures in-between. The fleece is, normally, shed naturally.

Rams are two-horned and the horns are strong. Scurred rams have been observed on Hirta, and occur occasionally in sheep owners' flocks. Ewes are either two-horned, polled or scurred.



South Down

The Southdown is a very compact sheep and should have "a leg at each corner", well fleshed down to its hocks. With a wide level back through to the tail.

Head: Ears small, covered with short wool. The colour of the face and legs should be mouse, preferably not dark brown.

Wool: A fine texture of great density covering the whole body down to hocks, knees, and cheeks but NOT around eyes or bridge of nose.

Skin: Pink, apart from nostrils which should preferably have a black "star" on it.



Suffolk

A large sheep without horns, dark face and legs, fine bones and long small neck. Today's Suffolk derives its meatiness and quality of wool from the old original British Southdown breed, crossed with the Norfolk horn. The Suffolk being the most popular terminal sire in the country.



Texel.

The Texel Breed is famed for its exceptional carcass qualities, which has resulted in the Breed becoming the dominant terminal sire used in the UK. In recent years the Breeds hardiness and recognized survivability has resulted in Hill and Upland producers using Texel Rams to produce store lambs and breeding females which are more marketable than the pure hill breeds that they replace.



Wiltshire Horn

The Wiltshire Horn combines the strengths of an old established lowland breed with ease of management and the ability to meet the most stringent requirements of the modern sheep industry. The breed is unusual in that it has little or no wool, reducing associated shepherding costs to a minimum, with no shearing and fly troubles virtually unknown.

Wiltshire Horn ewes lamb easily, the lambs having remarkable vitality at birth, good protection against the cold and relatively little attention is required at lambing time. Good mothering ability is also characteristic of the ewe and both purebred and crossbred lambs have the ability to grow to heavy weights without putting on excess fat.

Royal County of Berkshire Show Cattle



Aberdeen Angus

Developed from native polled cattle of N.E.Scotland – known locally as ‘diddies’ or ‘hummlies’ . The earliest herds can be traced back to the middle of the 18th century; the herd book was found in 1862 and the breed society in 1879. The three most influential breeders from the start were Hugh Watson of Keillor, Willaim McCombie of Tillfour and Sir George Macpherson Grant of Ballindalloch. They have been exported all over the world-especially-USA, South America(Argentina) Australia, NewZealand and South Africa. Distinctive all back with the ability to produce the famous ‘Scotch Beef’ with its characteristic ‘Marbled Flesh’ Renowned for its taste and tenderness. Angus bulls are popular with dairy farmers as crossbred calves are easy calving and produce excellent quality beef.



Ayrshire

Originating in the county of Ayr in Scotland prior to 1800, how the many different strains of cattle were crossed to produce the modern Ayrshire is somewhat hazy- but by 1750 breeders were crossing the native cattle with Tees water stock themselves originating from Dutch or Flemish stock and evidence suggest that Channel Islands breeds were involved as well. The early breeders crossed and noted for vigour and efficiency of milk production. The composition of milk well suited for cheese and butter production.

They have distinctive red and white markings and although their popularity amongst dairy farmers has waned in recent years they have a very passionate group of supporters including HRH Prince of Wales.



Beef Shorthorn

The Shorthorn is the oldest recorded breed of cattle in the UK, and the Coates's Herd Book began registering Shorthorn cattle in 1822. The original Shorthorn cattle were very much dual purpose animals but subsequent breeding and selection for specialist beef traits led to a division of the herd book, and the formation in 1959 of the Beef Shorthorn Cattle Society. The two societies maintain close links but are run as completely separate breed societies.



Belted Galloway

The society was founded in 1921 to promote the breed, encourage its development and keep records. The breed originated from exposed uplands of Galloway in south west Scotland. Colours maybe black, dun or red with the characteristic white belt which completely encircles the body. They are naturally polled and eminently suitable for converting rough grazing into lean meat. A double coat of long hair to shed the rain coupled with a soft undercoat for warmth ensures their survival in the hardest conditions. They are used to produce the very popular cross bred suckler cow-the blue Grey by crossing them with a white Bred shorthorn.



British Blonde

Bred originally from three strains of cattle, Garonnais, Quercy and Blonde de Pyrenees, from the south west corner of France, from the plains and hills of the Garonne and the Pyrenees Mountains. They can be traced back to the draft animals of the middle ages used for moving goods and weapons. They have been in the UK for 30 years. Now there are approximately 8000 registered breeding cows with the British Blonde Society. Mature bulls will weigh between 775-1050kg, well muscled with short light hair.



British White

Directly descended from the ancient indigenous wild cattle of Great Britain notably from the park at Whalley Abbey Lancashire purchased in 1563 by Richard Assheton, in 1697 Ralph Assheton from Manchester inherited Whalley, In 1765 his daughter married Sir Harbord Harbord (Lord Suffield) of Gunton Hal, Norfolk and took some white polled cattle to her new home.

From the Gunton Herd, two more herds formed, Sir Harbord Harbord's daughter in law Caroline succeeded to Blicking Hall near Aylsham and formed a new herd between 1793 and 1812. Nearly becoming extinct due to cattle plague in 1860, two cows survived and went on to form the foundation of many herds and the park society in 1918. Another Herd from the Gunton stock was formed at Woodbastwick in 1840 from one or two cattle purchased from a sale of Lord Suffield's Herd. The existing herd exchanged red pointed cattle and black pointed cattle but by 1918 the black point was universally dominant.

The breed was exported to Brazil, Columbia ,Australia and Kenya and at the outbreak of world war Two Sir Winston Churchill insisted that 5 cows and 1 Bull were exported to Pennsylvania and went on to form the British White Herds in North America.

In 1918 at the time of the formation of the Herd Book Society there were 7 Herds with 16 Bulls and 115 Females and by 1990 there was 116 herds with over 1500 registered cattle.



Charolais

Originating in west central and south eastern France in the neighbouring provinces of Charolles and Nievre, according to legend the 'white cattle' were first noticed in the region in 878 AD and by the 16th and 17th centuries were well known in the French markets of Lyon and Villefranche. Selection developed the white breeds which were used for draft, meat and milk.

In 1773 Claude Mathieu a farmer and cattle breeder moved from the Charolles to the Nievre province taking his cattle with him, they thrived in the region so much so that became known as Nivemais cattle. The first Herd Book was started in 1864 at Villars near Magny Cours, followed by breeders in the Charolles region establishing a herd book in 1882. The two societies merged in 1919 based at Nevers, the capital of the Nievre province.



Dexter

Originating in the south western region of Ireland, and descending from the predominantly black cattle of the early Celts the breed owes its name to a Mr Dexter who was agent to Lord Howarden of Co. Tipperary in 1750. The cattle were first imported into England in 1882 to Kidmore Grange, Oxfordshire from just outside Dublin. First shown at the Royal show in Norwich in 1886 and the foundation of the Kerry and Dexter/Kerry society in 1892.

They are the smallest of British breeds, dual purpose- milk and beef with an average weight of the mature female around 300-350 kgs, standing at around 100cms at the shoulder. Although predominately black in colour red and dun colours are acceptable.



Guernsey

Much has been written about the origins of Guernsey Cattle and many claims have been made about the way in which the 'Guernsey Breed' came to be established on a small island in the English Channel. In fact, very little concrete evidence exists about the cattle of Guernsey prior to the Nineteenth Century and most theories, such as one that suggests that cattle brought to the island by monks who had been banished from Mont St. Michel in the year 960 A.D. formed the foundation of the present breed cannot be verified and must be regarded as conjecture or pure fantasy.



Hereford

As the name suggests this breed has evolved from the indigenous Red Cattle which roamed the Welsh Border Counties in the early middle ages, used primarily as oxen. The origins of this special breed have been mentioned as long ago as the 1600's, originally coloured red, black or roan the red was finally agreed with the distinctive white face and mane, which the breed has stamped onto every cross bred throughout the world. Some of the oldest herds in the county can trace their history back to the late 1700's with the first herd book published in 1846 containing records of 551 bulls entered by 75 breeders, and today there are breed societies in at least 25 countries across the world. The Hereford is renowned for its efficient conversion of grass into beef and the quality and taste it produces.



Highland Cattle

Originating in Western Scotland it is one of the most distinctive breeds of the British Isles with its long coat and very long horns. Written records go back to the early 1800s with the Highland Cattle book first published in 1845. The herds are known as 'folds' and many of the blood lines have Gaelic names. The breed has exported all over the world. They are kept predominantly for the aesthetic value they bring to the countryside they graze in.



Holstein

The breed while originating in Holland and Germany first appeared in the UK in the early 1900's importations of cattle from Canada before and after the World War Two helped to establish the breed. A pure Holstein society was formed in the 1960's alongside the already established British Friesian society. The breed continued to develop slowly until the 1970's when an explosion in popularity of the breed created a number of importations. The two societies merged in 1999 establishing Holstein UK society. The breed is easily recognized by its traditional black and white markings although there are a number of red and white cattle. The breed is currently averages around 7500-8500 litres per lactation.



Jersey

This breed shares a common ancestry with not only the Guernsey but cattle found on the Normandy and Brittany coasts. There are fewer than 6000 Jerseys on the island 4000 on these in milk production. No other breed of cattle are present on the island of Jersey. Typically light brown in colour although ranging from light brown to black, known as mulberry with a black bush tail, a black muzzle with black feet. Now found across the world they are adaptable in dealing with the vagaries of various climates. Yields of milk are between 5000 and 9000 litres per lactation the milk is in many ways unique as it contains 18% more protein and 20% more calcium and 25% more butterfat than 'average' milk.



Limousin

These cattle have striking resemblance to cattle found in cave drawings estimated to be 20,000 years old in Lascaux cave near Montignac France. These golden red cattle are now native to south central France in the regions of Limousin and Marche, a rugged area with a harsh climate evolved a breed of unusual sturdiness, health and adaptability. From 1854 to 1896 Charled de Leobary and his stockman Royer strove to improve the breed and won many prizes at the Bordeaux Competition. The first herd book was formed in 1886, and reorganized twice in 1923 and 1937 both times to redefine the characteristics of the breed.

Known in France as the butchers' animal it is characterised by its vivid golden colour, large but fine boned frame-mature bulls averaging around 1000 to 1200 kgs.



Murray Grey

Originating in the Murray Valley on the New South Wales / Victoria boundary the breed has spread to New Zealand, Asia, North America and Europe, renowned as easy care, versatile cattle.

The first calves were born on the Sutherland's Thologolong property in 1905 by crossing a White Bred Shorthorn and Aberdeen Angus cow. They are superb converters of feed and produce carcasses of merit with the added bonus of 'marbled flesh'. Varying in colour from dark grey to silver they are naturally polled and famous for their docile temperament.



Simmental

Originating in the Simmen Valley in the Berner Oberland in Switzerland over 200 years ago the breed has spread and established itself across Europe. They have been bred in the UK for 35 years and have a world population of around 41 million. Famous for the 'beef' qualities passed on through cross breeding activities in the worlds suckler herds. Simmental cows were traditionally kept as dual purpose animals (milk and beef) and there are a small number being milked in this country to day, however most are kept for beef with a large demand for bulls to run with dairy herds.



South Devon

The South Devon is the largest of the British native breeds, being large-framed, more muscular in conformation, later maturing in terms of fat deposition, but early maturing in terms of puberty.

Its colour is a rich, medium red with copper tints, though it varies in shade and can even appear slightly mottled. The skin is exceptionally thick, loose and mellow. The breed is mostly horned although many naturally polled individuals do exist and polling is now being actively pursued. The South Devon temperament is excellent, giving rise to the nickname "gentle giants".

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