



The History of Galloway Cattle Breed

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GALLOWAY, which has given its name to a valuable breed of black or dun polled cattle, was an ancient regality or lordship lying in the south-west of Scotland.

Hector Boece (1570), writing of Galloway, says: "In this region are many fair ky and oxen of quhilk the flesh is right delicious and tender."

Ortellius, the historian, writing in 1573, says: "In Carrick are oxen of large size, whose flesh is tender, sweet and juicy."

Carrick was then part of Galloway. Today we still say the meat is tender, sweet and juicy.



Up until 1877 Galloway cattle were recorded in the Polled Herd Book of Great Britain alongside but separate from Aberdeen Angus. In 1878 writing in Volume 1 of the Galloway Herd Book the Editor, and Secretary of the newly formed Galloway Society The Reverend John Gillespie said, "It was felt that though the Polled Angus or Aberdeen cattle and the Galloways, having probably originally sprung from the same source, have still a strong resemblance to each other, yet these being now distinct varieties it was desirable to have a separate Herd Book for each, all the more so that their respective homes are so far apart from each other."

Galloways have produced two major successor breeds; the Belted Galloway over 350 years ago and the White Galloway less than 100 years ago.

The now defunct Galloway Cattle Society of Australia first recorded Galloway Cattle imports into Australia in 1951; however there is evidence to suggest that the breed existed within our shores long before this.

In 1971 the attributes of the Galloway carcass were brought to the attention of beef breeders throughout Australia by winning first prize on the hook in the Royal Melbourne Show. Then in 1972 three Galloways were entered in the pure bred fat cattle classes in a field of 88, one winning Champion steer. Galloways then won Royal Melbourne Show's prestigious Borthwick trophy for carcass quality for three consecutive years.

Galloway cattle breeders continue to use the hoof and hook competitions to demonstrate the benefits of the breed to the industry. The interest in the breed is growing due to the successes Galloways are having in the major shows - such as the Sydney Royal Easter Show where Galloway cattle are the only breed of cattle to have won the Taste of Champions (an all-breeds consumer taste test) two years in a row (2002 & 2003).

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