

Devon Cattle Breeders Society

Christmas Newsletter 2011



Lisa Osman of 'Provisio' presenting a new trophy for the Junior Devon Champion at the Dorset County Show

Dorset County Show

This year saw the Dorset County Show progress from the Holwell Manor section into the Society Multi Day Points section. In honour of this some new trophies have been presented. Lisa Osman of 'Provisio' gave a new trophy (The Provisio Perpetual Challenge Trophy for the Junior Devon Champion) to be competed for by the winners of the 2 yearling classes. 2011 winner was Tivington Kinsman with reserve Lisa Roper's Forde Abbey Jaca 14th. Also Andrew Davies of Synergy Farm Health Vets kindly gave new trophies for the Male and Female Champions.

Smithfield Classes at East of England Winter Fair

This year the Smithfield Classes were again held at the East of England Winter Fair. Elmford Lord exhibited by RJ Wright and bred by D & S Martin came 2nd in the light native steer class and Kubla Khan bred and exhibited by A & J Cottey came 5th

in the heavy steer class. Well done to all concerned, an excellent advert for the breed.

South West Winter Fair

Greenslade Taylor Hunt held their 5th annual Winter Fair at Sedgemoor Market on 5th December. There were strong entries from Society members and the society trade stand was present to support them. Prize winners were Class 3 Best Pedigree or pure bred Native 2nd place a Devon heifer entered by S & T David, Class 4 Best cross bred native 3rd place a Devon steer entered by S & T David, Class 14 Best sired by pedigree native 1st place Devon steer entered by Heywood & Hurd.

Interbreed Quiz – The annual Interbreed quiz takes place at Oake Manor Golf Club near Taunton Monday 16th January 7.30pm. Usual format, turn up on the night and a team will be picked. To book a buffet supper please ring Pauline Barker with numbers 01823 432171 by 12th January.

DCBS Spring & Autumn Show & Sales

There are some changes for future Society Shows & Sales.

From 2012 all bulls must be antigen tested for BVD and a negative veterinary result certificate provided with entry form. Persistent Infectors (PI) are not eligible for entry into the show or sale. In addition all bulls tested for BVD must be vaccinated against BVD at the time of the initial test and receive a second vaccination dose within 4-6 weeks of the first. Vendors who vaccinate their herds as a matter of practice must administer a booster vaccination within 60 days prior to the sale day. A veterinary certificate of booster must accompany the bull and be provided prior to unloading. It is recommended that the initial test and vaccination commence 10-12 weeks prior to the sale.

From the Spring Show & Sale vendors will have the option to bring cattle to the market the night before the sale but this will not be compulsory. All cattle will be inspected and in future rejected animals will be sold in a separate section at the end of the sale together with birth notified steers. Animals in the second section of the sale will be not covered by the NBA warranty.

Spring Show & Sale will be held at Sedgemoor Market under the auspices of Greenslade Taylor Hunt and will take place on **Thursday 15th March**, entries close **15th February**. If you would like an entry form for the Spring Sale please request one from the office now.

A date for your diaries, **Autumn Show & Sale Thursday 20th September**

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Year Letter for 2012 'L'

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Another 'gong' for DCBS Members

Congratulations to Tim Jakins of Moonstone Meats – winner of the Taste of the West 'Best Burger'.

RBST Conservation Semen

Rare Breed Survival Trust have some semen available for members for conservation breeding. Any member interested please contact the office. The bulls presently in RBST store are:-

Bemersyde Magnate
Bovey Lonely 1st
Brightley Cardinal 2nd
Halsbury Harvester 2nd
Ham mill Nimrod 3rd
Heanton Rocket 23rd.
Radworthy Creditor 27th.
Radworthy Progression 9th.

Annual Yearling Show - April 2012

The next Yearling show will contain new classes for Young Handlers. The classes will be:-

Under 14yo handler with pure bred steer or cross bred steer or heifer sired by a pedigree Devon bull born in 2011

14 – 18 yo handler with pure bred steer or cross bred steer or heifer sired by a pedigree Devon bull born in 2011

18-26 yo handler with pure bred steer or cross bred steer or heifer sired by a pedigree Devon bull born in 2011

We hope that as many of you who can encourage young people to get showing with an animal of their own will do so.

Please note – No BULLS will be allowed for these classes

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ABRI

The new performance recording system is almost ready to run. Members recording weights and/or scanning their cattle should now forward the details to Barbara Webster at Pedigree Cattle Service barbara@breedplan.co.uk who will hold onto it until the system is 'live' and then add it in to the data base. Once the new system is up and running there will be member workshops.

Photo Competition

The Breed Promotion Committee are running a photo competition in order to select twelve photographs to produce a Society calendar for 2013. All members are invited to submit

photographs by 25th March 2012 electronically in jpeg format to Jo Ayre jo_ayre@yahoo.co.uk (*there is an underscore between jo and ayre*) 01884 860075 or forward to the office. It is hoped to select a photograph appropriate to each month with the winning photograph being on the front cover.

British Cattle Breeders Club Conference 23rd to 25th January at Telford Golf & Spa Hotel in Shropshire. Contact BCBC for more information 01409 241579 www.cattlebreeders.org.uk

Classifications

VG Males

M Lanz

Champion Mighty Man VG83

VG Females

M Lanz

Wellshead Clare 3rd VG80

Wellshead Daydream 4th VG86

Wellshead Gaygirl 3rd VG81

Wellshead Lace 1st CG87

Wellshead Lustre 6th VG82

Wellshead Lace 3rd VG84

Wellshead Lily 1st VG76

Wellshead Lovely 3rd VG80

Wellshead Petal 2nd VG84

Wellshead Lottie 4th VG84

Forde Abbey Beauty 67th VG82

9th World Tour & Conference – Brazil – 2012

The Brazilian Devon Cattle Breeders Society have organised an interesting and informative tour of their cattle and local attractions, cumulating in the four yearly world conference. The tour starts on 10th May 2012 and runs to 16th with the possibility of extended your visit at either end of these dates. For further details contact the office.

Farmers Markets

We have a new section on the website for members who sell their meat at farmers markets. If you would like to be included please contact the office with details.

Don't forget you can also advertise on the website if you sell boxed beef and/or have a farm shop.

Bull Registration Inspections

Bulls may be put forward for inspection with a view to registration at any time after reaching 14 months of age. Forms are available from the office or via the Members Area of the web site. These should be completed and returned to the office when an inspection will be arranged. If you use a bull before getting it registered you should be aware that **the progeny of unregistered bulls is not registerable.**

Birth Notification of Calves

Birth notification of all calves must be made within three months of birth. These are acceptable on an official birth sheet or via Pedeweb. **No other form of notification will be accepted.**

Annual Subscriptions

Full and Associate Members will receive an invoice for annual subscriptions with this newsletter. If you pay direct from your bank the invoice is just for your records.

North Somerset Show 7th May 2012

In recent years we have had designated classes at the North Somerset Show. Last year the entries were not very good and we have been asked by the organisers to encourage members to enter their cattle at this great show. Please contact Tim Ledbury 08456342464 for an entry form or download one from their website www.north-somerset-show.org.uk

President's Christmas message

As president I have had a wonderful year, with the society pulling together, we have managed to be successful - of which I am very proud.

I have enjoyed working with Simon (our new chairman) and feel that the society is travelling in the right direction and going from strength to strength.

Andy and Gina will be leaving us soon and as they have worked so hard and tirelessly for the society they will be sadly missed. However we have Catherine Broomfield taking over and should give her the same support to enable her to follow in Andy and Gina's footsteps - a hard act to follow!

I look forward to seeing you all in 2012 and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Dick Dorrell

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Chairman's Message

2011 will be a year to remember for the DCBS. There have been many challenges for our members not least the very varied weather conditions throughout the country. But also some very positive occasions. The National Show at Devon County back in May, a really fantastic attendance both in and out of the ring with many of the best of our breed on display. The other multi day shows and the one day shows throughout the country where the breed had considerable success at the interbreed level as well as within its own breed classes.

Red Ruby Devon Beef is now on sale in Waitrose supermarkets throughout the South West and more and more butchers are being asked to supply some of the best beef on offer, ours!! Tasting successes, National Trust competition winners etc. One could go on and on, but none of this would have happened without the tireless work of a group of people whose efforts should be recognised. Our former Chairman Mike Wright, who has served this society so well for the last six years, and Andy and Gina Lane in the office of the Breed Secretary. Andy and Gina have been a magnificent team ensuring growth, financial success and breed recognition from their base in Iddesleigh. To these individuals and to

their supporting helpers we all owe a huge debt of gratitude.

But looking to the future. In the Spring we will have the Yearling Show at Hatherleigh on April 21st, a place where new breeders and showmen are encouraged to come along and take part as well as seeing some of the displays including this year a presentation of our new recording system ABRI. We are also working on plans to promote our young bulls as ' Sweepers ' for the dairy sector after our initial venture up to the NEC this September.

Geographic expansion has to be an area where we can make major inroads as well as ensuring we keep our current membership in touch with all that is going on within the society. And this is where I introduce our new secretary Catherine Broomfield a breeder of Red Rubies from just outside Ottery St Mary. Catherine who will be able to be contacted on 01404 812800 from January 1st.

2012 will no doubt present us with a whole new set of challenges but how lucky we are to be breeders of Red Ruby Devon Cattle, most definitely one of the best breeds. May I wish you all the very happiest of Christmases and an astounding 2012

Simon Phillips

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Secretarys Message

Since making the decision to relinquish the secretariship and custodianship of the breed the time for Gina and I has flown by. Our planned exit has become a mad rush and there are inevitably going to be many of you to whom we haven't spoken recently. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for putting up with "our ways". We both feel a hint of sadness at handing over the baton but know that it is going into safe hands. We will now revert to being devoted admirers of Devon cattle and supporters of the Society. We wish you all Good Luck in the future and keep up the good work.

AJ & G

Catherine Broomfield will be taking up the reins as Breed Secretary from 3rd January next year. Many of you will know Catherine, who until last year had her own Blacklake herd of Red Rubies. She has previously served on the DCBS Council for two terms and also produces our bi-annual breed brochure. Also joining Catherine in the new year will be Lucy Searle, who will be assisting Catherine as office administrator on a part-time basis.

As from 3rd January the Society's office address will be:

Blacklake Farm
East Hill
Ottery St Mary
Devon EX11 1QA

Telephone: 01404 812800
e.mail: dcbs@redrubydevon.co.uk
website: www.redrubydevon.co.uk
Office hours will be 9.30 - 5.00pm, Monday-Friday



Albert Beer has kindly submitted this article for inclusion in the Newsletter – a very well done to the Dart Family for this tremendous achievement.

CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS “CHAMPSON”

The Exmoor Society was founded some 50 years ago to protect and to ensure the sustainability of Exmoor in the face of modern pressures. Each year the Society presents the Samuel Foss Conservation Award to a person or organisation having made a major contribution to conservation issues in the area. This year, following a nomination by Sean and Albert Beer, the award was presented to the Dart Family of Molland for their efforts over more than half a century in support of the four Exmoor native livestock breeds.

The nomination read as follows:-

We wish to nominate the Dart Family of Molland for the 2011 Samuel Foss Award in respect of their services to conservation on Exmoor by their work, over more than half a century in agriculture, with the native livestock breeds of Exmoor: the Devon Cattle, the Exmoor Horn and Devon Closewool Sheep and the Exmoor Ponies, on their farms at Great Champson and nearby Kipscott.

The Exmoor that we all love is the product of an interaction between the natural world and the human beings that have inhabited the moor for thousands of years. The landscape that we see is as a result of this interaction, and the traditional systems of farming and livestock that has evolved over that time. The farm livestock of Exmoor are a essential part of this scene, just as are the banks and the beech hedges, the wild flora and fauna and its people. The native breeds of livestock to the area have evolved on the moor and are particularly adapted to living here and are integral to producing the Exmoor that we cherish. Over the years farming fashions have changed, but a core of Exmoor farmers have maintained a devotion to the local breeds of livestock, saving that heritage and the link with the natural environment of Exmoor. The Dart family have been leading lights with regard to this.

The Devon breed of Cattle fondly called the Red Rubies, is historically linked with Molland and Exmoor, in so much that several years ago when a “passport” booklet was produced for tourists to North Devon villages, the symbol for Molland was R for Red Ruby! The Dart Family have bred the Champson Herd since 1945 on the farm at Great Champson, originally leased by the Quartly family in 1703. It is here that Francis Quartly did so much to save and develop the breed in the first half of the 19th century.

Henry Dart has judged Devon Cattle all over the country and in 1988 judged at the royal Queensland Show in Brisbane, Australia. William, his twin brother, is one on the few people, if not the only person, to have judged

Devons, Closewools and Exmoor Horns at the Royal Show, whilst the next generation, Richard, son of William, and Christopher, son of Henry, are both full members of Devon Cattle Breeders' Society Judging Panel. Henry and Christopher have stewarded at major shows and the family have shown, with much success, at shows all over the country including Smithfield which they attended for many years with cattle and the two sheep breeds.

Both Henry and William have held the presidency of the DCBS and have served on its Council. Henry chaired the DCBS Council for six years in the last decade of the 20th century when the breed was fighting back and re-establishing its position in the industry following the continental "invasion" of breeds such as the Charolais and the Limousin. As Secretary of the breed society at that time (AB) can vouch for all the hard work that Henry put in as well as before and since.

Henry has also Chairman and President of the North Devon Agricultural Society which runs the North Devon Show, he is a council and livestock committee member of the Devon County Show and also a steward and livestock committee member of the Royal Bath and West Show and has looked after the interests of the Exmoor native breeds in these organisations.

Numerous farm walks and events have been hosted by the family. On the occasion of the Devon Cattle World Congress in 1996, with visitors from New Zealand, Brazil and the USA, the tour party showed such interest in Great Champson and its livestock that it was two hours late arriving at the next farm! The farm has been the venue for numerous domestic events and in 2010 another Devon Tour saw a large party from the USA, N.Z., Brazil and Australia viewing the quality of farming by the Dart Family.

Another highlight for Great Champson was the production, in 1996 by "Farming Press", Ipswich, of the videotape "Beef Breeds of Britain", when the Devon breed section was filmed on the farm with William Dart appearing alongside presenter, Joe Henson, father of the current "Countryside" farming personality, Adam Henson. The "Video" was a sell-out.

The Champson herd received its due reward at the DCBS Spring Show and Sale at Sedgemoor livestock Centre in 2008 when "Champson Defender" sold at auction to another North Devon farm business for a world record auction price for a bull of the breed of 14,000gns. Francis Quartly must have been looking down with a smile on his face!

William and his son, Richard, have both served as Chairman of the Devon Closewool Society and both past presidents, Richard as recently as 2010/11. The Closewool was bred and initially established in the late 19th century by crossing the Exmoor Horn with the Devon Longwool and Exmoor based flocks have now, for well over 100 years, supplied hardy rams and ewes to lowland West Country farms as well as maintaining quality by buying and selling breeding stock to one another. The Exmoor Horns have run alongside the Closewools at Great Champson and William has been Chairman of the breed society and was recently its president.

Whilst the Smithfield Show was running in London (up to just a few years ago) the Darts were probably the most regular exhibitors, flying the flag for the Red Rubies, the "Hornies" and the Closewools and Henry was a member of the Smithfield Council for many years.

In addition to the cattle and the sheep the family have for many years run a herd of Exmoor Ponies, the Moorland Herd, on the Common. On the occasion of the DCBS tour in 2010 the visitors, especially the Brazilian delegates, were truly excited to see the ponies and the camera shutters clicked incessantly.

Over the decades the Dart family have travelled thousands of miles, given freely thousands of hours of their time and dispensed generous hospitality in support of Exmoor's native breeds. Indeed it would be safe to say that no family has done more for the cause, bringing the world's eyes to focus on Exmoor, its landscape, environment and farming. Great Champson has been, and still is, a nucleus of pedigree and pure bred stock providing sustainability for the breeds not only on Exmoor but to farms far and wide. In addition the breeds are an attraction to the Exmoor but to farms far and wide. In addition the breeds are an attraction to the tourists and help to maintain the Moorland in a desirable manner having themselves been bred to suit the moor and its farms. We cannot think of any farm other than Great Champson anywhere with all four native breeds. We have no hesitation in nominating the Dart Family for the Samuel Foss Award.

Nomination submitted by:-

Albert Beer	Former Secretary and now Honorary Life Member DCBS. Past President and former Secretary Devon Closewool Sheep Breeders Society. Former member Exmoor Horn Sheep- Breeders Society. Retired farmer and agricultural journalist.
Sean Beer	Senior Lecturer School of tourism, Bournemouth University. Researcher and writer on Exmoor affairs, food and farming. Member of DCBS.

Both Sean and Albert are members of the Exmoor Society and have been regular contributors to Exmoor the Country Magazine and the Exmoor Review.

Further support documentation:-

Jim Butcher	Exmoor Review 1964
Clive Thornton	"Red Rubies" 1993, published by Gabriel Communications, Manchester.
Farming Press,	Ipswich, 1996, "Beef Breeds of Britain", (Videotape).
Albert & Sean Beer	"Red Rubies, Jewels in Exmoor's Crown", "Exmoor" Autumn 1998.
Albert & Sean Beer	"From the Porlock to the Exmoor". "Exmoor" Spring 1999.
Albert & Sean Beer	"Closewool Country". "Exmoor Spring 2000.
Albert Beer	"Twins from Molland". "Exmoor" Winter 2006.
Michelle Werrett	"Exmoor's Livestock Heritage". "Exmoor" Spring 2011.

Following unanimous approval by the Exmoor Society Executive Committee the award was made to William and Henry at the Society's AGM by its president, Sir Antony Acland and enthusiastically acclaimed by the membership present.

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The following article has been included at the request of a third party. It should be noted that any opinions expressed therein are not necessarily the opinions of the Devon Cattle Breeders Society nor its officers or servants.



How the Healthy Livestock project can help the pedigree beef breeder

Helen Ashcroft, Beef Specialist with Healthy Livestock at Duchy College's Rural Business School

*Healthy Livestock works with dairy, beef and sheep farmers throughout the south west of England to improve the health of their herds and flocks, and so improve their profitability. Livestock farmers have **70% funding** to tackle specific diseases that cost the industry £million.*

The Project:

The beef element of the Healthy Livestock project focusses on preventing and controlling the incidence of BVD, Johne's Disease and Bovine Respiratory Diseases in cattle. The project provides 70% funding towards vet and adviser consultations, diagnostic screening tests, farmer discussion groups, and a programme of training events.

Benefits for Pedigree Breeders:

The Healthy Livestock project is prescriptive in its delivery, from a group awareness meeting, to one-to-one time on farm with your own vet to consider risks on your farm and develop an action plan specific to your own requirements. There is provision for diagnostics, in the form of a **screening test**.

The accreditation schemes, such as CHeCS, require whole herd diagnostics. Therefore the Healthy Livestock project does not automatically qualify for accreditation as there is no scope under the project for whole herd testing. However the Healthy Livestock BVD and Johne's disease strands do qualify for the VLA Herdsure stage I.

What the Healthy Livestock project does offer to pedigree breeders however is 70% funding to understand more about the disease, what the risks are on your own farm and the disease status of your herd. The Healthy Livestock team recommends, along with many breed societies, that those breeders who are just starting to look at their herd health status in the south west, utilise the Healthy Livestock project funding as a starting point before deciding if membership of a CHeCS scheme is appropriate and progressing to full accreditation.

The risk assessment element is required for CHecs accreditation. The screening test enables breeders to know their herds' disease status prior to committing to the cost of whole herd testing. This enables an action plan to be developed with their own vet, which could include progression to accreditation with the breeder paying for whole herd or youngstock testing if required.

This is a great opportunity for breeders to gain support to start on the process for accreditation, and therefore greater marketing opportunities.

The disease strands:

BVD

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) Virus is a common condition of UK cattle herds and is particularly prevalent in herds in the south west, not least due to the high density of cattle and other predisposing factors that exist in cattle herds in the region. It is estimated to cost the UK livestock industry £50 million per year, with the associated losses including the predisposition to other infections. Control and eradication programmes exist in other regions of the UK and are common throughout Europe. The benefits of the BVD control and eradication are well known and well established.

The disease affects fertility, general health through its immunosuppressive effects, pneumonia and respiratory disease as well as causing classical mucosal disease. Although vaccines are available, they do not control and eradicate disease completely, but serve to reduce the impact of the disease in infected herds, and protect uninfected herds where biosecurity is not practical or effective.

The disease creates a major trading issue due to the significant biosecurity risks of introducing infected cattle to an uninfected herd. Carrier animals are often not evident and the major risk is the purchase or introduction of pregnant cattle that are carrying a persistently infected calf (the "Trojan Cow"). It has been estimated that as many as 1 in 25 pregnant heifers are carrying such 'PI' animals. Healthy Livestock provides knowledge and support focussing on controlling and eradicating the disease and also allows disease status declaration to enable trading of animals from herds of known disease status.

Johne's Disease

Johne's Disease is a major problem in the region and is becoming more common both as an endemic disease existing in many herds (preliminary results from Healthy Livestock indicate its presence in 41% of beef herds in the south west region) and as a threat to those herds as yet unaffected. The presence of the disease is often not recognised due to its subclinical nature. However, with simple systems in place, this disease is controllable.

Johne's Disease has been predicted to cost the average 94 cows beef herd £1,504 annually. The disease becomes apparent in older animals, with not only the classical wasting but also increased incidence of such ailments as lameness, infertility and mastitis and poor growth rates of the calves of affected mothers. In fact Johne's infected cattle are five times more likely to be lame, twice as likely to develop mastitis and nearly twice as likely to develop digestive and respiratory diseases.

Respiratory Diseases

Bovine Respiratory disease (BRD) is a growing concern across the beef sector, particularly in the south west. The sector consultation identified BRD as a priority topic area due to its level of incidence and the health and financial impact on the livestock enterprise. The cost of respiratory disease to the sector is estimated to be £60M nationally and SAC figures suggest that the cost of an outbreak is around £63 per calf infected. This figure breaks down to highlight the hidden costs of respiratory disease as follows: mortality £9, labour £6, treatment £24 and lost production £24.

More recently, a survey conducted in the south west region demonstrated the lost growth potential in finished cattle with evidence of lung damage. In this study, 48% of finished cattle showed some evidence of lung damage and those with the most lung damage lost 202g/day in weight gain from birth to slaughter. This equates to 74kg per year. While it is difficult to attribute an exact cost to disease, this study suggests that paying closer attention to pneumonia-induced lung damage could easily result in gains of £40-£50 an animal. This is clear evidence to suggest that a period of focussed activity on respiratory disease in the beef sector could deliver real value to the region.

The Healthy Livestock Project:

Healthy Livestock is a Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)-funded project, developed by a range of organisations and led by the Rural Business School as part of the South West Healthy Livestock Initiative (SWHLI). The priorities, for the beef outlined above, were set following a consultation exercise carried out by the SWHLI Regional Advisory Panel.

This project will provide up to 70%-funding towards designated training, discussion groups, vet and adviser mentoring and diagnostic testing; the exact mix of these supported elements will vary according to the priority disease in question. The project aims to avoid duplication and will be mainly delivered through local vets, beef groups, consultants and training groups.

How to get involved:

Many vet practices are already working with farmers in their locality, so it is advisable to contact your vet to find out what activities they are organising.

Alternatively please contact the Rural Business School on 0845 458 7485 or Helen Ashcroft, the Beef Specialist on 07909 527726 or helen.ashcroft@duchy.ac.uk for further advice and assistance.