

Spring '05



Newsletter

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Welcome to our newsletter, I say "our" because I very much hope that all you budding journalists out there will feel free to submit any suitable articles to me for inclusion in future newsletters. At the moment the newsletter will be quarterly but if we get enough information we will increase the frequency. The "new look"

Welcome !

newsletter also has space for a For Sale / Wanted section - where you can advertise any agriculture related items.

If you have any comments please feel free to send me an email or drop me a line.

Thanks in advance



Gavin Goodman
Editor



Do you know your Buff Orpington's from your Marsh Daisy's ?

Are you a Poultry Buff ? Would you like to play an important role supporting Rare Breed Poultry in Northern Ireland ? If so we would love to hear from you.



We are currently looking for a Poultry Convenor to help out on the Support Group Committee and to help organize the representation of Rare Breed

Poultry at agricultural shows in the Province. If you can help please contact us (see the Back Page for contact details).



Something to Bleat About

*Contributions by Freda Magill, Chairperson and Olive Mercer,
Sheep Convenor*

We are proud to report that twenty rare and traditional sheep breeds (as listed by the RBST) are now represented in Northern Ireland. Over the past year, Norfolk Horn, Castlemilk Moorit, Ryeland, Manx Loghtan, Black Wensleydale and Cotswold flocks have been established. We also have flocks of Shetland and Jacob which are no longer listed by the Trust. Lets not forget that getting off the list is a great achievement for the breed and the reason for our support of the Trust.

Unfortunately many of the twenty sheep breeds are kept in solitary flocks, presenting problems such as sourcing new stock rams and introducing fresh bloodlines. It is much easier to devise an effective breeding strategy where there are several flocks between which rams may be circulated and where joint importations may be organised from time to time.

The changing emphasis from commercial production to conservation grazing as a result of the Single Farm Payment presents exciting opportunities for the establishment of new Rare Breed sheep flocks. If you are considering a particular breed, talk to other local breeders or contact us for information about sourcing breeding stock.



Hopefully everyone is nearing the end of a successful and trouble free lambing season. The showing season, the shop window for our Rare Breed sheep is fast approaching and this year it has been decided to select the Balmoral Marquee display from the following breeds: Cotswold, Manx Loghtan, Ryeland, Black Wensleydale, Castlemilk Moorit, South Down, Hebridean, Portland, Norfolk Horn, Galway, Soay and Wiltshire Horn. It is hoped to accommodate as many as possible of these breeds several of which will not have been previously shown at Balmoral but it will ultimately depend on penning available. The RUAS kindly provide us with the Marquee each year so in return it is essential that all exhibition sheep are registered in the relevant flock book, typical examples of their breed, clean and in good condition.



Something to Bleat About

*Contributions by Freda Magill, Chairperson and Olive Mercer,
Sheep Convenor*

If you have animals from any of the above breeds you would be willing to exhibit in the Marquee, please contact me by 31/03/05. Your help in providing animals will be very much appreciated and this year an anonymous donor has generously offered a £20.00 Marks and Spencer gift voucher to be awarded to the best-kept pen during the show. The anonymous donor will also select the winning pen --- so make such you bring your "pooper scoop" with you!!

I hope you have all entered for the Rare Breed showing classes at Balmoral on Friday 13/05/05, for those of you who haven't, please come along and support your breed from the ringside.

Please remember it is essential to consider availing of the Semen Archive Scheme for your breed - see the last copy of the Ark for details or contact me.

Happy and Successful Showing

Olive Mercer(028 97532482)



Merchandising

Contributions by Sandra Byrne, Merchandising Officer

An excellent range of merchandise has been sourced by my dear husband Vaughan. This may be a little more expensive but of brilliant quality. Paul Chapman produces the merchandise and will accept commissions for the following :-

Portraits of owners' individual animals in oil or watercolour.

Tiles - with your own animal embossed on the tile - this looks lovely in the kitchen.

Farm signs, animal signs made to your requirements.

Whilst this is not an exhaustive range; Paul has agreed to accommodate the Northern Ireland Support Group in every possible way. Poultry lovers will rejoice at the excellent range of poultry prints. If you want to know more contact me :-

tel. 028 97532417

Mobile 07855 020670

Email Sandra.b@easy.com



Holy Cow

Contributions by James Eccles, Cattle Convenor

Support Needed For Cattle Classes

We are all aware new DVO regulations with regard to cattle moving are now in force. These require all cattle over 12 months old to be tested for Brucellosis prior to moving from your herd. Unfortunately this test will only last for thirty days from the taking of the blood, so we will be in the situation where animals will have to be tested on several occasions during the show season.

With this in mind can we appeal to all cattle exhibitors to please make an extra effort to support the cattle classes, even if you can only attend your local show, they will need all the support you can give. We know that showing can be hard work and requires a lot of time and effort but the advantages will bring its own benefits.

Remember that we use the County Shows as qualifiers for the Derby Finals at Cultra. This is open to members of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust - if you are not a member - why not join now? By showing your cattle you are able to promote your breed and your herd and this may help with sales in the future.

Over the years, due to the hard work of members, we now have managed to secure classes at eight shows, with Omagh coming on board this year for the first time. We know that these shows appreciate your support, they have supported us over the years. So if you can, make an effort to be out in the show ring this season.



Horsin' Around

Contributions by Sarah Creaner, Equine Convenor

Horses and Ponies.

Horses and ponies are extremely popular with the general public and make wonderful exhibits at our functions. They always attract a lot of attention and provide lots of opportunities for talking to the public about what we are about. But they must be the worst represented animals in Rare Breed circles in Northern Ireland. Very few animals are entered for the annual Show at Cultra and there are not even classes for them at the County Shows because there are not enough coming out to make it worthwhile! And yet I know that there are far more animals out there that would be eligible and that would provide great pleasure to a lot of people if we could get them out there.

One can only guess at the reasons why animals don't come out. Possibly the reasons are many and complex. If one is not really a pony/horse person, then, although there may be some attraction to own a rare breed pony or horse, the chances are that one will not have the skill/time/energy to put into having the animal in a fit state for showing. This is a pity because working with equines is extremely rewarding. It takes some time to teach them something but, once taught, it is never forgotten!

If one is a pony/horse person, then the problem is different. In the pony world, native ponies do not, generally, conform to what the fashionable pony-clubbing child wants to be seen with! They tend to be furrer, slightly coarser, and not quite so pretty. Unfortunately, people overlook the fact that they are also, generally, more intelligent, hardier, more self-reliant and need the attentions of a vet a lot less often and they can do anything that any other pony can do and are frequently more versatile.

But there is another, in my view greater, problem. Many breeds of equines that are classified as rare breeds **are** popular within the horse world. These would include, particularly, Irish Draught Horses, Clydesdale Horses and section A Welsh Ponies. These are all sufficiently endangered to be listed by the Trust. However, the people who work with them, and particularly, show them, at least in Northern Ireland (I do not know the position elsewhere), do not seem to wish to be associated with the Trust.



Horsin' Around

Contributions by Sarah Creaner, Equine Convenor

This is very sad because their obvious and genuine love of their breeds has not, to date, kept the numbers of their breeds at levels where their future is safe. It is important to try to remedy this situation.

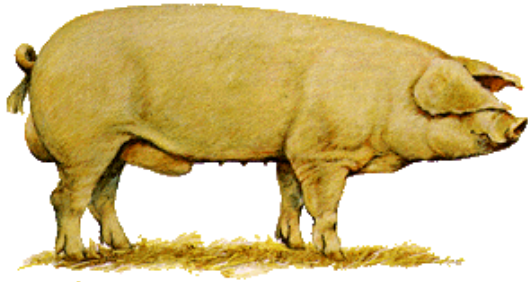
One possible reason why such people do not want themselves and their animals associated with the Trust may lie in our use of the expression, rare breeds. Perhaps these people feel that in allowing their animal to be thought of as rare, they are somehow demeaning it.

This is far from the case. One of the things that as rare breeders we wish to emphasise is that these animals are important, not because they are rare, but because they have wonderful characteristics that make them useful and certainly the Irish Draught, the Clydesdale and the Welsh have these in full measure.

What can we do about this? I don't have a simple solution but maybe it would help if anyone who knows anyone who keeps a rare breed equines would speak to them about rare breeds and explain that we in no way wish to take away from the mainstream usefulness of their breeds. We wish, merely, to be given the opportunity to help ensure that the breeds continue to exist in their pure forms. Maybe, in time, we can convert a few people.

In the meantime, I would, as Equine Co-ordinator, be very grateful if anyone who has a rare breed equine that they are prepared to bring out to events, would contact me by telephoning my mobile, 07710702012. The next event for which we are looking for an exhibit is the Rare Breeds Pavilion at Balmoral.

Sarah Creaner,
Equine Convenor



Happy as a Pig in.....

Contributions by Gavin Goodman, Editor

British Lop - *in brief*

The breed was formally established in 1920, but the foundation stock is unknown. It is thought to have been from the original white pigs of Wales, Cumberland and Ulster. At previous times they were referred to as the Cornish White and Devon Lop.

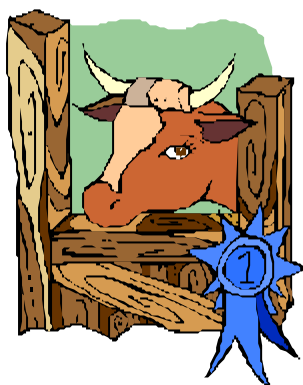
Today the breed is most numerous in the Tavistock area. It is mostly confined to Devon, but is also present in Cornwall, Somerset and Dorset.. It has found favour on small general farms where its docile nature, good grazing ability, and general ability to thrive on little specialised care have been most appreciated.

The size of the British Lop is one of the largest to be found in England. Except for its white colour, it resembles the Large Black in many characteristics. Its sides are long and deep, the hams deep and well developed, the back relatively straight, and they are of distinct bacon type conformation. The white hair covering is rather long and fine or silky in nature. The ears are large, thin, and droop well down over the face.

The breed has not been widely used in crossbreeding, but when crossed with the Large White the results have been quite satisfactory. Such crosses have produced sides that have won supreme honours in major exhibitions.

Advocates of the breed have stressed their strong constitutions, good health and freedom from common disorders. It appears they have attracted only very limited interest from commercial producers, and until such interest is aroused, the British Lop will no doubt remain more of a novelty than a factor in the pork production of its native country. Interest from foreign countries has, at best, been very limited. The development of such interest will depend upon the accumulation of evidence that it will truly outperform the breeds that are more widespread. Until now, the principal activity of breeders has been to exhibit the breed at shows.

(If anyone knows of examples of this breed in the province please let us know - GG)



Show Scene

What's going on at the shows with contributions from Thomas Cole and Claire O'Shea - Event Coordinators

2005 Calendar

<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>	<u>Show Name</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Contact Details</u>
11th May	13th May	Balmoral Show	Kings Hall, Belfast	Michael Guest 028 9066 5225
27th May	28th May	Ballymena Show	The Showground, Ballymena	J. Lamont 028 2565 2666
3rd June	4th June	North Antrim Agricultural Show	Ballymoney Showground	Mrs A V Morrison 028 207 51327
11th June	11th June	Armagh County Agricultural Show	Gosford Forest Park, Markethill, Co. Armagh	Bill Leeman 028 3751 5622
11th June	11th June	Coleraine Young Farmers' Club Show	Showground, Ballycastle Road, Coleraine	Mrs. Lorna Bradley 02870 352824
18th June	18th June	Saintfield and District Agricultural Show	Saintfield	Mrs P Campbell 02897 541716
2nd July	2nd July	165th Annual Omagh Show	Omagh Showgrounds, 4 Gillygooley Road	Mr. R. Pollock 028 8224 2500
9th July	9th July	Londonderry and Limavady Agricultural Show	Tullyhoe, Limavady, Co. Londonderry	Mrs. J. Mark 07739 151693 / 028 777 65123
16th July	16th July	Castlewellan & District Agricultural Show Ltd	Forest Park, Castlewellan	Mrs V I Bell MBE 028 406 30536
27th July	27th July	Clogher Agricultural Show	Augher, Co Tyrone	Mrs R Montgomery 028 8554 8883
2nd August	3rd August	Fermanagh County Agricultural Show	Exhibition and Auction Centre, Tempo Road, Enniskillen	Heather Crawford 028 663 22509
15th December	15th December	Royal Ulster Winter Fair	Balmoral, Belfast	Mrs. Rhonda Geary 028 9066 5225

The Back Page

Cotswold Farm Trip

Fancy a trip to a Rare Breeds Farm ?

Committee members Ross Mowbray and Evelyn Lindsay are organising a day trip to the Cotswold Farm Park (www.cotswoldfarmpark.co.uk) on September 17th. Flights are presently priced at £38 p.p. return and a coach/minibus would be laid on from Birmingham airport to the farm park which is located just outside Cheltenham (approx. 3/4 hrs drive).

More information on the trip can be obtained from Evelyn:-

Evelyn.lindsay@btinternet.com
or Evelyn Lindsay
5 Dufless Road
Stewartstown
BT71 5LU

Classifieds

Tamworth Pigs - weaners available, birth registered with BPA, eligible for herd book registration. Contact 028 66386642 or email info@macneanfarm.com

Gorrmets' Delight
Wensleydale (pure and X) hoggets for the freezer.
Tel: 02840630772

Contact Information:-

Chairperson:-

Freda Magill, 21 Redbridge Road, Rathfriland BT34 5AH
Email: magills@farmersweekly.net

Secretary:-

Conor Doherty, 9 Ardenlee Green, Ravenhill Road, Belfast BT6 8QF
Email: conor.doherty@dardni.gov.uk

Public Relations (& Newsletter Editor):-

Gavin Goodman, Corralea, Belcoo, Enniskillen BT93 5DZ
Email: gavin.goodman@btinternet.com

In order to keep our records up to date we would appreciate it if you could fill in the form below and send it to :- Gavin Goodman, Corralea, Belcoo, Enniskillen, Co.Fermanagh BT93 5DZ

This will enable us to restrict the sending of the newsletter to people who want to read it and thus avoid unnecessary expense. If we haven't had a reply before our autumn publication (September 2005) then your name will be removed from our mailing list. Your co-operation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

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Name:-

Address:-

Email:-

Preference - by email or post

Membership Number (if known/applicable)