



Hereford



Shorthorn



Aberdeen Angus

The beef farm and farmer

There are around 25,000 beef farms in England, with small herds of 10 cows, to farms with more than 100.

The farmer's most important job is to look after the health and welfare of the cattle.

Farmers help to support 1 million hectares of woodland and forests. This helps look after the habitats of wildlife such as birds, insects and pollinators. They also look after or plant hedges, trees and wild flowers.

Some farmers keep one breed of cattle, while others have a mix. Farmers choose breeds that are most suitable for their location, e.g. the Highland cow has a double coat of hair to survive in cold weather.

Heifers (young female cattle) can produce their first calves when they are two years old. After that they give birth to one calf per year, or sometimes twins!

Beef cattle

There are 34 breeds of cattle, which are native to the UK, including Aberdeen Angus, Hereford and Shorthorn.

Adult cattle weigh around 550–850 kg, depending on the breed.

Cattle have four compartments that act as a stomach and are called ruminants. This means they are able to eat grass and other plants as their main source of food.

Cattle spend the spring and summer months grazing. In winter, some cattle are housed, due to the weather conditions and land being unsuitable. During this time they are fed hay or silage.

All cattle must have a tag in their ear and a passport that travels with them so they can be identified.

Cattle can drink the equivalent of a bathtub of water every day.

Cattle lie down for 12–14 hours per day, but only sleep for about 4 hours.

Uses

Beef cattle are normally sold between the ages of 12 and 30 months, when they are adults, for meat.

Beef is used in a wide range of different dishes and meals.



Spaghetti bolognese



Roast beef dinner



Beef farmer

Farming food for you

Beef



There are more than 9.5 million beef cattle in the UK. Cattle can graze on land which is unsuitable for growing crops, such as moorland and hills.