

Longhorn wins carcass competition by a short head

PRE-RELEASE ~ not for publication before Wednesday 28th May ~ PRE-RELEASE

The culmination of the Native Breeds Carcass Competition run by Suffolk Food Hall and Bramfield Meats, was displayed at the Suffolk Show and concluded a close run contest albeit with a clear winner. The competition was open to native British beef breeds reared in East Anglia and was uniquely judged 'on the hoof' (a farm assessment), 'on the hook' (the butcher's perspective) and 'on the hob' (a taste test by some local noteworthy chefs).

"It has been an outstanding contest" said Charlie Mills, who runs Bramfield Meats, "not only in the number and range of entries but also the quality of the contestants". In total twelve carcasses were entered from across the region, covering five native breeds. The six judges concluded that a Longhorn steer from David Coe of C A Coe & Son, Great Wenham, was the out-and-out winner as it was clearly the leading animal when judged on the hoof and on the hook, and also one of the highest scoring steaks when judged on the plate.

Gerard King of Salters and King, butchers in Aldeburgh, commented on how interesting the process had been. He and Kevin Allen from Halesworth have their breed preferences, know which carcasses yield better and what their customers prefer, but still found comparative blind examination of unidentified bodies very enlightening.

The chefs' assessment was led by Mary Kemp, noted cookery writer, presenter and farmer's wife from Norfolk, who stated how exceptional each of the finished products tasted, particularly when compared to mainstream commercial steaks. On revealing the identities, the differences in rearing and finishing systems became the most interesting point and a great help to all farmers who want to understand what an independent butcher and the high street customer is looking for.

Each of the stages of the competition has been recorded by Anna Hill from Farming Today, BBC Radio 4, and should be broadcast in the next month or so. Second place went to an Angus heifer from Andrew Brown, Hawstead Lodge Farm, and Richard & Natasha Mann's Lincoln Red steer, from Iken was third.

Notes to editor

Please hold this release until Wednesday 28th May when the details of the winner will be in the public domain, by being on display in the EBLEX chiller trailer at the Suffolk Show. The winner is also due to be presented in the Grand Parade on Thursday 29th. A Beef Celebration Dinner was held after the final round of judging on Thursday 22nd May which raised £1835 in aid of www.memorialcycleride.co.uk

The competition could not have happened without the generous support from Suffolk Food Hall, Bramfield Meats, Suffolk Agricultural Association and EBLEX.

Further details are available at www.suffolkfoodhall.co.uk/competition or by contacting Oliver Paul

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