

Angus beats Red Polls in the carcass competition

Last week saw the culmination of this year's native breeds carcass competition run by Bramfield Meats and Suffolk Food Hall. The winning body of beef was an Aberdeen Angus from Andrew Brown of Hardwick Farms, Bury St Edmunds, although it was closely followed by two Red Polls which were judged to be joint second, from Giles Crisp of Uggheshall Farms and Paul Rackham of Manor Farm Bridgham.

The annual carcass competition is open to pure bred British cattle reared in East Anglia, and uniquely involves judging at three different stages; on the hoof (farmers' assessment), on the hook (butchers' grading) and on the hob (chefs' taste test). Charlie Mills, Wholesale Manager at Bramfield Meats, noted "the exceptional quality of entries this year, which included Angus, Longhorn, Red Poll and Hereford cattle. The real enjoyment and benefit for farmers, butchers and consumers is seeing the differences in the same animals during the three stages of this competition".

This year the final taste test and announcement was made at the Suffolk Food Hall during a St George's Day beef spectacular which involved presentations from Mr Mills, Jamie Harris a Food Hall butcher and Stevie Robson the Head Chef at The Cookhouse. Mr Mills concluded that the winning "Angus heifer was an exceptional animal from the outset and proved itself to have well rounded qualities, right through to eating stage." Joint second were two Red Polls, which did not grade quite so well, but excelled in the blind taste test.

Robert Paul of the Suffolk Food Hall said "it was a pleasure to receive such a calibre of entries this year and, with a Longhorn winning last year, it is apparent that there are many variables which determine the quality of beef in East Anglia." During the chef's assessment, where succulence and cooking qualities were looked at as well as the taste, it was notable how every entry was superior to mainstream steaks. Charlie Mills dryly added "you wouldn't have a sad face if any one of these were served up, and it's great to be enjoying the skills of farmers, butchers and chefs from across the region on a plate." Mr Paul advocates that "only beef of this quality comes from your local independent butcher" with the second place carcass being available at Salters & King in Aldeburgh and the winner at the Suffolk Food Hall.

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Bramfield Meats (a meat wholesaler supplying retail butchers and the catering trade across East Anglia) is proud to run the Carcass Competition, with the support of Suffolk Food Hall (located underneath the Orwell Bridge, includes a farm shop, restaurant and more).

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