

My experience of the Irish Moiled as a beef animal.

I keep a small herd of Irish Moiled suckler cows in Gloucestershire , England.

I have limited land available so apart from keeping a steer for our own freezer, I would sell them at weaning, either through Cirencester market (approx 20 miles away) or occasionally to my neighbour who runs a beef finishing unit.

My neighbour would fatten Dairy type steers, Continental type steers/heifers but seems to prefer Angus. He feeds them well and especially with recent prices seems to be a happy man.

The Irish Moiled wouldn't necessarily be on his buying list, and has told me "they are rare breed for a reason" but as one of my young handlers is his daughter, we were able to twist his arm when a couple of my steers were ready to go.

I was also interested to see how they would perform in an intensive rearing/fattening system. I know it is not what we think of as an ideal way to produce our beef, but with an interest in promoting the breed, I think we need as much information as possible to show they can perform economically as they are without "losing our cattle" as PJ put it.

Rosa Lee with Birdwood Kieth



Steers were born Johnny and Keith (Sexton and Earls respectively) on 4th and 20th Oct 23 to AI bull Ravelglen Rocky.



Johnny and Kieth age 22 months



Steers were run with other cattle and always looked well when I saw them.

Photos taken Aug 25

Kieth was 25 months old and I was pleased he was chosen to go locally. He weighed 560kg live and produced a 309kg carcass, so killed out at a respectable 55%.

My neighbour sends most of his cattle off to a large abattoir 'Foyles' about 8 miles away, but he also supplies our local butcher with one beast a week, via a small abattoir only a couple of miles away, usually with a native breed type animal.

So Keith was born here, moved next door, 2 miles to abattoir and back 3 miles to local butcher, so 5 miles in total !

Carcass was graded O5L at the abattoir.

I called down yesterday to have a look at the carcass (see photos of Rib and Sirloin) and have a chat with the butcher.

I was a slightly concerned that the intensive feeding would have produced a carcass which was too fat, and possibly not enough muscle, which would be undesirable to the market. However fears were allayed when I saw the carcass cut through. The butcher said it was definitely not too fat and just what he wanted for his local customers, and "the flavour is in the fat".

I think there is a real value in the breeding and the feeding will make the most of it.

Rocky is not especially beefy (Terminal one star) and the cow would lean towards a dairy type, (nice deep body though) which produced a perfectly acceptable carcass for the general trade and an especially desirable carcass for the local butcher trade.

Ribs on bone



T bone / Sirloin



So there we are, I didn't buy any as have a freezer full at home and I know how good it is!

Hope this is of interest to a few of you and I certainly enjoyed the making of it. I feel it goes some way to prove that my neighbours first thoughts may need looking at.

Wishing you all a happy Christmas and fun filled New year.

Cian