



# MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Winter 2020

Due to the cancellation of the National Ploughing Championships this autumn and the loss of the opportunity it provided us with to communicate with members, we have issued this newsletter. This will update you on our activities and the work that is being done to support and develop new and existing markets for Certified Irish Angus Beef for the benefit of our members.

## IN THIS ISSUE:

**Member Portal**

**Online cattle booking**

**Activating an understanding  
among consumers of the  
Certified Irish Angus brand**

**Update from Teagasc on  
Angus dairy cross calf to  
beef production research**



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We have all become more familiar with conducting activities online due to Covid 19 restrictions. As a result, we have developed our website, [www.certifiedirishangus.ie](http://www.certifiedirishangus.ie), to facilitate more of the normal interaction between us and our members online.

## MEMBER PORTAL

We are delighted to launch our new Member Portal which facilitates members to book Angus cattle for slaughter with our processor partners, ABP, Kepak and Slaney Foods. Full details of how this can be completed are below.

The system has two levels:

- i) Allows basic booking of numbers of cattle and dates of supply. It also allows the viewing of details of animals previously supplied to Certified Irish Angus.
- ii) Through the development of a unique API in conjunction with ICBF, members who have given ICBF data release can also have access to a full listing of animals within their herd. Members who have ICBF Herd Plus will also be provided with terminal index. It is our intention to use this system in the future to deliver additional value to members and to develop a more environmentally sustainable model of production.

If you have not yet completed an ICBF data release form and wish to do so, please download from our website [certifiedirishangus.ie](http://certifiedirishangus.ie) in the drop down menu 'about us' where all forms can be downloaded.

### HOW TO ACCESS THE PORTAL

The portal allows you to view details of

- Past supply and
- Rejected animals

It allows you to make booking for future supply.

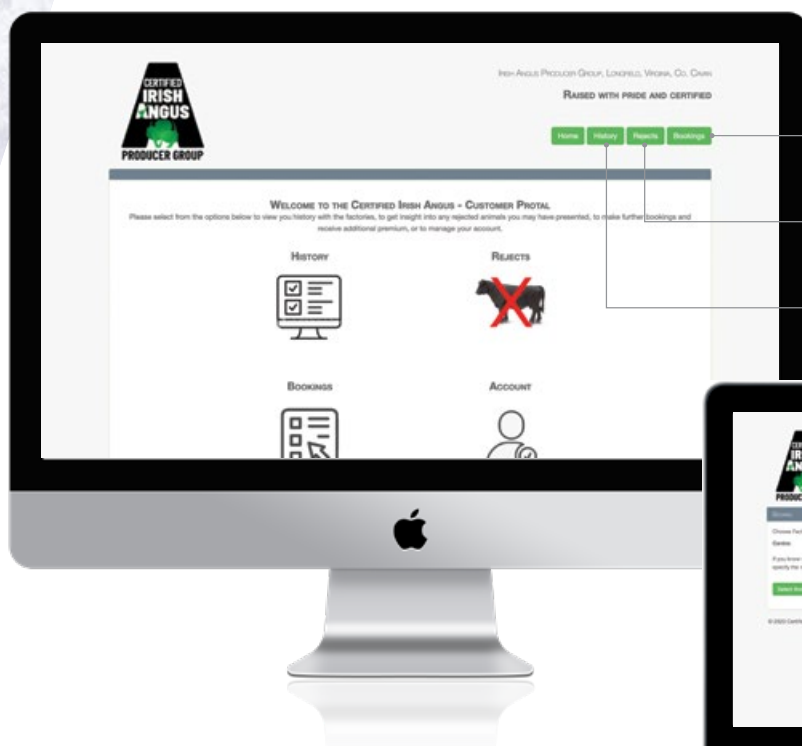
**See below step by step instructions to help you register and book cattle. For further assistance please contact our helpdesk on 046-9286927 / 9242820 / 9242541**

**Step 1:** Go to [www.certifiedirishangus.ie](http://www.certifiedirishangus.ie)  
Click on Farmer Portal.

**Step 2:** Register details  
Activate your account by going to your email and clicking on the link.

**Step 3:** Log In  
Using your newly created username and password.

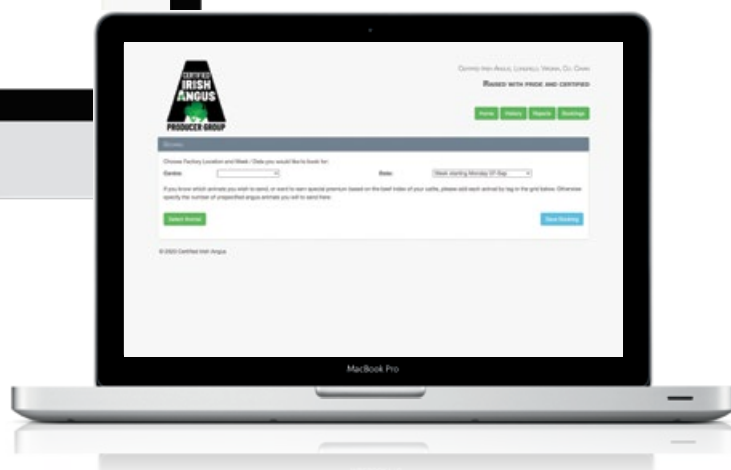
**Step 4:** Book Cattle  
Choose factory, date and select animals you wish to book and save booking.



TO CREATE A BOOKING

TO VIEW REJECTS

TO VIEW HISTORY







2020 Overall Winners Royal School Cavan, along with International Hockey star Katie Mullan.

## CERTIFIED IRISH ANGUS SCHOOL COMPETITION

Over the past seven years, we have enjoyed many great days surrounded by young, enthusiastic TY students as a result of our very successful school competition. It will be of particular disappointment to the 2020 finalists not to be in a position to attend the National Ploughing Championships to receive their calves.

We are optimistically planning for next year. We are looking for new entries for this exciting and rewarding competition. Full details of how to apply and references to previous winners are available on <https://www.certifiedirishangus.ie/schools/>.

We would encourage all members to promote this learning opportunity to TY students in their family or community.

## BUILDING A BRAND

Research shows that consumers are becoming increasingly interested in where their food comes from and understanding both the method by which it is produced and the people who produce it. To this end, we have created a number of farmer profiles to tell the story of who our members are and why they are passionate about the Angus breed. These profiles and video content can be viewed on <https://www.certifiedirishangus.ie/our-farmers/>

Should you be interested in being profiled in the future, please contact us.

The further development of our inspection and treble guarantee system adds depth and credibility to our certification process and reassures the consumer of the authenticity of our beef.

We have profiled our delicious end product, **Certified Irish Angus Beef**, through a number of exciting modern and classic beef recipes and videos showing how our beef can be prepared for a simple, nutritious everyday family meal or for special occasions where celebrating with nothing less than the very best will do. These recipes offer a mouthwatering invitation to consumers to purchase Certified Irish Angus Beef and support our members' family farms. View these recipes on <https://www.certifiedirishangus.ie/recipes/>.

Through our Chef's Club, we are bringing an awareness to a very discerning consumer all that is excellent about **Certified Irish Angus Beef**. Working with some of Ireland's most renowned hotels and restaurants, we are providing not only an Irish but an international shop window.



Clockwise from top: Clancy Family from Co Westmeath, Certified Irish Angus Chefs Club members Dromoland Castle, Certified Irish Angus Sizzling Steak Stir Fry.

Finally, it is of great disappointment to us that we are not able to share a cup of tea and a sandwich at this year's National Ploughing Championships while bringing you up to date with our ongoing work. We do hope that this newsletter, along with a visit to our website, will offer some meaningful understanding of what we are doing on your behalf. This work will continue with a number of further projects being undertaken over the coming months. Our staff continue to be available to you to answer any of your queries or to assist you in any way.



# SETTING THE SCENE

## TARGETS FOR ANGUS CATTLE UNDER DAIRY-BEEF PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

**Ruth Dunne**

Dairy Calf to Beef Research Technologist,  
Teagasc Johnstown Castle

**Spring 2021 is not too far away. Many dairy-beef farmers are already thinking about their stock plans for the coming year. For a successful system, getting the basics right are crucial; farmers must get the right calf in the right system and reaching the right targets from the right diet.**

### Get the calf right

Matching the type of animal to the system that suits their farm is the first hurdle, for example a 19/21 month heifer system may suit farms with limited housing facilities. For farmers looking to purchase beef-sired dairy-bred calves, Angus make up over 40% of the calves available. However, large differences exist in the quality of these calves. From the Teagasc/ABP sire evaluation trial, results show huge variation in the carcass quality and profitability of progeny from different sires within breeds, with a difference in margin of over €100 per animal between specific Angus sires (Connolly, 2017). Farmers must try to purchase calves from bulls that have a good genetic merit for terminal traits such as conformation score and carcass weight.

Calf-hood diarrhoea and pneumonia are two of the biggest health issues facing dairy-beef producers, and can greatly erode a system's profitability. Purchasing calves from farms where optimum levels of colostrum are fed at birth and that are vaccinating cows for IBR and Rotavirus/Coronavirus can greatly reduce the level of scour and pneumonia on farm. Dairy-beef producers should implement a strategic health and vaccination protocol, incorporating monitoring and dosing for coccidiosis and worms, and a vaccination programme for pneumonia, IBR and blackleg (if required).

### Get the stocking rate right

One of the major determinants of profitability for dairy calf-to-beef systems is carcass output/ha. Finding the right stocking density for your farm, where you can maintain high levels of animal performance from grass while also increasing output/ha, is vital for profitable production. For example, a stocking rate of 2.9 LU/ha has shown to achieve high levels of animal performance while also achieving high levels of carcass output/ha in Teagasc Johnstown Castle.

### Get the system and performance targets right

For Angus crossbred cattle, there are a number of grass-based finishing systems that work well and meet the required carcass specifications (Table 2.) for the Breed Bonus and Quality Assurance schemes that are available

For the rearing period, calves should reach 100 kg by 12 weeks of age. During their first season at grass, calves should gain 0.7-0.8 kg/day, grazing covers of 1100-1200 kg DM/ha. Farmers should target clean paddocks, such as silage after grass, for calves. Early born calves that are performing well at grass may be able to be weaned off meal from June to September, however March/April born calves should remain on 1 to 2 kg/day for the entire grazing season in order to reach housing targets of 230 kg (February/early March born) and 190 kg (April born) in November.

Once housed, weanlings are fed ad lib good quality (>70 DMD) silage alongside 1 to 2 kg of 16% beef grower ration, turning out in March at 260 to 300 kg. At grass, the yearlings graze covers of 1500-1600 kg DM/ha. For the 21-month heifer and steer systems, concentrate feeding begins in August; cattle are supplemented with 3 to 5 kg of 14% beef finisher ration at grass. The majority of these cattle are killed in November at live weights of 510 and 525 kg for heifers and steers, respectively. For the 24 month steer system, the bullocks are housed in October at 490 kg. They are offered ad lib silage for the first two months, followed by an 80 day finishing period of ad lib silage plus 5 kg concentrates, finishing at 600 kg in February. For the 26 month steer system, the steers are maintained on ad lib silage over the second winter before being turned out in March. They begin meal supplementation in May and are fed 3 kg at grass until slaughter in June/July at 650 kg.

**Table 1. Slaughter performance targets of AAX cattle**

	Target ADG (kg/day)
Rearing period	0.7 - 0.8
First grazing season	0.7 - 0.8
First winter	0.6
Second grazing season	0.9
Second winter (24-mth steers)	1.0
Second winter (26-mth steers)	0.5
Third grazing season	1.3

**Table 2. Slaughter performance targets of AAX cattle**

	21 mth heifer	21 mth steer	24 mth steer	26 mth steer
Final live weight	510	525	600	650
Carcass weight	255	270	310	330
Conf. score	0=	0=	0=	0=
Fat Score	3+	3=	3-/3+	3+

### Get your grass and winter forage right

Careful management of grass throughout the grazing season is crucial to maximise animal performance. A rotational grazing system, with good paddock infrastructure, will maintain high levels of grass utilisation. Operating a leader follower system of grazing ensures calves are getting the best grass and are less exposed to worms. Farmers will need to close 45 to 50% of their farm for two cuts of silage in order to have enough forage for the winter months. Calculations should be made early in the springtime as to how much land is required for closing to grow enough forage for the subsequent winter. In order to reduce the level of concentrate feeding, farmers must make high quality silage, targeting 70 DMD or better.

**Certified Irish Angus Producer Group has co funded the dairy cross beef production research in Teagasc Johnstown Castle which has been hugely beneficial in establishing a profitable blue print for this system.**