



CERTIFIED IRISH ANGUS
SCHOOLS COMPETITION 2022



KEPAK

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INTRODUCTION

Certified Irish Angus along with our processor partners, ABP and Kepak, welcome you to the final of the Certified Irish Angus School Competition, 2022.

We are honoured and privileged to have had the opportunity to work with these students, and their schools, teachers and families, over the past two years.

We are astonished at the level of enthusiasm and appetite for learning about agriculture, and about the production of Certified Irish Angus Beef in particular.

The effort that all of these students have made in rearing their calves and promoting Certified Irish Angus Beef, along with their in-depth research and reports, is phenomenal, especially considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This reflects the commitment of their schools, teachers, and parents to a full and complete education.



To our partners, ABP and Kepak, we thank you most sincerely for your support and help with this project.

We hope that this has been a memorable experience for all the students who have taken part and we wish you the very best of luck in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tim Dunne".

Tim Dunne

Chairman





THE ABBEY SCHOOL, Tipperary Town, Co Tipperary

Sean Gubbins, Michael Coman, Conor Farrell, Darragh Barlow, and Liam Hayes focused on the topic **"Producing Certified Irish Angus Beef in a Sustainable Manner"**.

Dairy farming is the predominant local farming system and these four students wanted to communicate the message that there is an Angus sire to suit every farming system in their area. They published an information booklet for farmers, through their local marts, co-ops, and other farm services, on the Angus bulls that are available via AI.



This promotional activity continued with the farmers as the students were able to compare the results from their cattle's slaughter with that of an average animal. The students felt that it was important to go back to the local marts and co-ops and let farmers see first-hand that cattle from the dairy herd can be finished at 20 months of age. From work they had already done with their agricultural science class, the students were able to compare the results



from their animals with a remittance docket from a local farmer who had finished cattle at the same time but at 30 months old. It was clear that the students'

five Angus animals had a lower impact on the environment due to needing fewer inputs to bring them to a decent carcass weight, resulting in an overall reduction in green house gasses.

In keeping with the proud sporting tradition associated with their school, the boys consulted their principal, and Limerick Senior hurling manager, John Kiely, on the importance of including beef in an athlete's diet. This information informed the group's discussions with PE classes in the school about how beef contains all the vitamins, minerals, iron, and protein that we need when participating in sport, and about how important it is to buy locally sourced beef.





MERCY SECONDARY SCHOOL, Ballymahon, Co Longford

Rachel Maguire, Kate Mulvey, Ciara Gavigan, and Aileen Briody focused on the topic **“How Certified Irish Angus Beef Improves the Sustainability on Beef Farms”**.

The students hit the ground running by welcoming five Angus calves to their school, making up somewhat for the absence of the National Ploughing Championships during the COVID-19 pandemic. The girls were keen to involve their school community in activities such as a Transition Year (TY) cook-off, where students prepared various dishes using Certified Irish Angus Beef, persuading many families to consider purchasing it again in the future, and school sports day, when they highlighted the topic of farm safety while having fun finding “Mercy’s Fittest Farmers”.



The girls’ strong farming background shone through in the management practices they already had in place on their home farms. They also recognised the importance of promoting a breed of cattle that suits Irish farmers’ lifestyles while creating the least amount of problems and labour throughout the breeding season, calving season, and throughout the finishing process.



The girls were eager to communicate how using an Angus bull for breeding reduces the stress of difficult births and increase profits as a result of producing cattle with the ability to utilise grass all the way through to finishing. Their message was based on their own experiences during calving season; when they were at school and their parents were at work, checking on cows that are due to calve was not done as often as they would like. In 2021, one cow out of every forty needed assistance during calving on Kate’s farm, while the five heifers that were in calf to the Angus bull (Intelagri Matteo E.T. (AA4089) calved without assistance and the calves were up and sucking within the first hour.



The group designed a calendar for local charity Cian’s Kennels, which was founded in memory of their school friend Cian Neary. The calendar featured photos from well-known Angus breeders in the local area.



GOREY COMMUNITY SCHOOL, Gorey, Co Wexford

Pádraig Kinsella, Caoimhe Crean, Eoin Kelly, and Caoimhe Horan focused on the topic **“The Environmental, Economic and Ethical Benefits of Producing Certified Irish Angus Beef”**.

The group started by researching how well the characteristics of Angus cattle match up with dairy farmers' goals for their dairy beef calves. They distributed a survey among dairy farmers in the local community, with the help of the Teagasc Johnstown Castle dairy unit, which circulated the survey among its dairy discussion groups. A total of fifty-four dairy farmers completed the survey.



Another particularly important aspect of producing Irish Angus beef from the dairy herd that the students identified was



that of ethics in farming. It has been observed in other jurisdictions that, when dairy production is ramped up, farmers do not really consider the type of calf they are producing. The team from Gorey Community School decided that farmers need to be educated about increasing the economic value of a dairy-bred calf by using an Irish Angus sire. These calves are a valuable product and will also play a positive role in food production and in reducing methane emissions in farming by offering an alternative to suckler-bred beef.

The students spread their message in the local community by helping to organise and steward the 2021 Awareness Head to Toe Tractor Run, in support of St. Patrick's School and the Hope Cancer Support Centre, Enniscorthy.



In order to hammer home the message to consumers, the students also published a cookery booklet of tasty recipes using Angus beef. They organised a visit to their local Tesco in Gorey, where the store manager gave them an overview of the various cuts of meat on offer and what products were popular with customers. The students left copies of their cookery recipes at the meat counter for customers to take home and try for themselves.

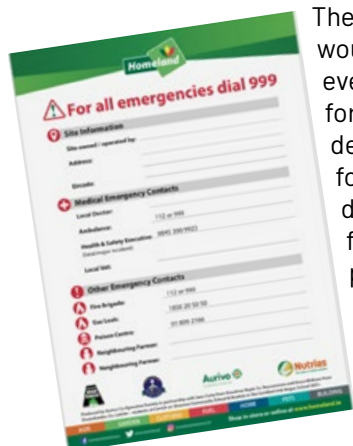




CARRICK-ON-SHANNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim

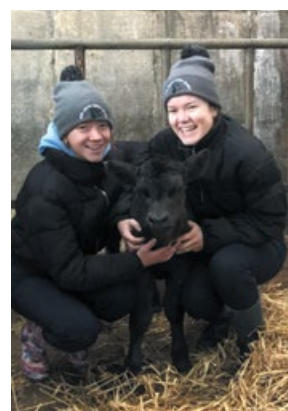
Grace McKeon and Jane Carty worked on the topic **"Health and Safety on Beef Farms"**.

Farmers often turn to their neighbours for help when an accident happens on a farm. This could be as simple as asking to borrow a tractor or trailer or just an extra pair of hands for a tricky job. The girls from Carrick-on-Shannon Community School felt that it is especially important that farmers ask for help and that they have useful contact phone numbers to hand in the event of an emergency. This inspired them to produce an emergency contact details sheet for farmers.



The idea was that this sheet would be clearly displayed on every farm. It included spaces for filling in emergency contact details such as phone numbers for the local vet and local doctor, the Eircode of the farm, and other local farmers' phone numbers. The sheet would then be displayed in prominent positions in easily accessible areas around the farm.

The second part of the girls' plan was to create a farmyard map with the different hazards marked out using a traffic light system (green for "Safe"; orange for "Be careful"; red for "Danger"), in order to remind farmers and visitors about the areas of the farm that could be dangerous.



The students spread the message about their Contact Form and Traffic Light activity sheet through local primary schools, where pupils gave them feedback on making their sheet easier to use. They also teamed up with Agri Aware and Homeland Agri stores in order to broadcast their message to a wider audience. The girls were delighted to see their hard work pay off when they received photographs of local children laminating and affixing the sheets in various locations around their family farms and inside tractor cabs.





BOHERBUE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL, Mallow, Co Cork

Amy Walsh, David Kenny, and Rachel Breen researched the topic **“Understanding the Role Angus Cattle Play in our Local Farming Community and the Environment”**.

The group, which hails from an area with a strong farming tradition, wanted to focus on the role of part-time farmers in rearing Angus cattle and the resulting benefits. From the surveys they conducted, they found that part-time farming supplied less than 30% of the overall income for nearly two out of three farmers and that over one-half of part-time farmers were in farming purely for the love of agriculture. Based on the conversations that they had with these farmers they created a leaflet that was distributed in local shops, Co-ops and livestock marts that explained the benefits of Angus Beef production.



The three students wanted to spread the positive message about Certified Irish Angus Beef production to the younger generation in Boherbue Primary School. They spoke to the pupils in 4th, 5th and 6th Class about the important role that agriculture plays in their local area and shared some interesting facts about the Angus breed.



They continued the theme of educating young people by setting up a farmers' club in their school for anyone interested in agriculture. The club met every Tuesday lunchtime, giving students the opportunity to meet people with similar interests and discuss how to improve the sustainability of their farming operations at home. The students in the farmers' club felt that local farmers need to adapt past traditions to fit future needs. The ability of Angus cattle to finish at an earlier age and from a grass-based diet was key to operating a profitable beef production enterprise.

The group's hard work culminated with an online seminar information night for local farmers. The topic for the night was the environmental benefits of rearing Angus cattle.



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