



Certified Irish Angus Beef Schools Competition



KEPAK

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

On behalf of the Irish Angus Producer Group and our processor partners, APB Food Group and Kepak Group, I wish to welcome you to this very special event.



We are honoured and privileged to have had the opportunity to work with these students, 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 in particular, the production of Certified Irish Angus Beef.

The effort that all of these students have gone to in the rearing of their calves and in the promotion of Certified Irish Angus Beef, along with the in-depth research and reports they have completed is astonishing. This reflects the commitment and effort of their school, teachers and parents to a full and complete education.

To our partners, ABP Food Group and Kepak Group, I wish to thank you most sincerely for your support and help in this project.

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

Tim Dunne
Chairman



COLÁISTE MHUIRE, BUTTEVANT, CO. CORK



Sharon, John, Annie, Aoife & Madeleine took on the challenge of promoting the value of the Certified Irish Angus Beef bonus among farmer beef producers in their area. Their goal was to expose farmers to the additional value that could be added to their beef enterprise by availing of the Certified Irish Angus Beef bonus paid through ABP Food Group and Kepak Group.

Being in the heart of cattle production, they felt this subject was one they could excel in. The calves resided on John's farm which is a typical dairy farm with an additional enterprise focused on producing a small amount of high quality beef cattle.

The final finishing feed plan was given great consideration to ensure that a well balanced ration complemented their grassland management plan. All of the animals were finished on grass supplemented by a concentrated feed for the final 100 days.

To create awareness among local farmers of the Certified Irish Angus Beef bonus, they attended local marts and surveyed farmers to establish the trends that existed when it came to the decision as to where animals in the area were slaughtered. They found that in general, farmers in their locality finished some cattle on their farm. They also found that 25% of these farmers were dairy farmers and 75% were suckler. They found that 80% were Bord Bia Quality Assured.

When it came to the Certified Irish Angus Beef bonus, only 40% of these farmers were aware of the value of this bonus. As a result of these findings, the group set about promoting the bonuses at local shows and farmer/agri events in north Cork, most notably being Charleville Show.



They also promoted the Certified Irish Angus Beef bonus through many school events attended by the parents of the students who would predominately be farmers.

In their final survey of farmers in the area, they found a 20% increase in awareness of the bonuses, demonstrating that their efforts had paid off. They also found that where many of the dairy farmers produced Angus cattle on their farms, a smaller proportion of them kept the animals through to slaughter with the majority of animals kept from birth to slaughter on suckler farms. These suckler farms tended to be smaller farms and quite regional.

In conclusion, the group found that a more focused advertising campaign was necessary to help farmers in the area understand the series of bonuses paid for Certified Irish Angus cattle. This advertising and education was best delivered directly to farmers through small group meetings and seminars.

PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL, LOUGHBOY, CO. KILKENNY



Celine and Therese investigated the benefits of Certified Irish Angus Beef as the theme of their project. Being two farmers' daughters attending a large girls school in the centre of Kilkenny City where the majority of the students are from a non-farming background, the girls set about educating their fellow students on the benefits of Certified Irish Angus Beef in the diet of teenage girls.

Certified Irish Angus Beef is well renowned for its marbling. Their research showed that marbled beef has unsaturated fatty acids, Omega 3 and Omega 6. This helps to lower low density lipids, thus reducing blood pressure, improving circulation and assisting blood clotting. It also contains a high iron content need to produce haemoglobin in the blood. This is especially essential for teenage girls and active sportspeople.

Certified Irish Angus Beef is almost completely produced from a grass based diet. Therefore it contains high levels of the protein Keratin needed for normal strengthening of hair and nails. To make this point, they researched and compared grass fed beef and intensively grain fed beef and found that intensively grain fed beef contained saturated fat causing increased levels of coronary heart disease leading to strokes and heart attacks. They invited a PHD student who has studied Environmental and Chemical Science to address the Transition Year students in the school on this subject.

To promote their findings, they set about a number of initiatives within the school aimed at their fellow students, their teachers and their wider families. They showed videos to Transition Year students and Home Economics classes on the research and findings of Professor Robert Pickard on the importance of red meat in the diet of both young women and older people.



With a focus on the superior flavour of Certified Irish Angus Beef, they produced a recipe booklet consisting of Irish Angus Beef dishes which they obtained from many celebrity chefs. The recipe booklet was available in the school and also formed a very popular part of their social media engagement with the wider population.

They used the fact that they were rearing five Certified Irish Angus calves to generate interest from their non-farming fellow students in their diets. In addition, they ran blind tests between Certified Irish Angus grass fed beef and grain fed beef among their fellow students. They found an 80% preference for the grass fed beef.

In conclusion, they found that many of their fellow students had little understanding of Certified Irish Angus Beef prior to them raising awareness. They showed that as a result of that awareness, many young women changed their view on beef and became convinced of its health benefits. They also helped them to increase their awareness of the different types of beef available and how they might visually assess a piece of steak to establish its eating quality.

SALESIAN SECONDARY COLLEGE, COPESWOOD, PALLASKENRY, CO. LIMERICK



Daniel, Dean, Jamie and Shaun were given the theme of farm safety to study in conjunction with the production of their five Irish Angus cattle. Being a group of two farmers' sons and two boys with no experience of farming or farming life whatsoever, they decided to start by comparing each other's views on current farming practices from a health and safety point of view. They decided that this would give a good balance of approach to farm safety.

They spent the early days after winning the calves observing each other's approach to livestock, farm machinery and general farm practices. The non-farming boys were astonished at some of the activities they witnessed their farmer fellow students engaged in. Likewise, the farmers found it amazing the lack of understanding that existed among their fellow non-farming students. They research the level of farm deaths for the past 10 years and found that with the exception of a couple of years of extremes on both sides, farm deaths have remained static.

They attended a number of agricultural shows and farm events across Limerick to establish the view of farmers and their attitudes to safety. Drawing their attention to a number of obvious key safety areas such as regular checking and maintenance of cattle handling facilities to working at heights and open water and slurry tanks, they found that farmers in general had little understanding of the high level of risks involved in their day-to-day activities and how simple changes could greatly reduce these risks.

As a result, they conducted a survey of 456 farmers across Limerick. The survey involved 20 questions establishing awareness of risk and precautions taken. Their findings were outstanding and when relayed to their own five calves, they found major improvements in safety from working with Angus cattle were:



- the reduced risk from injury as a result of de-horning unnecessary as Irish Angus cattle are polled
- the docility of the breed reduced the risk of injury. Of the 456 farmers surveyed, 21% (96 farmers) had Irish Angus cattle on their farms. Only 33 of these has suffered a farm related injury within the last five years compared with the other 360 non-Angus farmers where 341 said they had suffered some form of injury in the past five years.
- Handling facilities – they also found that good handling facilities well maintained reduced the risk of injury to the farmer. In addition, if the farmer chose when moving cattle to load them from the crush rather than from a pen, it not only substantially reduced the risk of injury but it improved the welfare of the animals by greatly reducing stress and as a result, the quality of beef.

In conclusion, they found the disconnection between farmers and farm safety amazing. They established a strong social media following on which they increased awareness of how simple changes could improve overall safety. They also entered their survey and their findings in the Young Scientist Exhibition where they got a Highly Commended recognition. As the school is part of Pallaskenry Agricultural College, they addressed the College on a number of occasions to demonstrate their findings on farm safety. Finally, when they slaughtered their five cattle, they donated the value of one of their animals to the school in recognition of its support of them and their project.

BALLYMAHON VOCATIONAL SCHOOL, Co. LONGFORD



Enda, Niall and Tadhg were tasked with creating awareness among farmers of the Irish Angus breed and its benefits. Their production of a comedy drama video where they promoted all that was good about the production of Irish Angus cattle in their local mart in Ballymahon was both entertaining and informative.

The Longford/Westmeath area has a long tradition in the production of large continental animals with only a small number of specialised producers producing Irish Angus cattle. The boys decided to use their farming knowledge and their passion for farming to demonstrate the benefits of the Irish Angus breed among farmers in their area. Many of the farmers in this area are part-time, therefore the Irish Angus breed is well suited to their needs. The calves resided on Enda's farm and formed part of a larger herd of Angus cattle that Enda's father finishes annually.

The Farrell family are highly skilled in grassland management and hosted the National Irish Grassland Association Grassland and Farm Walk. At this event, the boys addressed the conference and explained how they intended to raise their calves on a predominantly grass based rearing system that would not only reduce costs but would drive performance. They hosted many other groups on the farm over the period of production of the cattle and allowed the system to be scrutinised by fellow farmers, in particular, their own peers on a Macra na Feirme visit.



To demonstrate the profitability of Certified Irish Angus Beef production on a low cost grass based system, they completed an e-profit monitor study for their calves. This measured input costs and performance with the majority of the lifetime performance of the animals coming from a grass based diet finished with a high quality concentrate for a short period of time alongside superior quality grass silage. As a result, their cattle had a net profit of €3,767.

In conclusion, the findings of the trial conducted by the boys demonstrated that where every aspect of farm management was completed to the highest standard, a sizeable income can be obtained. This coupled with the suitability of Angus cattle to this grass based system made many of the farmers in the Longford/Westmeath area enticed into considering Certified Irish Angus Beef production.

OUR LADY'S SCHOOL, TERENURE, CO. DUBLIN



Eithne, Tara, Emily and Shauna were given the theme of creating a Market Awareness of Certified Irish Angus Beef. The four young sophisticated city slickers had already demonstrated the ability to take on a challenge in their initial application and achieve success in the winning of the calves.

Their location and the location of their school within what is very much an urban setting brought an air of excitement and enthusiasm to the entire school population and the surrounding area. After collecting their calves at the National Ploughing Championships, they set about a Calf Naming Ceremony in November 2015 where their five Angus calves were taken into the school grounds for a Naming Ceremony that involved the entire school.

Before starting a full scale launch on increasing market awareness, the girls set about research to see how Certified Irish Angus Beef compared with other beef offerings. In a blind taste test among their fellow students in the school, they compared Hereford, Charolais and Angus with Angus scoring 64% preference, Hereford 19% and Charolais 17%.

They conducted a number of additional surveys to measure:

- which cut of beef was most popular
- how consumers ranked beef in order of importance, flavour, traceability
- awareness of where the beef had come from
- awareness of the process involved in converting live animals into packs of beef

Armed with this information, they set about informing consumers of the benefits of Certified Irish Angus Beef. First step was within their own school among their own fellow students, teachers and parents. On a number of occasions, they addressed the entire school assembly of 800 students and also addressed individual classes.



They attended Scifest in Tallaght IT and presented to third level students. They set up a very successful social media presence which attracted a large audience. As a competition on social media, they asked followers to post pictures of the most unusual place they found Certified Irish Angus Beef. As a result, they received posts from not only Ireland but all over Europe where followers on holidays noticed the logo and uploaded it.

Our Lady's School, Terenure is located beside the well known Bushey Park where every Saturday is held one of Ireland's most famous city farmer's markets. The girls attended a number of days in the market where they educated "foodies" on the benefits of Certified Irish Angus Beef and encouraged them to attend their local Tesco to purchase the product. At these events, they also handed out recipes that they had downloaded coupled with posting on their social media discount offerings that Tesco had.

They raised the profile of their social media with endorsements from some members of the Dublin football team and radio interviews.

In conclusion, the novelty of Dublin city girls producing cattle, their enthusiasm and appreciation for agriculture and in particular, Certified Irish Angus Beef production has made their efforts at creating awareness ever more influential and their engagement with consumers more appealing.



**Certified Irish Angus Beef
Schools Competition 2017**

