

WHAT PART ARE BROWN SWISS PLAYING IN THE UK DAIRY INDUSTRY?

Brown Swiss are playing an important part in the UK dairy industry. Common complaints about many dairy cattle these days are poor feet, lack of strength and poor fertility. These are all strong points of the Brown Swiss breed. Add to these Low cell counts, high components all combined with high milk yield then the Swiss are ideally suited to modern dairy systems. Another advantage which is often overlooked is that Brown Swiss are very similar in size to Holsteins, as Holsteins are the most common dairy breed this means that Swiss can fit in to most herds alongside the other cows whether this is through crossbreeding or the addition of pure animals.

JONATHAN LOCHHEAD

Brown Swiss are carving themselves a place in all sections of the British dairy industry, whether high input/ high output or low cost grazing systems, mainly through its efficient milk production from high intakes of grass or conserved forage. The breed's core advantages of longevity, calving ease, high yields of quality milk and increased resistance to a wide range of common diseases make it an attractive, and profitable, alternative to a growing number of dairy farmers and these characteristics also make Brown Swiss a popular choice for organic farmers, as well as playing an increasing role in crossbreeding.

MIKE EDWARDS

The Brown Swiss breed are helping contribute to the variety of alternatives on offer to milk producers who are looking for something different from the 'standard' black & white accepted cow.

With a core of genetic traits stretching back '000s of years, this breed originates from the Alpine regions of Europe, but has now become a key breed in worldwide genetics, especially in areas of geographic or climatic extremes.

A high presence of the Kappa casein gene makes the milk perfect for cheese making, giving yields of curd some 6% - 8% higher than standard black & white milk. Looking forward the breed is well placed to help dairy farmers breed for lower reliance on veterinary medicines, as recent work at London University has demonstrated; the breed has a much stronger natural resistance to a number of common diseases and infections affecting the national dairy herd.

The Brown Swiss breed is becoming an accepted breed in the mix on offer to UK dairy farmers, especially those wanting to use the breeds core traits in proven cross-breeding programmes in their commercial herds.

ANGUS DALTON