



Shorthorn Beef – more finishers wanted

More finishers are required to join Morrisons Shorthorn Beef scheme. Following its hugely successful launch in 2016, Morrisons latest plan is to supply the brand to all its stores.

Initially, between 130 and 150 finished cattle were sourced each week to supply the Shorthorn Beef brand in over 100 selected stores, however Shorthorn Beef proved to deliver unequalled eating quality and it soon became apparent that it is one of those basket items that Morrisons customers enjoy to the extent, they keep coming back for more.

The following year, the full range of steaks, salmon-cut and topside joints, each proudly holding the Beef Shorthorn Cattle Society logo on its packaging, expanded to 300 stores up and down the country. Similarly, the volume of cattle sourced also expanded to 200 head per week.

As the scheme enters its next expansion phase with a target to supply all Morrisons stores, the supermarket is actively looking for more finishers to rear cattle sired by a pedigree registered Beef Shorthorn bull.

"We welcome this huge opportunity as the Beef Shorthorn Cattle Society continues its agreement for Morrisons to be the sole UK supermarket to retail Shorthorn Beef; it's a development that reflects the company's long-standing commitment to the breed," says Beef Shorthorn Cattle Society president, Sally Horrell.



Morrisons Shorthorn Beef Scheme finishing units: criteria + protocol

The Morrisons Shorthorn Beef range aims to offer customers a consistent product, using only beef bred cattle sired by a registered Beef Shorthorn bull.

To ensure that consistency, Morrisons requires its finishers to adhere to a number of requirements.

- All eligible cattle must be fed on a high starch, cereal-based finishing diet for 60 days prior to slaughter.
- Approved finishing units must be Farm Assured.
- After one of the Woodheads team has inspected the unit and further to approval, farmers will be required to sign a declaration form as an approved scheme finisher and attach a copy of the finishing diet.

Woodheads in conjunction with the Beef Shorthorn Cattle Society, is pleased to support the following spring store cattle sales

- 12 Apr - St Boswells, Harrison & Hetherington
- 18 Apr - Ruswarp, Richardson & Smith
- 2 May - Skipton, CCM Auctions
- 8 May - Longtown, C & D Auction Marts

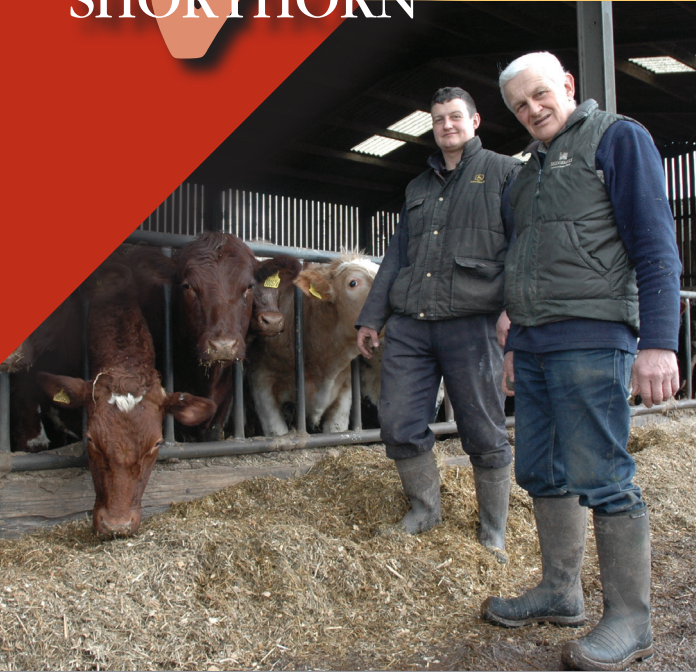
Details of autumn sale fixtures to follow.



Timeline

- 2011 Morrisons Traditional Beef Scheme launched offering a premium to all native bred cattle.
- 2013 An 18% rise in Beef Shorthorn calf registrations, the fastest growing native breed.
- 2014 The Traditional Beef range receives major investment and rebranding as part of Morrisons 'Signature' range in new high-quality vacuum packs with a black backing tray.
- 2016 The Traditional Beef scheme was replaced by the Shorthorn Beef scheme with products going in to Morrisons 'The Best' range in 100 stores, and proudly displaying the Beef Shorthorn logo.
- 2017 'The Best' Shorthorn range extended into over 300 Morrisons stores. The growth came just under a year after launching the product, and doubled the number of stores supplied. Products include premium steak cuts, diced, mince and joints.





Finishing Beef Shorthorn: a viable venture

Finishing Beef Shorthorn sired cattle for Morrisons Shorthorn Beef scheme is proving to be a viable venture for David Charlesworth and his son, Ollie who turn over approximately 100 head a year at Hinstock Hall, Shropshire.

"We buy in Beef Shorthorn cross store cattle - mainly steers, aged seven months upwards at marts throughout the region, and numbers are made up with steers from our own 30 cow pedigree herd," he explains. "They are all taken through to target finishing weight, an average 360kgs at 18 months of age, and we aim to achieve as many R4Ls as possible."

The stores are grazed until November after which they are housed in straw yards and fed ad lib a 70:30 grass maize silage mix. Home grown barley and concentrate that meets with Morrisons required specification makes up the diet fed for the final 60 days prior to kill to achieve performance verging on 1kg daily liveweight gain.

The Charlesworths were amongst the first members to supply the Morrisons Traditional Beef Scheme after its launch back in 2011. "We had retired from dairy, moved on to establish a beef enterprise and decided to invest in stocking a native breed," David explains. "I considered Beef Shorthorn to have the potential as a functional suckler cow. I initially invested in 18 heifers and the breed has proved to offer a real commercial opportunity."

"I first sold finished steers to a local butcher, however when Morrisons launched its scheme, we were in a good position to take full advantage. It also coincided with a tenancy opportunity for a further 150 acres of HLS grazing, enabling us to increase finishing cattle numbers."

As approved finishers, the Charlesworths rate the scheme as being straightforward. They already had a preventative health plan which had been developed with their vet, and the unit was Farm Assured. David adds: "We are always on the look-out for more consistent quality suckler bred cattle, each with the sire's tag number and his breed noted on their respective passports."

Passports – name the sire

A reminder to all suckler producers: the UK passport number of the registered pedigree Beef Shorthorn bull must be included on each animal's passport in order to ensure eligibility for rightful premiums when you sell your store cattle. When registering births with BCMS, click on the optional 'sire' box and enter his UK ear tag number. Morrisons is moving towards registered sire bonuses from 2018 and to solely registered sires by 2019.

'The Best' Shorthorn Beef range specification and returns

All Beef Shorthorn sired steers and heifers under 30 months of age are eligible for premiums as per the grid. Weight range: 270kg to 400kg deadweight; O+ to -U, fat class 3 – 4H.

	1	2	3	4L	4H	5L
E						
U+						
-U			30	30	15	
R			25	25	10	
O+			15	15	-15	
-O						



Beef Shorthorn Cattle Society upcoming official pedigree sales

- 6/7 May - United Auctions, Stirling
- 23 May - Coldrochie dispersal II, United Auctions, Stirling
- 25 May - Harrison & Hetherington, Carlisle
- 15 Sep - HW dispersal, United Auctions, Stirling
- 22 Sep - McCartneys, Worcester
- 21/22 Oct - United Auctions, Stirling
- 7 Nov - CCM, Skipton

Become a supplier – join our scheme

To find out more about registering as an approved finisher, see www.beefshorthorn.org or www.morrisons-farming.com for a declaration form. Alternatively, contact the Woodhead Bros livestock office on 01282 729153 or one of the Woodhead Bros / Morrisons team below.

Michael Winchester, senior livestock buyer – national	07801 100092
Jodie Bolland, livestock and farming development manager – national	07583 068311
Jim Holden, cattle and lambs – national	07831 555076
Ray Platts, cattle and lambs - Midlands, southern England and Wales	07801 595327
Richard Sharratt, cattle and pigs – Midlands and southern England	07788 184300
Stephen Zealand, cattle – southern England	07891 812706
Michael Wilson, cattle and lamb – Scotland	07581 412433
Richard Henderson, cattle and lamb – Scotland	07885 110762
George Clapham, cattle and lamb - national	07970 372944