

2021 NATIONAL HERD COMPETITION RESULTS & REPORT

Donington Grace A12 winner Class 9 & JUDGES CHOICE – OVERALL CHAMPION



**TANKARDS FOR WINNERS
OF EACH CLASS AND
OVERALL JUDGES CHOICE
GENEROUSLY
SPONSORED BY JOHN
CUSSENS, FERRY ALES
BREWERY - FAB**



**PRIZE MONIES FOR
JUDGES CHOICE
SPONSORED BY JENNY
HURST**

2021 National Herd Competition Judge, Jenny Hurst's Report

It was a wedding present of an in-calf Lincoln Red Heifer that started my journey with the Breed in 1984 and I have learnt a lot and seen many changes. Back in, and prior to 1984, the Breed was declining in number due to the popularity of the continental cattle; but now thanks to selective breeding and breed improvement the Lincoln Red continues to gain a reputation for its excellent attributes.

Over the years I have Shown and Judged at several Shows but my biggest challenge and highlight has been Judging the 2021 Lincoln Red National Herd Competition. This allowed me to see the cattle thriving in many different environments, from the edge of Bodmin Moor to the windswept North East of Aberdeenshire and many Counties in between.

It was very interesting; I am impressed. The many herds I visited have adapted their management of the cattle to the conditions and type of land they farm. Some of the grazing is quite poor and the cattle are grazed extensively with very low input costs but the cows are in very good condition and rearing good calves, including good breeding cows still working at the age of 12 to 14 years old. These herds were generally in the stewardship scheme. Some Breeders out-winter the cattle and feed them on potatoes and sugar beet; perhaps giving them some hay or silage in harsh weather; whilst others, to prevent poaching the land, winter them indoors; feeding the cows only a mix of hay or silage and straw.

The finishing cattle are also managed in different ways, for example some herds, with stewardship land, finish their steers and heifers on grass at an older age. Some bring them in for a week or so and give them a bit of concentrate to put a final finish on them. Others finish them inside feeding hay or silage with a feed mix. The average finishing weights and grades around: Bulls 360-380kg at -U3 or 4L 15/16 months; Steers 340kg at R4L 16/18 months and Heifers 320kg at R4L.

Most of the herds, I saw, are in accredited High Health Schemes and a number are weight recording with Signet. Some herds are recording pelvic measurements to aid them in selecting the best heifers to breed from and maintain the ease of calving trait. The Society brought in compulsory DNA Profiling of Registered Bulls and Breeders are using known Polled Status Bulls and are monitoring the Myostatin in the genetics of the Bulls they are selecting.

All the Breeders I visited have established different outlets and ways of marketing their cattle and beef; successfully selling their produce in the local area and to local butchers and restaurants. Some have their own farm shop, pub or butchers shop or have set up a marketing scheme co-ordinating buyers and sellers.

Breeders are selling bulls to commercial and dairy herds and heifers are being sold as base cows to produce good commercial suckler cows, either pedigree or cross bred.