

SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’

EU No:

PGI (X) PDO ()

1. NAME(S)

‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’

2. MEMBER STATE OR THIRD COUNTRY

Ireland and United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT OR FOODSTUFF

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)

3.2. Description of product to which the name in (1) applies

‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’ is the name given to meat which is fresh and frozen bone-in and boneless beef including carcasses, sides, bone-in cuts, boneless primal, retail packs and manufacturing beef derived from Angus/Angus cross cattle that have been sired by a pedigree Angus bull and whose identification documents identify them as Angus or Angus Cross (AA or AAX). Angus/Angus cross animals are slaughtered between the ages of 16 to 36 months of age finished (brought to slaughter within the carcass weight range of 220-410kgs) and are certified as Angus cattle breed by an appropriate certification body.

‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’ has intermuscular, intramuscular, and subcutaneous fat levels. It has characteristic intramuscular fat known as marbling running through the connective tissues. This intramuscular fat contributes to a lightly packed network of myofibril muscle cell fibres which contributes to a tender texture. The subcutaneous fat colour on these cattle is widely dependent on the diet of the cattle but is generally creamy white in colour. The lean meat has a distinctive red colour and fine texture grain.

The marbling in ‘‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’’ melts during the cooking process, creating a moist, soft, juicy texture and prevents the beef from drying out, particularly where beef is cooked as ‘well done’.

Examples of marbling in ‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’



3.3. Feed

The vast majority of births of Angus/Angus cross calves takes place in spring from mid-March to mid-May which coincides with peak grass production ensuring an abundance of available feed.

Supplemented feed is required in winter. This feed comes in two forms:

- i) Forage is grass silage, maize silage or hay
- ii) Cereal based feed which includes wheat, barley, oats and soya bean

The majority of Angus/Angus cross cattle's lifetime after weaning is spent grazing. It is not permitted to feed the animals with any form of growth promoters

3.4. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area.

All animals must be born, reared and finished, slaughtered, chilled, de-boned and packed within the geographical area.

3.5. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.

N/A

3.6. Specific rules concerning labelling of the product.

In addition to what has been prescribed elsewhere in legislation, the following shall be indicated on the product packaging:

- Product name ‘‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’’
- Product logo - The logo can be enlarged continuously to any size, there is no upper limit.

Where ‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’ is sold without packaging, such as butcher counters, the same information contained on the labelling of the packaged cuts is displayed alongside the beef display. In the case of food service where ‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’ is sold as part of a meal, the same information contained on the labelling of the packaged cuts may be clearly displayed on the menu of the establishment.



4. CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The geographical area consists of the island of Ireland including Northern Ireland. It also includes all smaller islands of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The causal link between the product and the area in which it is produced is based on its consistently high eating quality which in turn has led to a well-established reputation.

Specificities of the Geographical Area

The island of Ireland has an oceanic climate, warm and damp, cloudy and rainy throughout the year. Both the diurnal and the annual temperature ranges are narrow, so summer heat and winter frost are rare.

The island of Ireland has a temperate climate influenced by the Gulf Stream which ensures an abundance of rainfall resulting in a natural irrigation of grassland. This climate provides ideal conditions for a long outdoor grazing season. The Angus breed has earned a reputation over a long period of time for being ideally suited to be outdoors all year round. Their size and stature helps them take advantage of the long outdoor grazing period that exists in Ireland. The moderate temperature ensures animals do not experience extreme cold in winter or extreme heat in summer and creates ideal stress-free conditions for raising livestock.

Due to the high rainfall coupled with climate conditions, Angus/Angus cross cattle are ideally suited to grazing outdoors in Ireland as their light weight and breed characteristics such as wide muzzle ensures that they can consume large volumes quickly avoiding 'poaching' (hoof prints in soil) and damaging the soil.

Cold waves are rare and are usually short-lived. Night temperatures drop below freezing (0°C or 32°F), usually by a few degrees, for about twenty days each year.

A combination of the quality of the grass and clover and the natural habitat of small fields surrounded by strong hedgerows and trees that offer shelter creates the ideal environment to enhance the natural ability for Angus/Angus cross cattle to forage outdoors and contribute to the biodiversity of the countryside. Grassland on the island of Ireland accounts for approximately 90% (4.73 million ha) of the available agricultural land. Of the total area of farmland (5.5 million ha), pasture, hay, grass silage and rough grazing account for 5.052 million ha.

Specificity of Product

Angus/Angus cross animals are easily identified by their breed characteristics. Their heads are small to medium in length, broad in the forehead with a wide black muzzle and they do not grow horns, known as “polled”. The body is long and deep with a straight, wide back and chest and with the underlying parallel to the back. The hindquarters are long, wide and fully fleshed with the flesh carried well down to the hock. They are mainly black hided. Calves are small at birth, grow quickly and mature early producing a small, compact carcass.



‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’ has been sold in leading retailers and food service outlets in Ireland, most notably under the premium range of Ireland’s largest food retailer for the past 25 years. ‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’ has earned a reputation for consistently being of the highest eating quality with a succulence and juiciness derived from its marbling. It has reputational evidence including the winning of the World Steak Challenge for the best fillet beef.

Causal link : Reputation and other Characteristics

The tradition of cattle farming in Ireland is strongly rooted in Irish culture, particularly in the farming of Angus cattle. There is evidence to suggest that the arrival of Angus cattle in Ireland predates 1838. The Norman invaders introduced a small black bull which was crossed with the native British Isles Celtic cattle to develop a small polled (hornless) animal known as a Doddie. This breed was further developed in the historical county of Angus, bordering Aberdeenshire in Scotland by William McCombie (1805-1880) resulting in what is now known as the Angus or Aberdeen-Angus breed.¹ The breed came to prominence after the Great Famine of 1845-1852 which coincided with the enlargement of agricultural holdings due to the reduction of the Irish population by almost 50%.²

Cattle were very much seen as a symbol of prosperity and added greatly to the economy of rural and urban Ireland. Traditional cattle fairs were held in rural towns and villages across the island. These fairs brought substantial economic benefit to both those owning the cattle and businesses within those areas, resulting in an immense pride among the owners of the cattle.

¹ Lucas, A., 1990. *Cattle In Ancient Ireland*. Kilkenny: Boethius Press.

²Walsh, G., 2017. *Cattle Breeds In Ireland A History*. 1st ed. Taghmon: The Borie Press, pp.167-187.

The Angus breed formed the foundation for the thriving beef industry that exists in both Ireland and Northern Ireland today. Up to the early 1960s, most livestock produced on the island of Ireland was exported to Great Britain for processing. The 1960s saw the development of a beef processing industry on the island of Ireland which added additional demand for the production of livestock on the island. Angus cattle were best placed to facilitate this demand as they were easily finished from a grass-based diet which was ideally suited to the island.

At that time, the process of beef production at farm level was primitive. It lacked the technology and equipment to produce beef from grain-based systems as was commonplace in Europe. In order to develop a viable meat processing business, it was necessary to increase output at farm level without incurring large capital investment.

The Angus breed was best placed to take advantage of the island of Ireland's natural ability to grow grass and convert it to high quality beef with minimal on-farm capital investment. In 1960 H.S. Crosbie Cochrane from Northern Ireland was appointed Secretary and Fieldsman of the Irish Aberdeen Angus Association (part of the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society in Perth Scotland) he brought a fresh new dynamism to the breed in Northern Ireland. He set up many farm walks and field days which educated and explained to farmers the potential of the Angus breed which had been in decline. His dedication and hard work re-energised the Angus breed and encouraged a new generation of breeders. At the same time in Ireland such was the strategic importance of the Angus breed in the planned development of the beef industry that the then Irish Minister for Agriculture established an Irish Angus Herd Book within the Department of Agriculture. Not only did this assist in the establishment of the Angus breed among Irish farmers, it also allowed for the tailoring of Angus genetics towards an animal type that was best suited to grass based production, resulting in animals that required limited housing and feed supplements and produced a small well-fleshed carcass.

The knowledge and expertise required to produce Certified Irish Angus cattle on what is in many cases, marginal land, is unique to each farm and is more of a tradition and 'know how' than a commercially focused production system. Certified Irish Angus Producer Group aims to protect and enhance this traditional farming system. The development of the Group helps to preserve these traditions.

The Group operates the Certified Irish Angus Beef School Competition and the Angus Youth Challenge in Northern Ireland which educate second level students and possibly the farmers members of the future, on the traditional systems of production and uniquely suitable characteristics of the Irish Angus breed to the land and climate of the island of Ireland. This competition instils passion and enhances the belief in these traditions.

David McCann, Executive Head Chef states *“We always use ‘Certified Irish Angus Beef’. There’s no competition in quality”*

Den Hertog restaurant owner, in Olen, Belgium states *“We only work with products we are 100% behind to spoil our customers. Therefore, the choice is for Certified Irish Angus Beef.”*

URL to Product Specification