

# LINCOLN RED

## Summary

A hardy and thrifty rare breed, with the ability to fatten off grass within 30 months, the Lincoln Red has much potential for expanded use within nature conservation grazing situations. Docile and easy to handle, it appears to have fairly non-selective grazing habits and is likely to be a good choice for maintenance grazing any sward.

**Hardiness** – a hardy and thrifty breed, well able to withstand adverse weather conditions.

- *Hardy* – bred for its ability to withstand cold east winds during winter and drought conditions in summer months.
- *Thrifty* – an excellent converter of roughage into meat; will also cope well on pastures of higher nutrient status.
- *Able to out winter* – and maintains condition well, provided food is not in short supply. However, out wintering may not always be practicable as its heavy weight makes poaching likely, especially on heavy clay soils.

**Physical Attributes & Husbandry** – docile and easy to handle, the Lincoln Red may provide an attractive choice for conservation grazing situations.

- *Background* – two categories of Lincoln Red are accepted: pedigree animals without any continental blood (Traditional Lincoln Reds) and these are a Rare Breed; animals with an element of continental blood in them.
- *Distribution* - fairly widespread across the country, although registered herds found primarily in Lincolnshire and the adjacent counties.
- *Handling* – quiet, non aggressive and easy to handle, although can give the appearance of being belligerent.
- *Fencing* – respects electric fencing.
- *Flies and ticks* – no particular problem; quite thick-skinned.
- *Size* – amongst the largest of our native breeds; average weight of a cow 600-700kgs.
- *Appearance* – deep cherry red in colour. A polled breed since the 1940's when Aberdeen Angus blood was introduced to the previously named Lincolnshire Red Shorthorn.



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- *Breeding* – bulls very placid in a herd situation. Cows will usually calve up to 12-14 years of age and produce a plentiful supply of milk for calves. A popular choice for crossing with continental bulls.

**Grazing Characteristics** - unselective grazers that will make good use of any sward.

- *Grazing ability* – no particular preferences noted, although appears to take a range of coarse and fine grasses, including Tufted Hair-grass, Common Reed when young and Soft Rush in the winter or after being cut.
- *Browsing* – limited information available. See site details overleaf.

**Interaction with the Public** – a docile breed, suitable for use on public access sites. May be easily spooked if not handled often.

- *Reaction to people* – a very docile and non-aggressive.

**Marketability** – a breed with good commercial potential.

- *Meat* – produces a fine textured, well-marbled beef.
- *Finishing* – finishes well off grass within 30 months. Bull beef can be finished at 14-15 months.

## Sites where Lincoln Red cattle are in use & contacts

## References

SITE NAME	HABITAT	DETAILS AVAILABLE	CONTACT
<b>Snipe Dales</b> Lincolnshire  Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Wet valley grassland over Spilsby sandstone and Kimmeridge clay.  54 ha	Site neglected since WW2. Introduced 8 Lincoln Red cattle in 2000 having tried Highland, Galloway and Longhorn in the past but all proved too unruly & difficult to finish in 30 months. Aiming to increase herd of Lincoln Reds. Graze April-October. Outwintered on part of site. Site in organic conversion. The use of cattle resulting in the reduction of the amount of Tufted Hair-grass.	Barrie Wilkinson 01507 526667
<b>Silverines Meadows</b> Lincolnshire  Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Upper meadow dry grassland on Spilsby sandstones, lower meadow SSSI on heavier soils. Wet flushes throughout.  5.9ha	Long history of hay & grazing management on meadows, although no hay cut in recent years due to Ragwort. Since the early 1990's cattle have been used except in 1997/8 when sheep were used to try and control Ragwort. Since then Lincoln Red (& others) have been used. Dry area grazed June - October each year. The cattle tend to leave the wet flushes until last for grazing. The light poaching in the wet flushes is allowing a more diverse sward to develop. Water Aven, Marsh Marigold, Marsh Orchid, Fleabane and Ragged Robin all doing well. Cattle maintaining an open sward better than sheep did. Floristic diversity of the light sandy soils is slowly improving.	Barrie Wilkinson 01507 526667  Mr J. Parkinson 01507 343500
<b>Sow Dale</b> Lincolnshire  Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Spilsby sandstone and Kimmeridge clay.  34ha	Around 23 ha of the site is pasture. Grazed April-November by 25-30 Lincoln Red cows (+ calves) since 1992. The cattle are maintaining a stable Gorse population whereas it had been increasing when sheep were on the site. The cattle also enjoy browsing the hedges.	Barrie Wilkinson 01507 526667
<b>Gibraltar Point</b> Lincolnshire  Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Hay meadows, dune systems, fresh water marsh, saltmarsh and mudflats.  437 ha	The fresh water marsh area grazed July–October with 20 in-calf heifers since 1988. The cattle graze the fresh water marsh and move into the waters edge and trample and lightly browse reed and rushes.	Barrie Wilkinson 01507 526667
<b>Manor Farm</b> Lincolnshire	Wet valley and arable reversion on Spilsby sandstone and Kimmeridge clay.	Land split into 13 grazing compartments, which are grazed by 93 cows (+ calves) at differing times according to conservation requirements of each block (breeding birds / flora). Cattle tend not to eat Reed unless it is very young, but will help to control it by trampling. Winter 1999/2000 two cows outwintered, free ranging over site to control Rush. To control Rush, concentrated numbers of stock used at non sensitive times of year (after nesting and flowering), after first cutting (not flailing) Rush.	Roger Wardle 01790 752366
<b>Other contacts:</b>		Lincoln Red Cattle Society	Lincolnshire Agricultural Society 01522 511395
		Rare Breeds Survival Trust	024 7669 6551

HART E (1999) *Traditional Lincoln Red Cattle* The Ark Winter

STENNETT (1999) *Old Breed Looks to the New Millenium* The Ark Winter