



Droimeann Cattle Society

07th October 2019

To who it concerns, please find attached the recommendations of the Droimeann Cattle Society for the upcoming CAP reform.

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Biodiversity

The Department of Agriculture and the marine currently recognise the following native Irish Cattle breeds. The society recommends that the Native Breeds be continued to be supported through the various Agri- Environment Schemes with some recommendations in the design of the scheme.

Native Cattle Breeds (current)

- Irish Moiled Cattle
- Droimeann Cattle
- Dexter cattle
- Kerry Cattle

Droimeann Cattle Society

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Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Retention of Agri-Environment Scheme

The society recommends the following within any new Agri-Environment Scheme.

- Increase the headage payment from 10 to 25 breeding animals.
- Ensure that animals must be bred to a purebred bull annually.

Note
The Society also recommends that only Native Irish Cattle Breeds be included within any new Agri-Environment Scheme and recommend that any new Agri-environment Scheme continue to target Native Breeds exclusively and not to expand the option to "Traditional Breeds".

Recommendation 2

Marketing and Premium Outlet

- The society also recommends that in conjunction with the Agri-environment scheme that some **financing and support within CAP be set aside to help the various Native Cattle breeds develop a marketing strategy and premium outlet for their produce.**
- The society would also recommend financial and other supports within CAP to determine whether the breed would be able to achieve a **PDO or PGI certification mark** covering the island of Ireland similar to other breeds such as the Maine Anjou Breed in France or Manx Loaghtan Sheep Breed in the Isle of Man.

Regenerative Farming Ireland have produced a document titled "**Farm2Fork 2030**" where they have highlighted an opportunity for Native Breeds to develop a Niche Products. **Regenerative Farming Ireland** have recommended the following for their vision of agriculture pertaining to Native and Traditional Breeds

- ✦ promote the creation of specialist foods using traditional breeds as a core characteristic
- ✦ connect the specific food products to landscape or high-nature-value land management
- ✦ kick-start upland foods with on-farm or local artisan-scale food-processing facility grants
- ✦ a network of small-scale local abattoirs and butchers is an imperative for upland regions
- ✦ grant aid should be considered to link food products to agrotourism with visitor centres

The Society have recognised that they have a very good product and have recently applied for a certification mark from the Irish Patents office (Trade Mark Application No. 2019/01435) to certify Red Meat, Milk and Hide from the purebred Droimeann animal.

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Additionally, The Droimeann Cattle Society has recently submitted a *joint application for Native Irish Cattle Breeds* with the Irish Moiled Society and Irish Dexter Cattle group to the Department of Culture to be recognised as part of *“Ireland’s Intangible Cultural Heritage”* in an effort to develop and market the breed as being linked definitively with the Island of Ireland and with Irish culture which hopefully if accepted, the societies will be able to use as a marketing tool.



Figure 1: Proposed Certification Mark for Droimeann Product (Certification Pending)

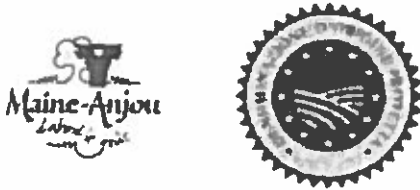


Figure 2: Maine Anjou Brand and PDO certification label

Recommendation 3

Conservation Grazing Partnerships

The Society has made a Submission to the proposed new Heritage Plan for Ireland recommending a “National Conservation Grazing Partnership” and we are awaiting the publication of the plan to determine if our proposal was accepted.

The society recommends that the tracts of land currently in State or Semi State ownership be opened up for restoration grazing to the Native Cattle Breed Societies including the Droimeann Cattle Society. The society proposes a “National Conservation Grazing Partnership” in conjunction with various departmental, local government and semi-state bodies similar to the grazing animals project (GAP) already established in the UK. A Partnership project with the Droimeann Cattle Society would also fulfil the requirements of the National Biodiversity Plan 2017-2021.

“Objective 4: “Conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside”

Action 4.1.1 Development and implementation of Agri-environment schemes (AES) under the current and next rural Development Programme.

Action 4.1.7 Implement the National Genetic Conservation Strategies for animals and Plants.

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Benefits

- The land will be extensively grazed to maintain these environmentally sensitive areas at their optimum and to prevent scrub encroachment.
- Reduced risk of Wildfire and the cost implications of these Incidents.
- Reduced need for Chemical and Mechanical maintenance of these landbanks and the associated environmental and cost benefits associated with such a scheme.
- The meat from this native breed animals coming from top tier ecological land Management systems can be marketed as a truly sustainable premium product helping to sustain local communities.
- Droimeann Cattle are being successfully used in smaller scale conservation projects such as Fernhill gardens in Dublin.

Why use Droimeann Cattle?

Droimeann Cattle are small to medium framed animals, that are easily managed, naturally horned and are well known to thrive well on poor quality forage. Most of the breeders out winter the animals as they are ideally suited to the Irish climate. They are excellent mothers who provide more than enough milk for their young. The breed itself is primed to become a hugely successful suckler breed as it has very good fertility levels, the cows have no issue going back in calf within 7-8 weeks after calving. They thrive on poorer quality lands and are ideal to cross with a continental bull and when mated with such animals will produce an excellent quality calf.

The breed has the ability to thrive in areas the continental cattle wont and in doing so it highlights the huge benefit the breed can have to achieve high nature value farming, in all sorts of settings.

To highlight the positive role they can play in traditional hay meadows, we as a society have recently linked up with Dún Laoighre - Rathdown County Council to highlight the impact Droimeann Cattle can have in such meadows as those that are present in Fernhill Co. Dublin. This group of Droimeann cattle are carrying out conservational grazing on traditional hay meadows that have been completely untouched for over 100 years. The council who are running the project are delighted with the positive impact the cattle are having on the land in terms of flora that are being controlled in a much more eco-friendly manner then they had been up to this point.

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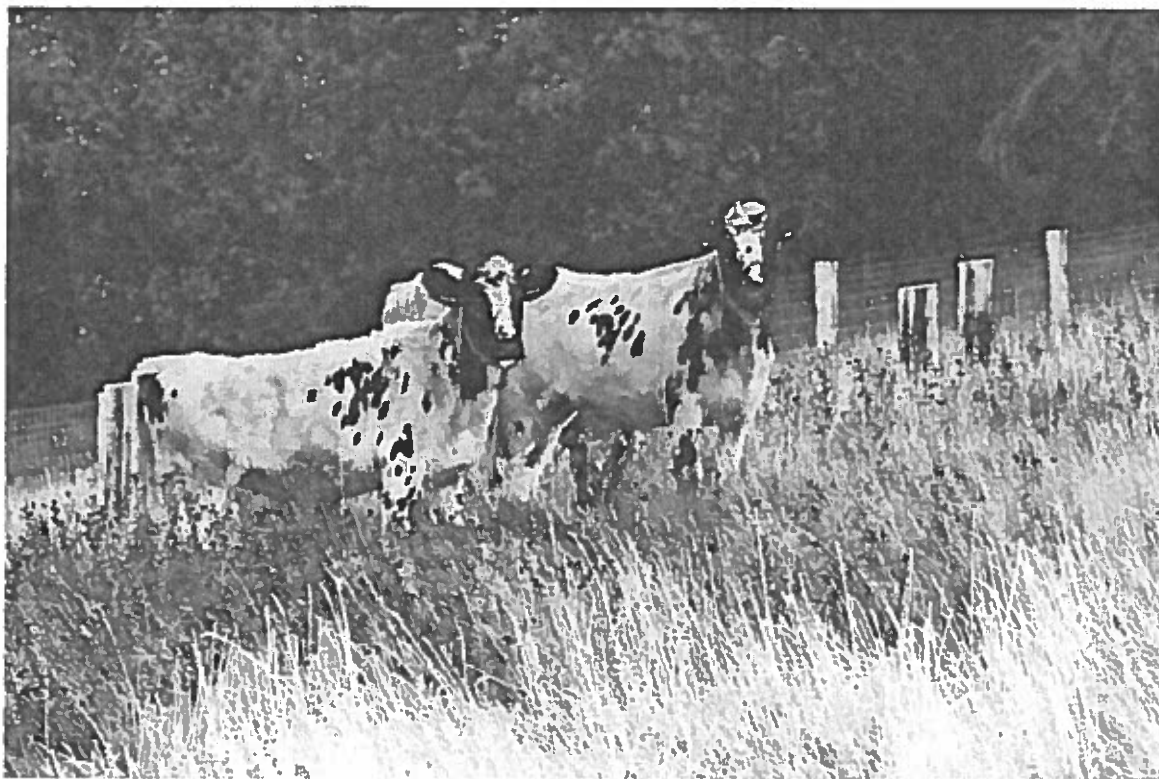


Figure 3: Droimeann Cattle at Conservation Grazing Project in Fernhill, Dublin.

X 

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