

The Limousin breed was first imported into Canada in late 1968 with a reputation as an efficient producer of lean red meat on less feed. Raised on the rough terrain of the relatively isolated region of south-central France, these range animals were bred to forage for themselves as the area produced very little in feed grains. Today the Limousin is noted for its ability to deliver a maximum yield of high-quality beef at minimal cost in labour and feed.

In 1988, there were more than 1 800 breeders of registered Limousin and registrations were in excess of 10 000. A herdbook compiled by the Canadian Limousin Association allows breeders to register all calves above 37 percent if they are sired by a registered Limousin bull. New breeders can thus start with their existing cow herds and upgrade them to purebred Limousin cattle at 90 percent. All full French cattle are identified in a separate herdbook and are the result of the mating of two parents that traces directly back to the herdbook in France.

The Canadian Limousin is particularly noted for its foraging ability under rugged conditions and its ability to produce a high-yielding and high-quality car-

cass. These qualities, combined with good mothering ability, have made the Limousin popular for crossbreeding. Limousin cross steers have produced high-quality carcasses that have been winners at major competitions throughout Canada.

The birth weight of Limousin calves is about 38 kg (84 lb) for males and 36 kg (79 lb) for females. In 1989, Canadian Herd Performance Program records show that males on test had an average yearling weight of 421 kg (926 lb) and 323 kg (711 lb) for females. In the same year, animals on test had a post yearling average daily gain of 1.23 kg (2.7 lb) for males and 0.79 kg (1.7 lb) for females.

Characteristics for which Limousin in Canada are most noted are the following:

- 1) ability to produce under rugged conditions;
- 2) ability to produce a high-quality, high-yielding carcass;
- 3) ease of calving, mothering ability and fertility; and
- 4) efficiency in conversion of feed.