

The first breeding herd of Aberdeen-Angus imported into North America was brought to Canada from its native Scotland in 1876. The progeny of these early Aberdeen-Angus imports soon attracted interest and other shipments followed. Breeders were impressed with their longevity, hardiness, and ability to produce high-quality beef — qualities that have been the prime factors in developing the breed in Canada. The Aberdeen-Angus now ranks second in popularity among Canadian beef animals. All Aberdeen-Angus are hornless, and both black and red animals are registered in the same herdbook.

There are currently more than 2 000 breeders of registered Aberdeen-Angus in Canada, and 1985 registrations were in excess of 14 000. Although the main export market has been the United States, recent shipments to Britain, Argentina and Japan have signified rising interest in the breed.

The Canadian Aberdeen-Angus is particularly noted for its increased size, foraging ability under rugged conditions, and ability to produce a high-quality carcass. These carcasses have been consistent winners at major competitions throughout Canada. Desirable conformation and excellent marbling are two of the major factors involved in this outstanding performance. These qualities, combined with good mothering ability, have made the Aberdeen-Angus popular for crossbreeding. Aberdeen-Angus bulls are in demand for crossbreeding with first-calf dairy heifers to permit breeding at an

earlier age. The Aberdeen-Angus crosses, like their parents, are naturally hornless — a desirable feature.

The birth weight of an Angus calf is low — 34 kg (75 lb) — but its growth rate enables it to overcome this situation. In 1984, ROP records show that Aberdeen-Angus on the Home Test Program had an average yearling weight of about 421 kg (928 lb) for males and 327 kg (725 lb) for females. Bulls on station tests have recorded yearling weights of more than 544 kg (1 200 lb). In the same year, animals on the ROP Home Test Program had an average daily gain of 1.08 kg (2.38 lb) for males and 0.66 kg (1.45 lb) for females. Exceptional animals at test stations have recorded gains of up to 1.86 kg (4.1 lb) per day.

Some of the characteristics for which the Canadian Aberdeen-Angus is most noted are the following:

- 1) large size and ability to produce under rugged conditions;
- 2) outstanding ability to yield a carcass of superior conformation and exceptional, well-marbled muscle;
- 3) ability to produce a desirable weight carcass at an early age;
- 4) exceptional ease of calving, excellent mothering ability, and above-average milk production;
- 5) natural resistance to sunburn, pink eye, and snow blindness; and
- 6) naturally hornless.