## Crossbreeding

When crossed with a beef breed, breeder's benefit from a high value product (the crossbred calf) from a low maintenance unit (the Shetland cow) resulting in a high profit margin.

They generally produce a low birth weight calf – typically 40kg – that grows at a rate expected of a beef breed. Even without creep feeding DWLG are achieved in excess of 1.4kg (steers) & 1.3kg (heifers) with 200 day weights of 320kg (steers) & 290kg (heifers).



Photo: Shotland x Limoucin calf 416 months old

'The Shetland has proven to be a fantastic suckler cow with exceptionally good traits which performs incredibly well in our commercial system. They are underestimated due to a lack of awareness of the breed's capabilities.'

## **Hybrid Cow**

Farmers are crossbreeding the Shetland with other beef breeds to produce hybrid breeding stock, mixing the Shetlands strong native traits with continental traits to give impressive results.

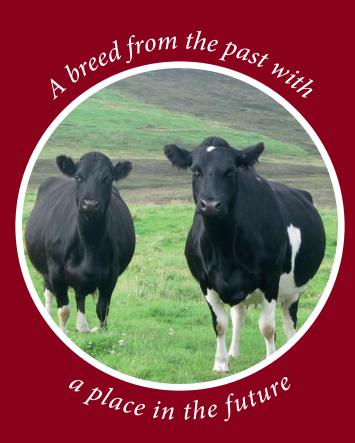
A three way cross - Limousin bull on a Shetland x Simmential Cow - produces a calf weaned at the same rate as the cow. The calves consistently achieve a U3/U4L carcase classification with deadweights in excess of 360kg at 14 months old.



Photo: Shetland x Limousin Cow

'The Shetland is as important a factor in all this as the Simmental & the Limousin – as I say, my little nuggets of gold'





**Profitable Suckler Cow** with Exceptional Traits

## **Economic, Low-Maintenance Suckler Cow**

The Shetland evolved as a dual-purpose cow, being required to provide a plentiful milk supply for both its calf & the household. This milk yield explains the high growth rate of their progeny.

Their udders are exceptionally neat & tidy with teats that remain small throughout their lives.

They are good-natured, low maintenance cows that perform well in a variety of farming businesses ranging from extensive to intensive situations.



Photo: Shetland cow - 5 years old

'Sensibly sized, milky & even-tempered cow, economical to keep whilst producing a large well-fleshed calf at weaning'

Shetlands are famed for their ease of calving helped by their pelvis width, which is second only to the Jersey. They calve quickly & easily, rarely requiring assistance, with calves eager to get up & feed.

They are renowned for their high fertility, can maintain a tight calving pattern & continue to breed into their late teens.

Shetland beef is of the highest quality, scientifically proven to be high in conjugated linoleic acid & with excellent marbling, giving wonderful flavour & texture.



*Photo: Shetland x Charolais calves* 

'The Shetland's attributes allow me to benefit from environmental payments as well as producing credential beef. This amounts to a better margin than three times as many continental breeds'



For Commercial Farmers

## **Key Traits**

- Superb mothers with good milk yield
- Easy calving with calves that are born full of vigour
- High fertility & calves consistently into its late teens
- Calm & easy to handle
- Relatively small (average 450kg) requiring less feed & reduced damage to wet ground
- Natural foraging ability & excellent feed conversion
- One of the hardiest of breeds with minimal foot & udder problems
- High carcase yield and quality tender meat

More information can be found at:

Shetland Cattle Herd Book Society www.schbs.co.uk

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