
Canadian Highland Cattle Society

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Highland Cattle originated in the Highlands and west coastal islands of Scotland, areas severe in climate and lashed by the North Atlantic gales. Throughout the long recorded history of Highlands, breeders have taken great care to retain the original characteristics of these cattle. Originally, the breed was divided into two classes, the West Highlands or Kyloe, and the Highlander. Today all members of the breed are called Highland. They were first imported into Canada from Scotland in the 1880s.

Highlands have a double coat of hair a downy undercoat and a long outercoat which may reach 13 inches, and which is well-oiled to shed rain and snow.

It is not uncommon for Highlands to shed this heavy hair coat when exposed to a hot dry climate and then grow a new one as the damp old weather returns.

The Highland is unusually healthy and hardy. It will survive on roughage and poor grazing, including brush if necessary, under climatic conditions where most of our popular breeds would suffer.

The Highland's proven ability to produce top quality meat without the addition of expensive high quality feeds makes this breed the perfect choice for those people who wish to produce beef with natural inputs.

The mothering instinct is highly developed in the Highland cow. Abandoned calves, for even first-calf heifers, are rare. This strong protective inclination of the cow minimizes predator losses that can even extend to sheep that are pastured in the same field.

The Highland calf is exceptionally hardy and grows rapidly up to weaning. Their excellent health record, along with the present worldwide demand for Highland Cattle, has led to a number of exports of Canadian Highlands and Highland embryos to countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, Germany and even Scotland.