

LONGHORN



Cattle Society

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2 MAY 2012

Breed Society's concern over threatened bloodlines

The Chairman of the Longhorn Cattle Society has voiced his concern over the loss of important pedigree bloodlines due to the increased spread of Bovine TB. Recently a number of long established Longhorn breeders have had a significant percentage of their herds test positive to Bovine TB, resulting in the loss of influential bloodlines going back well over 30 years.

'The Longhorn breed is currently thriving in terms of numbers, but it wasn't so long ago that it was a very different story. In the 1970's the national population was at a critical level and it was only in 2005 that the breed came off the Rare Breeds Survival Trust's Watchlist', said Longhorn Cattle Society Chairman Geoff Wild of the Riffhams Herd, Chelmsford, Essex. 'With the numbers of cattle and the importance of the bloodlines being lost there is always the possibility that the breed could slip back into rare status again.'

'The Longhorn breed is in a stronger position than many other native breeds but we are still concerned about the increasing loss of our precious bloodlines. Our breeders have spent many years of careful selection to breed the Longhorn as it is today without the need for outcrossing and these pure genetics must be preserved for the future'.

'In addition, the emotional distress of losing a lifetime's work has proved to be the last straw for some breeders, who have decided not to continue keeping Longhorn cattle after seeing their herds decimated by Bovine TB. This could further reduce the Longhorn population and before we know it the breed may be in severe decline. I would urge the British Government and the Welsh Assembly to redouble their efforts to combat Bovine TB before the Longhorn and other vulnerable breeds become just another statistic.'