

Irish Dexter Times

Issue 1
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Preservation For The Future



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Welcome to the first issue of **Irish Dexter Times**.

The official publication of Legacy Dexter Cattle Breeders. The only group dedicated to the preservation of the Traditional Dexter.

*** Our Mission ***

To bring Dexter breeders together to preserve the old bloodlines free from modern upgrading and save the Traditional Horned Dexter from disappearing.

Forever

Originating in Ireland, **Dexter Cattle** descend from the predominantly black cattle of the early Celts. The breed can be found fully described and mentioned by name in a report on Irish cattle written by Dr. David Low in 1845. The breed owes its appearance, qualities and name to a Mr. Dexter, agent to a Lord Hawarden of England, who lived in Co Tipperary in the year 1750. He produced his “curious breed” by selection from the best of the hardy mountain cattle of the area. Dexter cattle were first introduced into England in 1882, and first shown in 1886. The Kerry and Dexter/Kerry cattle society was formed in 1892.

Dexters are one of the smallest breeds of cattle. Bulls should not exceed 900 lbs. and cows 800 lbs. in breeding condition. Dexters come in three colors, with black being the most common, and red and dun occurring in lesser numbers. It is interesting to note that before genetic testing, all non-blacks were considered red as there was little distinction between the shades. Dexters are a horned breed. Known for their beautiful white horns tipped in black, ALL Dexters of pure pedigree are horned. While some owners may choose to de-horn their calves, ALL are genetically horned.

In recent years polled Dexters have been allowed into the American herd. It is important to note that these animals all descend from the English up-grading and experimental programs and therefore carry out-crossed genetics. The LDCB does not include these animals or their offspring in the Preservation Effort because they fail to meet either requirement of Pedigree or Breed Standard.

Dexters come in two body types – dwarf and non-dwarf. The first type “historically known as short-legged” are true dwarf cattle. They bring the unique qualities and characteristics the breed was based upon. Short, low to the ground, large bodied and with deep dish-shaped faces, these Dexters are also commonly called “shorties” and “chondro carriers”. The second body type “historically known as long-legged” are also

small cattle, but proportionate in body. They are also referred to as “non-shorts”, “non-carriers”, and “non-dwarfs”. The body types are considered equal within the breed, and both are highly productive cattle.

Dairy / Beef / Draft Dexters are the true “Tri-Purpose Breed”. Their hardiness, high efficiency and ability to produce on far less pasture than larger cattle, make them the perfect breed for the small farm and homestead. A Dexter cow should produce enough milk to raise her calf AND provide milk for the family’s use. Known for their easy calving qualities, and strong maternal instinct, Dexters are excellent mothers. Strong immune systems and longevity are outstanding traits of the breed with many cows producing well into their teens, oftentimes on into their twenties – Something unheard of in most cattle breeds.



Vicki Solomon working with her team of oxen Paul and Silas.

Bulls are calm and easy to handle, and when not used for breeding purposes can be made into strong gentle oxen. Dexter steers dress out at 50-60%, and the ability to fatten on pasture/hay alone without the need for additional grain or other expensive feeds, makes them an ideal choice for grass-fed only situations. Graded as Choice, their high quality lean beef is slightly darker than that of other breeds. Dexters are extremely productive cattle – thriving where others cannot.
A True Heritage Breed

Dexter History in America

Dexter cattle probably arrived in America long ago, before distinctions were made between Kerry and Dexter imports. The first Dexters recorded in the US arrived during the 1st and 2nd decades of the early 1900s, with the importation of approximately 200 Dexters and Kerries from herds in Ireland and England. Well known herds of the time were Castlegould of New York owned by Howard Gould (later changed to Hempstead House by new owner Daniel Guggenheim), the North Oaks herd owned by Mrs. James J. Hill of Minnesota, and the Elmendorf herd of Lexington, Kentucky.

Interest grew, and the first attempt to organize the breeds was made by Professor Charles S. Plumb, of Ohio State University in 1910. He sent letters to every person he could learn of owning these cattle to ascertain the



Belle of Hempstead House, Victress of Hempstead House, Castlegould Minda



Kingswood Courtly Girl – 1st Prize Ag Champion Dexter female at NY State Fair 1912



North Oaks Herd - 1905



Dexter Cow – Nassau Co. Fair. Mineola, NY 1923

The Herd of Dexter Cattle
 OWNED BY
 Castlegould Estate, Mr. Maurice Molloy, Agent,
 Port Washington, Long Island, New York.
 Consists of many choice individuals, including the best Royal prize winners of Ireland and England.
 Our Show at the 1911 New York State Fair
 Attracted much attention.

The Largest Herd of Kerry and Dexter Cattle in America
 IS OWNED BY
 Elmendorf Farm, Lexington, Kentucky.
 We own many imported cattle, including noted prizewinners, and have a limited number of choice animals for sale at reasonable prices.
 Visitors are always welcome at ELMENDORF.
 Electric car service from Lexington to the Farm.

ownership and size of the herds across the country. Fewer than 20 herds were located, but some were large and actively engaged in development. Many of the breeders were interested in having an organization and the American Kerry and Dexter Cattle Club was formed in July 1911 through correspondence, owing to the small number of owners and wide distribution across the country. The information gathered can be found in Vol I of the herd book issued in 1921. The two breeds were kept separate within the herd book, with offspring of a Dexter/Kerry cross considered a crossbreed and ineligible for registration. Kerry registrations numbered 77 and Dexters 292. This first attempt at organization failed soon after.

It wasn't until the year 1940 that another attempt to organize the Dexter breed was made in this country. John Logsdon with the help of Roy A. Cook reorganized the American Kerry and Dexter Cattle Club, with Mr. Logsdon as President, and Mr. Cook serving as Secretary/Treasurer. A second printing of the herd book was issued in 1949 with 471 Dexter registrations including those from the first issue; no new Kerry registrations had been added since 1920. The American Kerry and Dexter Cattle Club changed its name to the American Dexter Cattle Association In 1957.

Notices taken from Bulletin Two - March 1912
 American Kerry and Dexter Cattle Club

Got Purple? ... About Legacy

Legacy began in an effort to raise awareness among Dexter breeders of imported bulls bred from the English upgrade and appendix registries. The US Dexter associations at no time in their history every permitted upgrading (outcrossing). A legacy founder discovered these upgraded bloodlines and their overwhelming presence in the US registrations. US breeders had never been advised of the upgraded/outcrossed bloodlines, and the traditional foundation of pure bloodlines in the US were disappearing at an alarming rate.

Breeders interested in preserving these bloodlines were required to DNA genotype their cattle and to parentage confirm their calves to maintain integrity in the preservation effort. UCD was the choice for this testing. Legacy also worked to make a DNA record of all the oldest Dexters in the US using donated funds. As the DNA database and interest in the preservation effort grew, Legacy began to expand the testing and registration program to all Dexter owners.

LEGACY DATABASE Pedigree Categories	
LH	Legacy Horned - Directly descended from the original Irish and English imports.
TH	Traditional Horned- Descended from the original Irish and English imports plus Bullfinch
MH	Modern Horned – Horned, descended from modern imports from English Upgrading/Experimental programs. No polled genetics.
HP	Horned Polled – Horned, Descended from modern imports - English Upgrading/Experimental programs. Polled genetics included.
MP	Modern Polled – Polled, descended from modern imports – English Upgrading/Experimental programs.

Today, ALL Dexter groups are now using UCD for their testing, another goal accomplished by Legacy. Legacy has continually focused on the best interests of the breed; and its owners are achieving amazing innovative success in a short period of time. Legacy will CONTINUE to work to the interests of Dexters and their owners.

****LEGACY HAS BEEN WORKING FOR YOU – COME SHARE THE LEGACY****

The Legacy Dexter Cattle Registry is open to Dexter Cattle worldwide meeting the registration requirements. All Dexters must have their sire and dam registered in an existing Dexter Cattle Registry with a pedigree that can be traced to either the original Irish registrations or the English herd books.

Legacy offers a full service Dexter Cattle Registry for Dexter cattle with DNA genotypes, and testing service with minimal cost and maximum benefit. Registration is simple and expedient. LegacyDexterCattleRegistry.com

Legacy established the First Dexter Cattle Genotype database in America
 Legacy established the First Dexter bloodline preservation effort
 Legacy is the only North American Dexter group to participate in the UK Dexter DNA research at Cardiff University in England
 Legacy negotiated with the A2 Corporation for testing license in USA
 Legacy negotiated with Australia for testing license for Chondrodysplasia at UCD
 Legacy negotiated with Dr. Jon Beever for PHA testing at UCD
 Legacy was the FIRST to provide testing for all Dexter genetic tests at one laboratory
 Legacy negotiated UCD testing fees less than 50% of going rates and forced other labs to reduce fees
 Legacy developed the idea of direct testing for contract prices and worked with UCD management to implement the new feature
 Legacy online pedigree site has the only ancestor records prior to 1940

What is a Dexter? Sadly, this is a question we hear too often today. And it IS confusing. Is it this? Is it that? I thought Dexters were supposed to be small? Why does your Dexter have horns? And the list goes on..... We hear as many different descriptions as there are people answering; each with their own little twist on it. **Here at LDCB we keep it simple!** Just as it should be.

Simply put - A Dexter is exactly what it is supposed to be! What we all know it to be. Legacy Dexter Cattle Breeders holds standards to the very highest of all – The breed standard exactly as it was first published by The Dexter Cattle Society of England in 1900. Just as the breed was established – and as it was intended to be.

A Dexter is a Dexter is a Dexter.

Most importantly and without question – A dexter must be born of 2 Dexter parents. Cross-bred cattle can be both useful and productive; but as they are not true Dexters they are not part of the Preservation Effort. Both sire and dam must be registered and pure blooded for their offspring to be a pure blooded Dexter, with pedigrees going back to the foundation animals of the breed. There can be no instances of outcrossed genetics or “other-than-Dexter” influences documented in the pedigree.

Second, Dexters **MUST** meet the written Standard for the Breed. They must look like Dexters and exhibit the characteristics/traits of the breed. LDCB accepts and uses only the original breed standard as was intended by the founders.

It is the responsibility of all Breed Societies to respect and protect the breed entrusted into their care, and this is especially important with smaller rare breeds such as Dexters. With such limited numbers of animals in the gene pool, deviations and “fad” breeding can have a huge effect. We are seeing this across the spectrum today as so many of our much loved animals are losing their “special traits” in the rush to improve and commercialize the breeds. Unfortunately our Dexters have not been immune to this tragedy, and it only takes a quick look around to see the changes that have been brought on by such short sighted breeding practices and the failure to follow the written breed standard.

The LDCB is proud to accept this responsibility and to draw attention to the plight of the Traditional Dexter. Today, with over 85% of the registrations in America carrying up-graded and out-crossed genetics, the situation is becoming more alarming every year. We are working to preserve and protect those irreplaceable qualities that make our Dexters the most “unique” of cattle and the perfect tri-purpose breed.

Lose one – or the other..... and we have lost the breed

I AM A DEXTER



CHAUTAUQUA AOIFE

LEGACY # L01315TH-11HH

Born in 2011. Aoife is out of Ace of Clove Brook and Chautauqua Moirin, a daughter of Lochinvar. A beautiful cow, her bloodlines include so many of the finest Dexters with names like Peerless, Old Orchard, Colorado, Bedford, Tak-Sca-Du-Hav, and so many others.

The combination of Clove Brook and Lochinvar has worked well at Someday Maybe Farms.

Hey! Every issue we will be featuring another outstanding Traditional/Legacy Dexter. Send us a photo and a little something, and we can all **Share the Legacy!**



Brenn of Paradise – Dwarf Bull



Lochinvar – Non-dwarf Bull



Legacy Jams Tuatha Jitsy – Dwarf Cow



Legacy Blue Tully – Non-dwarf Cow



Walnut Lawn Shadwell – Dwarf bull

A Standard Description of the Dexter

1. The Dexter is essentially both a milk-producing and a beef making breed, and both these points should, in judging, be taken into consideration.
2. Colour.--Bulls.-Whole black or whole red (the two colours being of equal merit). A little white on organs of generation not to disqualify an animal which answers all other essentials of this standard description. Cows.- Whole black or whole red (the two colours being of equal merit). Black with white on the udder, or red with white on bag. The extension of the white of the udder slightly along the inside of flank or under side of the belly, or a little white on end of tail, shall not be held to disqualify an animal which answers all other essentials of this standard description.
3. Head AND Neck.--Head short and broad, with great width between the eyes, and tapering gracefully towards muzzle, which should be large, with wide distended nostrils. Eyes bright, prominent, and of a kind and placid expression. Neck short, deep and thick, and well set into the shoulders, which, when viewed in front, should be wide, showing thickness through the heart, the breast coming well forward. Horns.-These should be short and moderately thick, springing well from the head, with an inward and slightly upward curve.
4. Body.--Shoulders of medium thickness, full and well filled in behind, hips wide, quarters thick and deep and well sprung, flat and wide across loins, well ribbed up, straight underline, udder well forward, and broad behind with well-placed teats of moderate size, legs short (especially from knee to fetlock), strong, and well placed under body, which should be as close to the ground as possible. Tail well set on and level 'with back.
5. Skin.--The skin should be soft and mellow, and handle well, not too thin, hair fine, plentiful and silky.
6. Dexter Bulls should not exceed 900 Lbs., live weight, when in breeding condition. Dexter Cows should not exceed 800 Lbs., live weight, when in breeding condition.

It should be noted that this early standard describes Dexters with Chondrodysplasia (dwarfism). It should also be noted that at the time the standard was written genetic testing was not available, and dun had not been distinguished as being its own color, separate from red.



LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY



Our Mission



"To protect endangered livestock and poultry breeds from extinction"

Why save them?

These rare breeds are part of our national heritage and represent a unique piece of the earth's biodiversity. The loss of these breeds would impoverish agriculture and diminish the human spirit. We have inherited a rich variety of livestock breeds. For the sake of future generations, we must work together to safeguard these treasures.

www.livestockconservancy.org

LDCB in Action

Answering the call! While our group is just

beginning, our members are already making a real difference in the Dexter community. Getting the word out, educating our friends and fellow breeders, identifying and saving breeding stock for preservation. Our efforts are in full swing. And we are growing!

Preservation Projects

- Saving the Colorados - The Colorado herd was started in 1965 with 4 cows and 2 bulls and was maintained as a closed herd, preserving their early genetics. Marge and Mark Davis still have a few young Dexters on their farm today, but most are in preservation herds around the country to protect these early bloodlines.
- The Red Preservation Effort – The color red had almost disappeared from the traditional herd in this country. Thanks to the work of some very dedicated breeders, huge strides are being made. Very soon red Dexters will once again be part of the American herd and available for our breeders to add to their own herds.
- AI Bulls – LDCB is working to ensure that we have many fine bulls (pureblooded/no upgrades) available for today's AI needs and into the future. Locating and storing straws, creating a listing of bulls suitable for preservation and also encouraging members to have their outstanding bulls collected.
- Oxen – As modern-day Dexters are losing many of their tri-purpose traits and becoming essentially a small beef breed, some of our members are focusing on training Dexter oxen and sharing their fun and passion with their friends and fellow breeders. Thanks to their efforts, interest in Dexters as draft animals is growing.

Legacy Dexter Cattle Breeders

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 Vice President – Shaun Ann Lord
 Secretary – Karrie Winebrenner

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