

Scholarship Update 2005

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Summary of your study (approximately 100-200 words)

The aim of my study was to investigate how consistently high quality beef is produced and presented to the consumer in the USA. To achieve this aim all stages of beef production were studied across six states in the mid west of the USA. At each separate stage of production, quality factors were identified, and the efforts producers put into producing quality analysed. Beef quality was an extremely important factor at all stages of USA beef production and beef producers were focused on quality. Cattle were reared with beef eating quality as a criteria. British breeds which graded well on the USDA system were extremely popular; this popularity was reflected in their market value. The USDA system has been extremely successful in presenting good quality eating beef which is easily identifiable.

Impact of your studies on the Welsh Sheep and Beef Industry

There were many lessons for Welsh beef producers in the USA. The focus on identifiable eating quality had increased returns for beef farmers by £100 a head over three years. Ensuring that good eating quality beef was easily identifiable to the consumer had been a major factor in improving these returns. Beef farmers in the USA had a very firm grip on costs of production and only focused on costs which would improve profit and efficiency. There were many farmers which could identify the most profitable cow in a herd of 2000.

Benefit of the Scholarship Association to you

The scholarship Association is a group of progressive beef and sheep farmers. Discussion within the group is often invaluable when assessing one's own practice on farm.