

Cattle factsheet

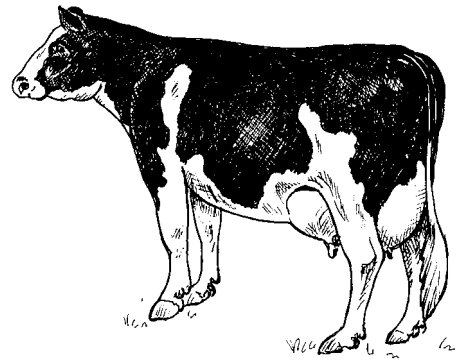
Name: Cattle

Male: Bull

Female: Cow

Young female: Heifer **Young male:** Bullock or steer

Baby: Calf



Where did they come from?

Descended from **aurochs** (large, extinct cattle).

Lifespan:

20-30 years naturally. Dairy cattle are usually slaughtered at around five years, beef cattle at 18 months and veal calves at four to five months old.

Special features:

Cattle are herd animals. They naturally live in groups.

How many are there?

1.78 million* dairy cattle and 1.6 million** beef cattle in the UK.

What's the point of keeping them as farm animals?

Beef cattle for meat – sausages, mince, steak and beef.

Dairy cattle for dairy products – milk, cream, cheese and yoghurt.

How are the animals kept on farms?

Dairy cattle:

To produce milk, cows need to give birth to calves. A dairy cow has one calf a year. In total, dairy cows produce 2.25 million calves a year. Some dairy cows now produce over 80 pints of milk a day.*

Beef cattle:

Beef cattle are bred to grow big and muscular. There have been some problems with selectively-bred cattle, including female animals experiencing difficulties at the time of giving birth (calving)

Most dairy and beef cattle usually spend spring and summer out in the fields and are housed in winter. Much of the housing that dairy herds are kept in can be uncomfortable for them. Some beef cattle housing may have slatted floors with no straw for the animals to lie down on.

Did you know?

About 40 per cent of the beef we eat is a by-product of the dairy industry – calves that are not needed or dairy cows at the end of their milk-producing lives.

* information correct as of 2014

**information correct as of 2013