

Salers

Calving ease
Maternal excellence
Optimum beef production

For many years, North American ranchers tried to import the Salers but the French would not allow it. Eventually a Frenchman who owned a ranch in Canada was successful. In 1971, the first stud Salers bull arrived in Canada, and soon afterwards Salers semen became available. Beef producers who used the semen quickly realised why the French valued the breed so highly. They found the Salers a rugged breed which solved production problems and improved carcass quality.

Stud and commercial cattlemen were attracted to the Salers breed after seeing the results in their own herds – in the last seven years the American Salers Association has jumped from 200 to 2,000 members and the Salers has won more carcass competitions than any other breed. In Australia, the exceptional qualities of the Salers are ideal for this country and will increase the production efficiency of quality beef for the domestic and export markets.



Origin

The Salers (pronounced 'sa-lair') is believed to be a direct descendant of the ancient Egyptian Red Cattle, and has been kept in the central, mountainous Auvergne region of France for centuries. Here at high altitudes the winters are severe and soil is poor, producing only native grasses. Because the country is too steep for cropping, the cattle are grazed in summer and fed hay in winter.

The unique characteristics of the Salers have evolved from their traditional system of management. Salers cows and calves were walked 100km up to the mountain pastures in spring where they were grazed nomadically and milked twice each day. Calves were kept in a yard separated from the cows and taken to them at milking. When the cow let her milk down, the suckling calf was tied to the cow's front leg while the cow was milked by hand as it stood untethered in the field. Some milk was left for the calf to suckle before it was returned to the yard. The milk was then made into cheese and sold.

The Salers has been kept as a triple-purpose breed – milk, beef and draught. It is a pure race of cattle which has developed during centuries of geographical isolation. Unlike other European breeds, it has never been kept in intensely managed farm confinement conditions.



Salers

The Balanced Breed



The Salers breed has all the economically important traits present in balance – you do not have to forgo one trait to achieve another.

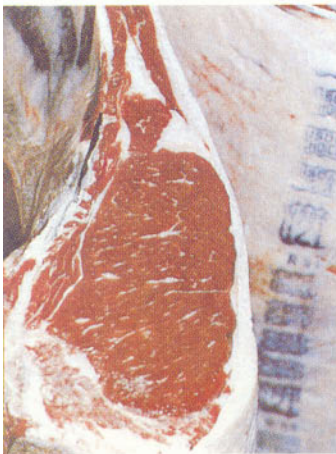
Calving ease is due to low birth-weight, wide pelvic opening (widest of the European breeds) and a slender, lengthy foetal conformation.

Milk Production is high – over 3,000lit in 274 days at 3.59% fat and 3.28%

protein. The French earned their main income from milk products.

Fertility is high – cows breed back quickly, heifers mature early. French research results show that Salers cows have higher conception rates and deliver a higher percentage of live calves than any breed tested (includes Simmental, Charolais and Limousin, the latter two both French breeds also).

Hardiness is fundamental to the breed. The Salers has been bred to produce from native pasture on steep mountainsides at high altitudes. The cattle are excellent mothers and persistent foragers. French studies show that the Salers has higher milk production per cow exposed than any other European breed.



Growth Rate is high. Canadian data from 58,000 cows shows Salers calves have the highest weaning weights of the 16 breeds tested. One of the major bull tests in the USA called the Midland Bull Test says that the Salers bulls top almost every breed every year with daily gain from 1.5-2.0kg. Low energy, high roughage rations are used in the Midland tests.

Carcase Yield and Quality is high. Salers and Salers crossbreds have consistently won or been highly placed in carcass competitions in North America in the eighties.

Bulls are virile. Beef producers in North America have found bull numbers can be reduced by 25% when using Salers bulls in their commercial herds.

Temperament – Salers are quiet and friendly because they are used to being associated with people. The French never kept an ill-tempered animal.



Calves are hardy with high calving and weaning percentages.

Salers

The Vigorous Crossbred

The Salers evolved through simple necessity. It offers the crossbreeder excellence in function and huge gains through hybrid vigour. These are not just theoretical, but have been proved through the many wins in carcass competitions and the extensive use of the breed in commercial herds. The Salers reduces management and increases production and profit. The main factors involved are:-

Calving problems are eliminated – the Salers has the widest pelvic opening of the European breeds. (More calves and less work.)

Low calf birthweight combined with high growth rate. (Higher production per cow.)

Twins help catch up any calf losses without adding a management problem. (Higher profits.)

Increased milking and mothering ability. (Higher weaning weights, higher profits.)

Vigorous foraging ability. (Lower management costs.)

Greater longevity means less replacement heifers. (Lower production costs, less work, lower capital expenditure in breeding stock.)

Hybrid vigour increases growth rate. (Higher profits.)

Improvement in carcass characteristics – higher yield, more marbling, less waste fat. (Higher profits.)

Higher herd fertility means heifers breed and calve early. (Lower costs and less work.)

Structural soundness. (Higher profits, less feedlot culls.)

The unmatched versatility of the Salers means more calves, less work and higher profits for the commercial producer.



Salers x Angus



Salers x Charolais



Salers x Hereford

Salers

Growth and Carcase

In France, the Salers easily weans a 320kg calf off pasture alone. These calves then grow at a daily rate of gain almost equal to the European 'terminal sires'. In the UK, tests have found Salers x steers weighed heavier than European crossbreds at the same age, and sold for a higher price per kilogram. In one test, a calf rearing unit compared Salers x calves with calves of three European crosses. The Salers calves were lighter at the start, heavier at the finish (12 weeks of age) and consumed less feed per kilogram of gain.

In America, test results show that the Salers as a group has consistently the highest grading carcasses. In a national test they also had the highest yield, came second for marbling and came first for muscling expressed as square inches of ribeye per 100lb of carcase. A pen of five Salers steers also posted the top feed efficiency. In the eighties, the Salers has consistently won Grand Champion or Reserve in carcase contests at the Great Western Beef Expo. The Salers is now preferred in feedlots.

The Salers bull maintains high growth rates and improves carcase quality. It also reduces management by minimising calving problems, increasing herd fertility and longevity and producing vigorous, better milking replacements.



Salers

The Ideal Breed for Australian Conditions

The Salers has a unique set of characteristics which makes it the preferred breed for the Australian cattleman. It has undergone centuries of intense selection for high productivity – fertility, calving ease, milking ability, growth rate, fodder conversion efficiency and carcass quality. The French also selected for grazing ability, quiet temperament, ease of handling and intelligence.

The Salers possesses surprising combinations of attributes – twinning, high growth rate coupled with low birthweight, moderate fat cover with a marbled carcass, excellent terminal characteristics in a maternal breed, vigorous and healthy on pasture and high feedlot performance. Research and trials have proved this throughout the world.

The Salers is rapidly gaining in popularity in Australia because it combines all the factors of economic importance backed by centuries of production off grass in a tough environment. This simply means more calves, less work and higher profits. It's plain commonsense.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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