



All About Scottish Highland Cattle

Highland cattle are the oldest registered breed of cattle with a Herd Book being published in 1885. The Scottish Highland Cattle Society was formed in 1884 and most of the cattle registered were black. Originally, there were two subgroups of Highland cattle, which today are merged into one. The smaller, mostly black or brindled cattle were raised on the western islands and were known as Kyloes, and the larger red animals of the Scottish mainland. Today, Highland cattle may be red, black yellow, white, brindle, silver or dun in color. All these colors are recognized by the registry, but only solid colored animals are allowed to be shown in the sanctioned shows.

Archeological evidence of the Highland breed goes back to the 6th century with written records existing from the 12th century. The first recorded importation into the United States occurred in the late 1890's when western cattlemen recognized the need to improve the hardiness of their cattle herds. Earlier importations are likely to have occurred since large numbers of Scotch/Irish immigrants came to this country early on, but the absence of a registry precludes any definitive proof. The American Highland Cattle Association registry was formed in 1948. The reasons these ranchers selected Highland Cattle are the same reasons you should also consider the breed.

Highland Breed Characteristics include:

- **Hardiness and vigor** - Highland cattle are noted for their hardiness and vigor. Natural selection over the centuries in the harsh climate of Scotland ensured that only the most efficient animals would survive to breed. The gene pool today remains largely intact allowing them to thrive where other breeds struggle.
- **Hair Coat** - The double coat of hair (long, course, outer layer and soft wooly inner layer) is one of the most notable differences between Highlands and all other breeds. The coat reduces the need for expensive barns and shelters. It is not unusual to see Highlands grazing a day or two after a winter storm with snow still melting off their backs, they are so well insulated. The long hair over the eyes (dossan) helps reduce the incidence of pinkeye and other fly borne problems. According to one breeder, Highlands feed intake does not increase until -18°F compared to 32°F in many other breeds. In addition, the long hair means that the animal does not have to produce a layer of fat to stay warm. This allows the animal to marble naturally on low input forage while producing lean, low-fat, high quality cuts of beef. Highlands shed out earlier in the spring and produce less hair in warm climates making them suitable throughout the U.S.

- **Easy Handling** - Highlands have a long, close history of living with humans. Early Scots would keep the cows downstairs to provide warmth for the family on the second story and to ensure the neighbors did not help themselves to the family's wealth. Highlands tend to be docile and calm and do not stress easily. They are easy to work with despite their long horns. Primarily, the horns are used to knock down brush to graze on, predator control and scratching. Horns on females are generally upswept and finer textured compared to the male Highlands. Male horns are massive and point more forward than the female Highlands.
- **Exceptional Mothering & Calving Ease** - Highland cows calve easily and are highly devoted and protective mothers. Calves are small, 40-60 pounds and birthing assists are rare. They produce rich milk allowing for their calf's steady weight gain. Cows may produce into their late teens reducing the need for frequent herd replacements.



Highlands are slow maturing which make the meat fine textured and succulent. In a recent study at Manyberries Research Station, Canada, groups of Hereford, Highland and Highland Herefords crossed were tested. The Highland groups produced 2,000 pounds more beef than the purebred Herefords, while the Highland/Hereford crosses produced 6,000 pounds more than the pure Hereford groups.



2010 Grand Champion Bull – Almosta Farm Koal

Highland cows will average 900-1200 pounds when mature. Bulls will average from 1500-2000 pounds depending on forage conditions. A study by the Scottish Agricultural College determined that Highland beef is significantly lower in fat and cholesterol and higher in protein and iron than other beef breeds.

The British Royal family maintains a fold of Highland Cattle at Balmorals Castle. They are considered royal beef of choice. Highland Cattle gives the rare opportunity for commoners to eat like the royal family. Highland Cattle Societies are found in Great Britain (Scotland), United States, Canada, Australia and several European Countries. The animals are referred to as Scottish Highland Cattle, Scotch Highland Cattle, Highland Cattle or Highlanders. Regardless of where they are located today, Highland cattle can trace their ancestry to Scotland.

Importations of Scottish stock and semen in the U.S. and Canada have served to assure continuation of the Highland gene pool.



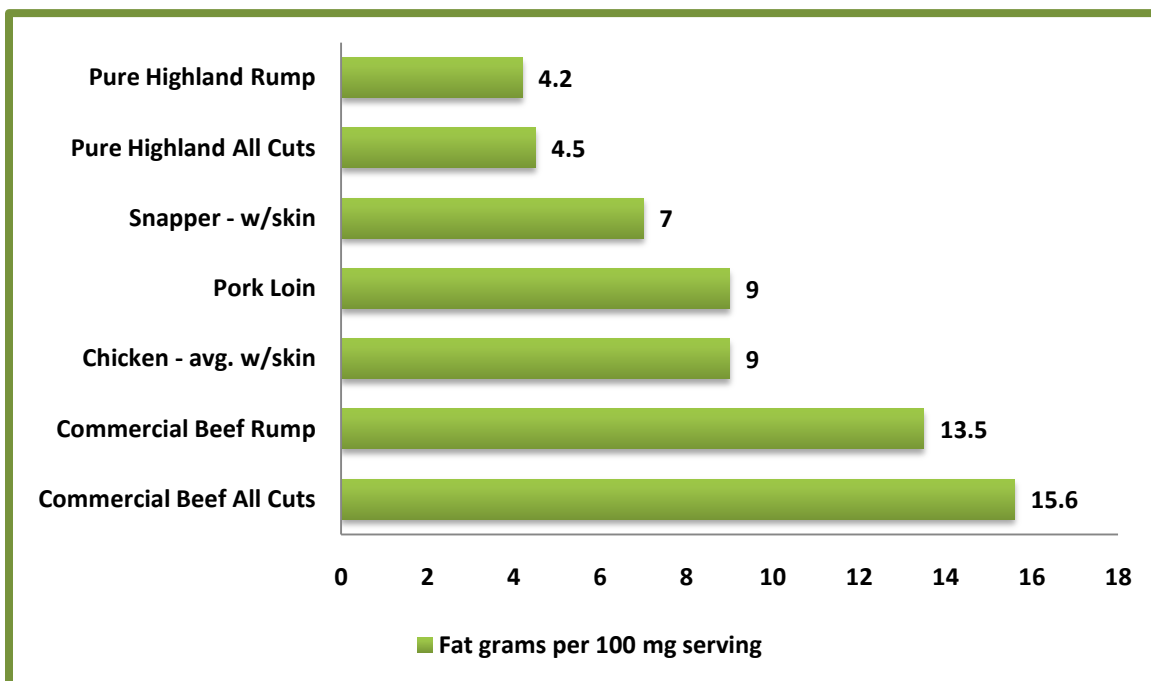
Highland cattle provide the opportunity to produce a premium quality beef with less cost and effort. They fit into a variety of operations from small farm to commercial beef operations. They are a true multi-purpose animal, producing meat, milk and fiber. Highlands can be used as oxen or for clearing land of unwanted brush. Many people just enjoy seeing and experiencing these beautiful animals in their pastures. Highland Cattle have a rich history and those working in the Highland breed today see an exciting future ahead. Highland Cattle are a dynamic part of our history and will play an important part in the future in the grass fed cattle industry.



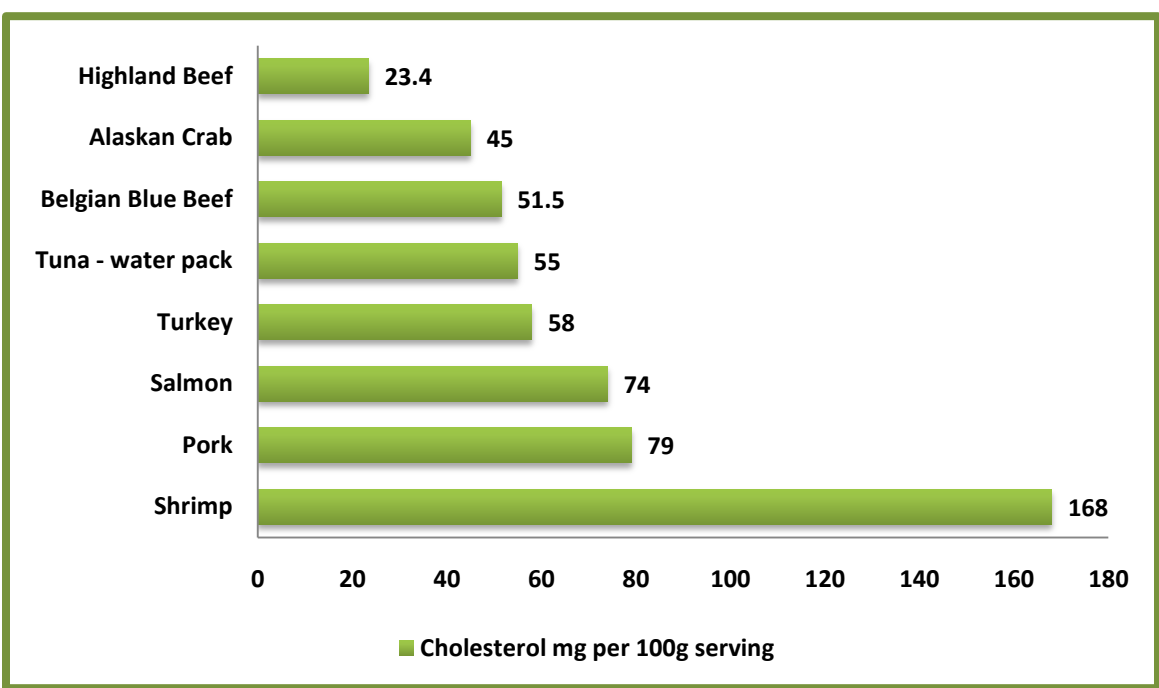
The following charts illustrate data collected from scientific tests carried out on Highland Beef by the Scottish Environmental Studies. These tests demonstrated convincing evidence that Highland Beef is significantly lower in fat and cholesterol, along with being higher in protein and iron than any other beef tested.

Also, the charts show additional data collected by food scientists at Scottish Agriculture College led by Dr. Ivy Barclay, Head of the Food Science and Technology Department. The published analytical results were determined by comparing pure Highland Beef cuts to comparable cuts from all beef cuts published by McCance & Widdowson at the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF).

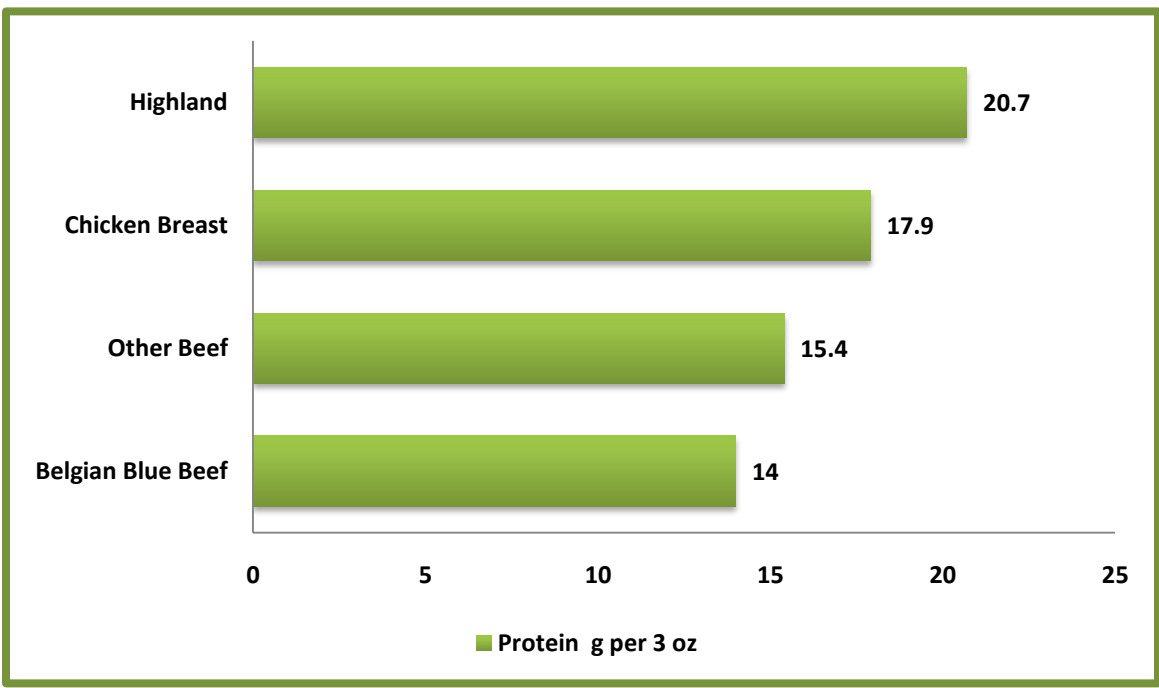
Fat Comparison



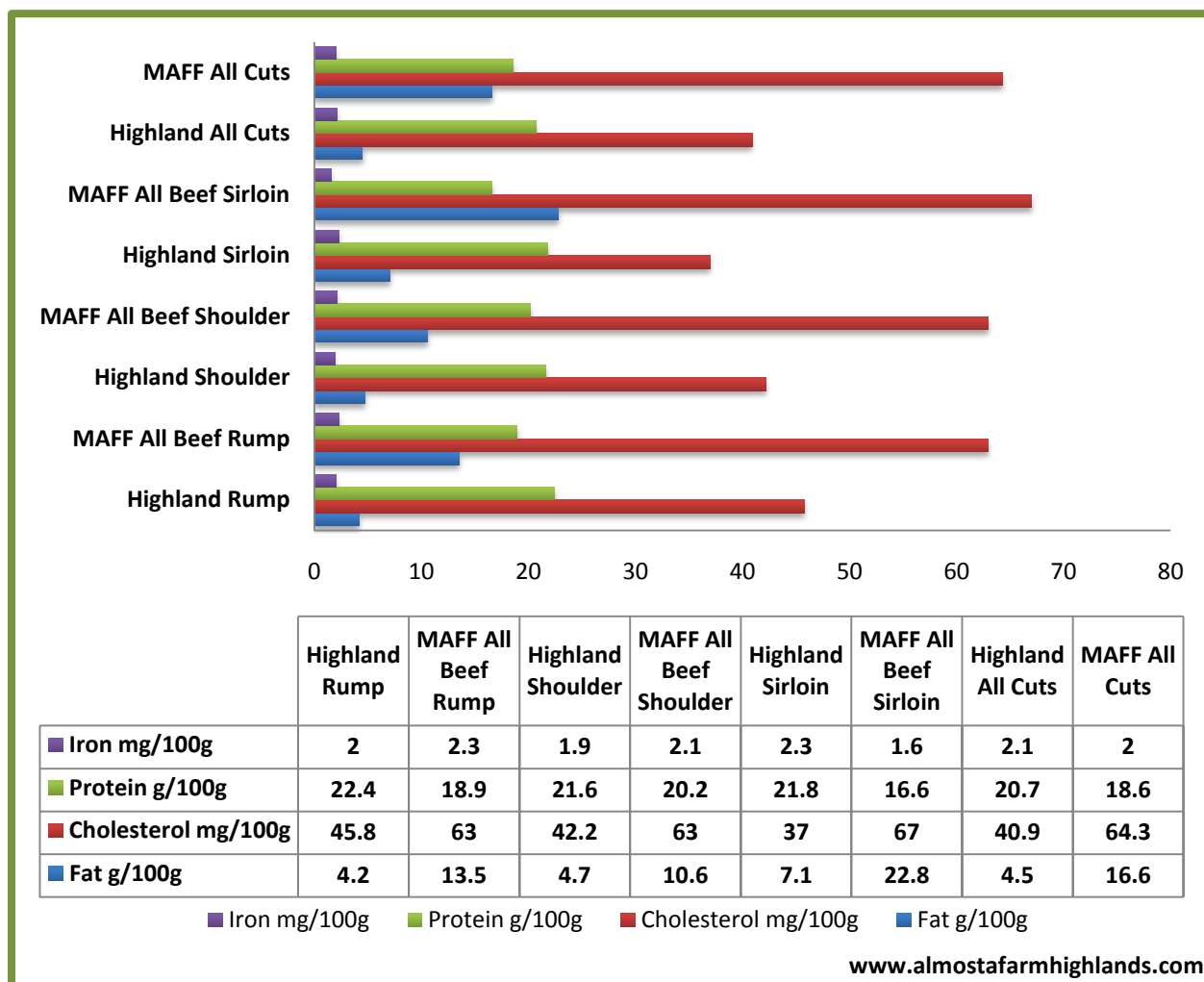
Cholesterol Comparison



Protein Comparison



Iron, Protein, Cholesterol & Fat Comparison on Specific Beef Cuts



Data compiled from Scottish Agricultural College, Scottish Environmental Studies & McCance & Widdowson at the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF).