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# Devon Cattle Breeders' Society

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**Breed Secretary**  
Catherine Broomfield  
[www.redrubydevon.co.uk](http://www.redrubydevon.co.uk)  
[dcbs@redrubydevon.co.uk](mailto:dcbs@redrubydevon.co.uk)  
01404 812800

**Registered Office**  
Blacklake Farm  
East Hill  
Ottery St Mary  
Devon  
EX11 1QA

PUBLISHED: MAY 2012  
UPDATE: DECEMBER 2015

## Buyers' Guide

This guide is intended for people considering the purchase of registered pedigree Red Ruby Devon Cattle. Whether you are new to keeping cattle, new to the breed or already keep Red Ruby Devons and simply want to refresh yourself on the important things to check when buying cattle, this guide should be of help.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Devon Cattle Breeders' Society (DCBS) is the breed society for Red Ruby Devon Cattle in the United Kingdom. The Society is a limited company and registered charity. Its aim can be summarised as maintaining the purity of the breed (adhering to its published Standard of Excellence), promoting the breed, and maintaining the Devon Davy Herd Book.

The Devon Davy Herd Book was first published in 1851 and is now also available online to DCBS members from the society website [www.redrubydevon.co.uk](http://www.redrubydevon.co.uk)

Only Red Ruby Devon Cattle listed in the Devon Davy Herd Book are registered pedigree cattle. Only calves with a registered pedigree mother and a registered pedigree father can be automatically registered themselves.

The Society employs a Breed Secretary, Catherine Broomfield, who is there to provide help, advice and guidance to anyone considering buying cattle. The Breed Secretary can check animal's registration status and lineage details for any prospective buyer.

Red Ruby Devon Cattle can also be referred to as "North Devon" and "Devon" cattle.

### **FIRST STEPS**

If you are considering keeping Red Ruby Devons for the first time, it is important to take some time just getting your "eye in" with the breed. The best way to do this is to go out and visit herds on farms.

Reputable breeders will be delighted to show you their herd and give you advice based on their own experience. Information on breeders can be found on the website. The Breed Secretary can help you get in touch with breeders near you. The Secretary will also be able to take into account any other

criteria you have, such as high health status herds, organic herds, or animals being kept in a similar environment to your own farm, for example.

Another important opportunity to see cattle and meet breeders is at the numerous summer agricultural shows and specialist beef cattle shows. A full list of shows at which the society is in attendance is published on the website or is available from the Secretary.

The Society also holds two official Show & Sales each year – March and September. These are held at Sedgemoor Auction Centre, Junction 24 of the M5. Catalogue details are available from the Secretary, the website, or from the Society's auctioneers, Greenslade Taylor Hunt.

## **FINDING CATTLE**

Once you have decided to go ahead with keeping Red Ruby Devons, finding cattle for sale is easy. You can contact the Secretary to help put you in touch with breeders who have cattle to sell, or you can visit the stock for sale pages of the society's website. The Society's bi-annual sales provides an excellent opportunity to purchase good quality cattle and there are a number of benefits to you buying at the Society's sale:

1. All cattle entered into the Sale are inspected by DCBS Inspection team to ensure they meet the breed's Standard of Excellence and the Society's weight-for-age guidelines.
2. All cattle sold at Society sales are registered pedigree cattle with their DCBS paperwork in full order.
3. All bulls sold at Society sales are BVD tested negative and vaccinated.
4. All females sold at Society sales can only be sold "in calf" on the presentation of a veterinary PD certificate
5. All cattle sold at Society sales are sold with a National Beef Association Warranty
6. All cattle sold at Society sales benefit from free transfers. This presents a saving to the buyer of (currently) £15.60 per female and £19.20 per bull (steers n/a)

## **BEFORE YOU COMMIT YOURSELF**

Generally you will expect to pay a premium for pedigree registered cattle. That is why it is important to be sure that you are buying a correctly registered animal BEFORE you commit to the purchase.

A reputable breeder will be only too happy to show you the original Devon Cattle Breeders' Society Pedigree Certificate of each animal you are looking to buy. This certificate will be signed by the Society's Secretary and will clearly show the name and ear tag number of the animal to which it relates.

*It is important that you are shown the original pedigree certificate. Copies of the document are not adequate proof of pedigree status.*

If a pedigree certificate is not available or if you simply want to double-check your facts, any prospective purchaser is welcome to contact the Secretary who will be able to check animal status on request.

## **OTHER THINGS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT**

### **1. Registration of Bulls**

The Society's current rules state that all bulls must first pass an inspection (by DCBS inspectors) before they can be registered and entered into the Herd Book.

Bulls cannot be inspected until they are at least 12 months of age. If you are considering buying a Red Ruby Devon Bull you must first satisfy yourself on the its pedigree registered status:

### **Is the bull registered?**

Ask the breeder for sight of the pedigree certificate and/or check with the Secretary

### **Is the bull being sold “unregistered, pending inspection”?**

All calves, whether female or male, MUST be birth notified with the Society within 6 months of their birth date. “Birth Notification” is not the same as “Registration”. Birth Notification must happen within 6 months of a calves’ birth date and is the pre-requisite, but not the guarantee, to registration into the Herd Book.

If you are considering buying a pedigree bull which is not registered because he has not yet been inspected, then check with the Secretary that the animal has a Birth Notification number. Without this number the bull will not be eligible for inspection and can therefore never be registered.

Buyers should be aware that no matter how good the bull looks, or how established and well-regarded the breeder, there is NO GUARANTEE that the bull will pass inspection for registration. Therefore if you buy a bull which is Birth Notified with the DCBS, but is still pending inspection for registration, you must be aware that you are taking on the risk that the bull may subsequently fail inspection.

ONLY calves by a registered pedigree Red Ruby Devon Bull can be registered into the Herd Book.

## **2. Buying females**

All female calves must be *at least* birth notified within 6 months of their birth date. “Birth Notification” is the pre-requisite to registering an animal into the Herd Book.

Females do not routinely need to be inspected before being registered. The majority of breeders elect to proceed straight to registration of their female calves at birth (i.e. within 6 months of their birth date).

However, some breeders may quite properly decide only to birth notify female calves as they may then assess them for suitability for breeding at a later age, rejecting some for breeding, and only registering the ones they decide to retain. Birth Notified females retained for breeding in this way can go on to be registered at a later date.

ONLY calves out of a registered female and by a registered bull can be registered in the Herd Book.

Whatever the route taken by the breeder, from a buyers’ viewpoint it is probably best to buy an animal which has been registered before purchase as, if nothing else, this saves the buyer from the additional expense of paying for registration fees.

## **3. Other Costs**

Once you have assured yourself as the registered pedigree status of the animals you are planning to buy, you need only to take into account the following costs:

A: Transfer costs. It is the buyers’ responsibility to pay for pedigree transfer costs. These are currently £15.60 for a female and £19.20 for a bull. Once you have purchased the cattle from your

vendor, the vendor will return the pedigree certificate to the DCBS Office – not to you, the buyer. Pedigree Certificates must be returned to the DCBS office in order that the Secretary validates the transfer and stamps the pedigree certificate.

If you are already a member of the DCBS, the Secretary will automatically process the transfer for you. If you are not yet a member of DCBS, contact the Secretary to receive a transfer request form.

B: Membership and Herd Prefix. Now that you own registered pedigree Red Ruby Devons you will probably want to start breeding your own registered pedigree animals. To do this you must be a member of the DCBS and own a Herd Prefix. There are a number of different categories of membership. Details and costs can be obtained from the Secretary.

#### **4. Joining the Society**

There are many “fringe” benefits to being a member of the Devon Cattle Breeders’ Society, such as social events, educational members’ events, networking, trading, information, advice, regular publications, newsletters, and a full time Secretary’s office to support and assist you. As a member you will belong to a Society founded in 1855 which has a great heritage and an even greater future as well as some 600+ other members who all share your interest in, and love of, Red Ruby Devon Cattle.

You can only start a pedigree herd and register cattle into the Herd Book, if you are a member of the Society. Pedigree status improves the marketability and value of your cattle. The good news is that the Devon Cattle Breeders’ Society works hard to ensure its fees are as low as possible and are fees are good value and very competitive compared with other Breed Societies.

If you would like to consider joining the Devon Cattle Breeders’ Society, please contact the Breed Secretary, Catherine Broomfield, who will be delighted to help you.

Contact Catherine on: 01404 812800 or email [dcbs@redrubydevon.co.uk](mailto:dcbs@redrubydevon.co.uk)

*This document is intended as a guide only. It reflects the rules, regulations and fees of the Devon Cattle Breeders’ Society as at the date of publication. The Society is not bound to be held to the information set out in this guide. The Society accepts no responsibility for actions taken by the reader regards decisions on the purchase, sale or management of cattle as a result of reading this guide. E&OE*

PATRON: HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, K.T., G.C.B., A.D.C

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