

Crossbreeding results

Californian success for Scandinavian Reds

The Montbeliarde and Scandinavian Red crossbred cattle are performing very well in the Californian trial involving seven big dairies:

First lactation averages (305 days, 2x milking)

Breed	Number	Milk kg	Fat %	Prot %
Holstein x Holstein	380	9890	3.56	3.10
Normande x Holstein	245	8592	3.76	3.24
Montbeliarde x Holstein	494	9202	3.66	3.17
Scandinavian Red x Holstein	328	9308	3.68	3.20

Second lactation averages (305 days, 2x milking)

Breed	Number	Milk kg	Fat %	Prot %
Holstein x Holstein	310	11,964	3.57	3.11
Normande x Holstein	217	10,071	3.72	3.24
Montbeliarde x Holstein	432	10,683	3.74	3.20
Scandinavian Red x Holstein	274	10,782	3.75	3.22

Swedish Reds much better for calving ease

Calving difficulty for the pure Holsteins and Normande crossbred calves was higher than for the other breeds, with the S.Red being by far the best breed for calving ease:

Calving Difficulty:

Mating	1st calf heifers	2nd-5th calvings
Holstein x Holstein	16.4%	8.4%
Normande x Holstein	na	8.7%
Montbeliarde x Holstein	11.6%	5.4%
Brown Swiss x Holstein	12.5%	4.9%
Scandinavian Red x Holstein	5.5%	2.1%

The trials showed that S.Red crossbred daughters also calved much more easily.

UK results show Swedish Reds last longest

Messrs Quicke have been crossbreeding for 9 years and have monitored survival of the different breeds in their 300 cow herd in Devon:

Mating	No. calves born	%survived to 4th calving at 5yrs
Holstein x Holstein	221	34%
NZ Friesian x Holstein	259	40%
Swedish Red x Holstein	318	49%

The above results confirm that the Swedish Red breed is an excellent choice for crossbreeding and it's not surprising that it is the most popular choice of breed for farmers in the US and second most popular in the UK (after the Friesian).

