

Booths Case Study

National Trust

Booths has become Britain's first food retail chain to gain the coveted 'National Trust Fine Farm Produce Award' for traditional beef, which is now exclusively available in selected Booths stores. Nationally recognised as an industry leader for its support of regional producers, Booths has been working with National Trust tenant farmers in Cumbria for the past three years to enable its customers to enjoy traditional breed dry-aged beef.

Rob Macklin, The National Trust's Head of Agriculture added: "The National Trust Fine Farm Produce Awards place a special emphasis on celebrating the best taste, quality and production of food from National Trust farms. To gain the award, products must meet National Trust environment standards and all livestock, farms must be certified organic or Freedom Food (RSPCA) assured. Traditional breeds of beef cattle have to be born and reared on National Trust farms to be included in the scheme. Finally all the products must pass strict taste tests where they must match or exceed quality alternatives. Over 50 products have received the awards since 2006 but only the best make the grade."

National Trust tenant farmers in Cumbria who are part of the scheme, include Raymond and Elaine Richardson from Burnt House Farm at Wasdale in the Western Lake District. They are the second generation of the family to run the farm and their son Graeme hopes to be the third generation. The family took over Burnt House in 1960 and keep 60 pedigree Aberdeen Angus cows.

The beef is grown up to 30 months to provide premium cuts such as top side, Sirloin and fillet, compared with standard beef which is only 20 to 24 months old.

The hind quarters of traditional breed cattle such as Aberdeen Angus, Galloway, Shorthorn, Highland and Hereford are hung on the bone for 21 days to dry age the meat. The beef is then de-boned and further matured for an extra seven days in a controlled environment to guarantee fullness of flavour. This process gives the beef a completely unique and exquisite taste.