

Cattle tales



Local or Native Cattle



Sahiwal Cattle



Mirkadim Cattle



Red Chittagong Cattle (RCC)

Bangladesh is home to various cattle breeds and their crosses. Although it is hard to distinguish between the breeds, as farmers do not keep accounts of the cattle being bred, they can be identified based on their phenotypical characteristics. The most commonly found breeds in the nation are Native, Sahiwal, Sindhi, Holstein-Friesian, Jersey, Brahman, Red Chittagong Cattle, Pabna Cattle, and Mirkadim Cattle.

LOCAL OR NATIVE CATTLE

It has been a part of this region's cattle history for over a hundred years and evolved to survive feed shortage conditions. They are comparatively smaller, and the adults do not weigh more than 150 to 250 kilograms. The native cattle have striking features like prominent humps, deep shoulders, well-developed hind quarters, but the head is slim with pointed, crescent-shaped horns. The meat acquired from this breed of cattle contains considerably higher intramuscular fat, and is overall juicy and tender. A native cow yields about 47-52 percent of its weight in meat.

Pabna Cattle, as the name suggests, is from Pabna, Sirajganj, as well as areas in Tangail, Dhaka, Manikganj and Bogura. They are actually cross breeds of Sahiwal /Sindhi or Haryana breeds with the native or local cattle. During dry winters, a lot of the lush green pastures are seen in the riverine char districts of Pabna and Sirajganj, which is a naturally nourishing feed for the cattle. They are larger in size than their native counterparts, and weight around 250-400 kilograms, and are usually grey, deep red, faun (red) or mixture of red and white in colour. Their physical features like their hump and shoulders are very similar to zebu cattle.

RED CHITTAGONG CATTLE (RCC)

Found in the greater plains of Chittagong, as well as to a smaller extent in Noakhali and southern

regions of Comilla, the Red Chittagong Cow (RCC) is similar in most ways to the native or local cattle, except that its coats as well as tongue, eye-brow, eye-ball, eye-lash, horns, hooves and tail are bright faun (red) colour. A typical male RCC cattle weighs about 250-400 kilograms, while its female counterparts are roughly 150-250 kilograms. The amount of meat collected from one cattle is roughly 48-52 percent of its actual weight, and in addition, it has a higher intramuscular fat with juicy and fat characteristics.

SAHIWAL CATTLE

It gets its name from the Sahiwal district of Punjab in Pakistan, where it originated from a breed of Zebu cattle. Primarily used for dairy production, this breed of cattle also yields meat of excellent quality. Their phenotypical characteristics include a prominent hump, deep shoulders, pendulous ears, dewlap, and well-developed hind quarters, and a wide bulging head with loose brown skin mostly. Compared to native cattle, Sahiwal Cattle are relatively larger, weighing about 350-450 kilograms and almost 47-52 percent of their actual weight yields meat.

SINDHI CATTLE

Particularly the red Sindhi cattle, is popular not just for its dairy production, but also yields good meat. The most well-known amongst the Zebu dairy breeds, it originated in the Sindh province of Pakistan, and is widely used in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and other countries for milk production. They are phenotypically similar to the Sahiwal, but usually have dark brown to deep brick coat in colour, with loose skin and pendulous ears. They weigh about 350-450 kilograms, of which, 47-52 percent can be used as meat. The quality of the meat is excellent, with a high muscle to fat content.

HOLSTEIN FRIESIAN LOCAL CROSS

This breed is known for temperate dairy nature, and their origins can

be traced back to Holland. Although primarily known for their excellent dairy production, the male cattle produce almost 40 percent of the beef globally, specifically ground and roast beef. While pure-bred adult cattle can weigh about 500 kilograms, a properly crossbred one can weigh up to 350-400 kilograms within a span of 2-2.5 years. Almost half of the cattle's weight can be collected in the form of meat, which is comparatively less fatty, but still tender. These cattle are best used for beef fattening because of their gentle nature and high growth rate.

MIRKADIM CATTLE

The Mirkadim gets its name from an area in Munshiganj where they are farmed. But not all cattle bred here are known as the special 'Mirkadem er goru,' which are rectangular in shape, with a mostly white colour, while its horn, eyelid, eyebrow, tail head, muzzle looks reddish white. They can grow up to 3 to 5 feet in height, and 4 to 7 feet in length. The meat from these cattle is considered to be of premium quality with a distinctively superior taste that no other breed has. Roughly half of its actual weight's percentage is yielded as meat.

By LS Desk
Photo courtesy: Bengal Meat

CATTLE SEXES

Bull: An uncastrated adult male is called a bull.

Steer: A castrated male is called a steer.

Heifer: A young female before she has had a calf of her own and is under two and half years of age is called a heifer.

Cow: An adult female that has had a calf is a cow.

Source: Collected