

MEDIA RELEASE

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ALLIANCE GROUP'S NEW PREMIUM BEEF PRODUCT WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

Leading food company Alliance Group's new premium beef product has won international honours with gold and bronze awards in the World Steak Challenge.

The co-operative's Pure South HANDPICKED 55 Day Aged Beef won the gold medal for rib eye and bronze medal for fillet at the event in London. The competition benchmarks the quality of beef production against global competitors.

Pure South HANDPICKED 55 Day Aged Beef is based on an innovative grading system that is focused on superior eating quality. Internationally-accredited master graders carefully hand select carcasses from prime cattle of any breed.

The selection is based on quantifiable meat quality characteristics such as marbling, fat cover, fat colour and pH. Alliance selects from Prime animals only (Steer and Heifer), and the carcase must have a marbling score of 4+, and pH of 5.7 or lower. Selected cuts are then aged in a vacuum bag for 55 days. Only a fraction of the very finest beef ever makes the grade.

The product, the first within Pure South's HANDPICKED range, is aimed exclusively at the food service sector. It was launched in May following a three-year research and development programme and extensive chef and premium restaurant trials.

Peter Russell, General Manager Marketing at Alliance, said the product has an unprecedented level of tenderness and a milder beef flavour profile, suitable for a variety of eating experiences.

"The product has been developed with restaurants in mind. The extended wet ageing of the product means chefs may choose to serve immediately or further dry age.

"Feedback from our trials at restaurants around the country and from 'blind' taste testing alongside other premium beef products has been exceptional with chefs reporting an unprecedented level of succulence, tenderness and flavour.

"This award provides international affirmation of the programme's objectives – being breed agnostic, selecting only the finest quality carcasses and pre-ageing the product before release.

"The success in this competition and the independent gold medal is a very powerful stamp of quality that will be used as an integral part of the product marketing.

"This accolade on the world stage underlines the value of our commitment to building a differentiated premium portfolio, directed to specific channels and consumer requirements and offering farmers the opportunity to partner with us on products for new segments across our entire range."

Heather Stacy, General Manager Livestock and Shareholder Services at Alliance, said: "HANDPICKED 55 Day Aged Beef is a further step in the company's strategy to capture more market value for farmer shareholders.

“We’d like to see more animals making the grade. We are collecting a range of data from the selection process to identify attributes that may influence marbling outcomes. Once we have collated 18-24 months of data, we will be able to provide feedback to farmers on those factors.”

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NOTES TO EDITOR

Alliance Group is a co-operative owned by approximately 5,000 farmer shareholders.



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