

Farmers celebrate protected status for Irish grass-fed beef

By Elizabeth Schroeder | 10 March 2024 | 7:00 pm

Irish grass-fed beef has been awarded an EU all-Ireland Protected Geographical Indication (PGI). According to FarmingUK, this was a protection similar to that given to champagne in France, and Irish whiskey.



[BBC News reported](#) that cattle included in the status would be required to spend at least 220 days a year on pasture, and at least 90% of their feed intake would have to be derived from grass, while only selected higher-grade beef cattle would be eligible.

There are three other products from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland that had previously been awarded PGI status: poitín (a traditional distilled beverage), cream and whiskey.

The Republic of Ireland already had five other products with PGI status: Clare Island salmon; Timoleague brown pudding; Connemara Hill lamb; Waterford blaa (bread rolls); and Sneem black pudding.

PGI status was awarded to products “produced, processed or prepared within the specified geographical area [that] have particular features, qualities or a reputation attributable to that area”, the BBC report said.

Speaking at an event to celebrate the award, the Northern Ireland minister for agriculture, environment and rural affairs, Andrew Muir, said this meant the Irish grass-fed beef brand would be enhanced, and “make sure it’s at the top of shelves internationally”.

“Having a PGI is a triumph, a recognition of how the unique climate, landscape and practices of a region translate into food and drink, bestowing them with a distinctive taste and character.”

Muir applauded both the Livestock and Meat Commission for Northern Ireland and Board Bia (Irish Food Board) for collaborating with processors and farmers during the application process.

The Republic of Ireland’s agriculture minister, Charlie McConalogue, told [FarmingUK](#) that it was a “very positive day” for farmers and the beef sector on the island of Ireland.

“The primary produce from Irish farmers that goes into creating our internationally respected quality food is the backbone of our agri-food sector. Securing the PGI status is recognition of these premium standards.”