What is Livestock Judging?

• Analysis of animals and measuring them against a standard that is accepted as ideal

• Three parts
  – Making observations
  – Organizing thoughts
  – Expressing opinion via oral reasons
Basic Judging Criteria

• Four animals in a class
  – Numbered 1-4 from left to right when viewed from the rear when tied, in stanchions or racks.
  – Or clearly marked by
    • 1, 2, 3, 4
    • |, ||, |||, ||||
Basic Judging Criteria

• Three species judged in market and breeding classes
  • Beef
  • Sheep
  • Swine
Basic Judging Criteria

• Strategy
  – Evaluate from a distance of 20 to 30 feet
  – Handle animals if appropriate to confirm placing
  – Go with first impression
Basic Judging Criteria

• The Hormel system and the judging card.
• Each class is worth 50 points for the placing.
• Each set of reasons is worth 50 points.
• Classes are divided into three “pairs”
  – Top
  – Middle
  – Bottom
• The Hormel System
  – There are 24 different possibilities to place four animals.
Basic Judging Criteria

• What to look for?
  • Frame
  • Muscle
  • Balance
  • Finish (market classes)
  • Structural Correctness
  • Breed and Sex Character
Parts of the Steer

- Tail Head
- Quarter
- Stifle
- Hock
- Cannon Bone
- Hoof
- Body
- Neck
- Poll
- Forehead
- Face
- Nose
- Nostril
- Muzzle
- Dewlap
- Shoulder
- Brisket
- Elbow
- Knee
- Fetlock
- Pastern
- Coffin
- Dewclaw
- Rump
- Loin
- Back
- Ribs
- Last Rib (13th)
- Sheath
- Underline
- Fore Flank
- Shank
- Flank
- Crops
Selection Criteria

- Age
- Frame Size
- Muscle
- Balance
- Structural Correctness
- Disposition
• Show calves will be market ready when 15 to 18 months old at County Fair
• Born between February and May of the previous year
• For example a steer born in March of 2003 will be 17 months old at fair time
Frame Size

- Adequate
- Long Bodied
- Clean
Muscle

Five Indicators of Muscle
Muscle - Hind Quarter

- Width between pin bones
- Stifle
Muscle - Shoulder

- Bold and rugged
- Thick fore arm
- Smooth
Muscle - Top

- Long
- Level
- Straight
Muscle - Top

• Wide Topped
Muscle - Wide Based
• Large circumference of bone
Your calf should be balanced on both ends
➢ Select a calf with style
➢ A deep bodied calf that is full in the flank
➢ Uniform in capacity and ruggedness
➢ Smooth
Examples of Balance

Good Balance

Poor Balance
Structural Correctness

• Legs and feet
• Set to hock
• Flex at pastern
• Take long strides
Legs should hit the ground straight
Point straight ahead
Structural Correctness Legs

Toes In

Toes Out
Structural Correctness Feet

Feet should be big and rugged

Slope to pasterns
Introduction to Beef Selection
Criteria for Beef Selection

• Soundness
  – Structural
  – Reproductive

• Volume and Capacity

• Muscle

• Skeletal Extension

• Femininity/ Masculinity
Ideal Beef Heifer
Structural Correctness

• Correct joint angles
  – Shoulder, knee, hock and pastern
• Strong top
• Level rump structure
  – Hooks to pins
• Large, square foot
• Adequate bone
Structurally Correct Heifer

- Level rump
- Strong top
- Shoulder Angle
- Knee & Pastern Set
- Hock Angle
Correct Structure: Rear view
Straight Structured
Incorrect Hip and Hind Leg Structure

Low Pin Set

Too Much Set to Hock
Volume and Capacity

- Most critical in beef production
- “Fleshing Ability”
  - The ability for a mature female to maintain body condition while in lactation
- Deep, bold-sprung ribs for feeding and breeding capacity
- Wide-chested and wide-based
High Volume Heifer

Deep Fore & Rear Flank
• Heavy muscled cattle are preferred if muscle pattern is long and smooth
• Tight, round muscle can inhibit movement
Skeletal Extension

• Long bodied, long fronted cattle are preferred
• Cattle being too large in their frame can be detrimental
• Problems with cattle that are “too big”
  – Females too large as mature cows
  – Feedlot cattle do not deposit marbling until excessive weights are reached
Frame Size

• Measured with Frame Score
  – Considers both age and hip height

• Ideal frame score range
  – British Breeds: 5 to Low 7
  – Continental Breeds: 6 to High 7
Femininity

- Females need to be refined through their shoulder, neck, and head
- Vulvas need to be developed with correct udder structure
Correct Femininity
Masculinity

• Bulls need to be masculine about their shoulder, neck and head, but not coarse
• Bulls should have well developed testicles that are even in size
• Minimum scrotal circumference requirements
  – Maternal sire: 34 cm
  – Terminal sire: 32 cm
Correct Masculinity