Livestock Judging Suggestions
Selecting the most profitable livestock is a science that must keep up with modern trends in consumer demands and efficient livestock production. Knowledge of livestock selection is acquired only through many hours of study, training and practice. By participating in livestock judging, 4-H members learn the principles of livestock selection and how to evaluate differences among both breeding and market animals. Members also develop the ability to make accurate and quick observations. The time limit required in making observations trains the member to think clearly and make concise and complete observations. He must catalogue this information mentally and make written notes for the preparation of oral reasons. Members visit successful livestock producers and gain an understanding of how excellence is developed through careful planning and hard work. The ability to visually recognize important differences between animals and to correctly interpret production records and carcass information are the tools needed to implement a good selection program.

Developing decision-making ability and the ability to give concise, definite reasons to substantiate judgment are skills that will be valuable throughout life, regardless of the club member's chosen profession.

*LIVESTOCK JUDGING CONTESTS*

In livestock judging contests, classes of beef cattle, sheep, swine and occasionally horses are judged. Both market and breeding classes usually are evaluated. In an official contest, the contestant receives placing cards with a group designation and contestant number. Instructions are given to all contestants following registration.

In most judging contests, four animals are used in each class. Cattle, sheep and horse classes are numbered from left to right (1, 2, 3, 4) when observed from the rear. Some cattle may be loose in a pen and will be identified in the same manner as swine classes with a number or mark on the back.

In most classes the contestant is given 12 to 15 minutes to place the animals and prepare notes for written or oral reasons. The general procedure is to allow contestants about 4 minutes to observe the class at a distance of 20 or more feet. This is an important 4 minutes. Back away to a sufficient distance that all four animals are in focus for a comparative study. Crowding too close to the class is a serious mistake of beginners.

A period of 5 to 8 minutes is allowed for contestants to make close observations and to handle the animals. Most classes can be placed with a minimum of handling if you know what you are feeling for and do it quickly and methodically.
The remainder of the judging time is used for another observation from a distance, and for writing down the placing and completing notes.

**USE OF PLACING CARDS**

In most judging contests, contestants will be issued a judging card for each class. Be sure to count the cards to make sure you have one for each class.

The card should have your individual contestant number on it. You will be responsible for writing the class name and number on the card, as well as the placing of the class. The two basic types of placing cards (one in which you write down your placing and the other in which you check the desired placing) are shown below. Always double check your placing before turning the card in to your group leader.

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**AS.043**

**TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE**

**4-H JUDGING CONTEST PLACING CARD**

**Contestant's No. A-15**

**Class No. 2**

**Class Name. ** ANGUS HEIFERS

**Placing of Class**

1st. 2  2nd. 4  3rd. 3  4th. 1

Placing Grade

Reason Grade

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**Placing Card**

**ANIMAL SCIENCE**

**DEPARTMENT**

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

**Contestant No. A-15**

**Class 2**

**ANGUS HEIFERS**

**Score**

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USE OF RECORDS IN LIVESTOCK SELECTION

In order to effectively select livestock for genetic progress, a person needs sound records, as well as competent visual appraisal. No single selection plan fits all breeders and producers, but any profitable selection program must be based on the ability of an animal to perform in a given environment. Properly measured performance is the best estimate of the animal’s breeding value. It includes growth characteristics, reproductive ability, longevity and the ability to produce acceptable quality meat, milk and wool at a minimal unit cost. Performance and/or carcass data on the animals in the class, or on their sibs or parents, may be provided for consideration in judging a class.

The trait being evaluated often determines whether measurements can be made on the prospective breeding animal or whether they must be made on relatives. For example, growth traits are measured directly on the prospective breeding animal. Maternal traits must be measured on female relatives (dam, sister, daughter) of a prospective sire. Until recently, carcass traits had to be measured on slaughtered relatives. Now the use of ultrasonic devices for estimating fatness and muscle size on live animals has helped reduce both the time and expense involved in testing for these two important traits. Decisions about what types of production and carcass data to collect should be based on the benefits of increased selection accuracy in relation to the costs of collecting the data.

The importance of genetic influence on a trait is expressed by the “heritability” of that trait. Heritability and the relationship of one trait to another are very important considerations in a selection program. A selection index allows one to select for several traits at the same time, and gives variable emphasis to the traits based on relative economic importance, heritability and relationships among traits.

The importance a producer may place on a specific production trait in livestock will be largely governed by the present level of production in his herd and his goals for the future. “Standards” used by some progressive livestock producers in selection programs for beef, swine and sheep include the following:

### BEEF CATTLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAIT</th>
<th>HEIFER</th>
<th>BULL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternal</td>
<td>Selected from cows with demonstrated reproductive ability (12-month calving interval), longevity, and proven milking and mothering ability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth weight</td>
<td>Weights should not be excessive so that calving is easy: 60 to 90 pounds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth rate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205-day adjusted weaning weight</td>
<td>510 pounds</td>
<td>560 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365-day adjusted weight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing ration</td>
<td>750 pounds (1.5 ADG)</td>
<td>1000 pounds (2.75 ADG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High concentrate ration</td>
<td>Not recommended</td>
<td>1120 pounds (3.50 ADG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pounds feed/pound gain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(high concentrate ration)</td>
<td>Not recommended</td>
<td>Less than 7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcass:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rib eye area</td>
<td>1.2 to 1.4 square inches/100 pounds live weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thickness of outside carcass fat</td>
<td>.04 inches/100 pounds live weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcass grade</td>
<td>Minimum USDA Quality grade — Low choice on 900- to 1300-pound slaughter cattle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressing percent</td>
<td>60 percent or higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent boneless retail trimmed loin, rib, round and chuck</td>
<td>50 per cent or higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SWINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAIT</th>
<th>GILT</th>
<th>BOAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Litter size</td>
<td>From a large litter and a sow with proven milking and mothering ability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nipples</td>
<td>No less than 12, well-spaced, not inverted or abnormal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth rate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average daily gain</td>
<td>1.8 pounds or more</td>
<td>2.0 pounds or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(from 50 to 220 pounds)</td>
<td>165 or less</td>
<td>154 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days of age at 220 pounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pounds feed/pound gain</td>
<td>Less than 3.3</td>
<td>Less than 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(from 50 to 220 pounds)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcass:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length at 220 pounds</td>
<td>30 inches or more</td>
<td>31 inches or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backfat at 220 pounds</td>
<td>1.1 inches or less</td>
<td>.9 inches or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loineye at 220 pounds</td>
<td>4.5 to 5.5 square inches</td>
<td>5.0 to 6.0 square inches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SHEEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAIT</th>
<th>EWE</th>
<th>RAM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prolificacy</td>
<td>Selection for twinning on both ram and ewe sides will give slow but permanent improvement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth rate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120-day weaning weight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine wool breeds</td>
<td>90 pounds</td>
<td>105 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat breeds</td>
<td>105 pounds</td>
<td>120 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearling fleece weight:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine wool breeds</td>
<td>12 pounds</td>
<td>16 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcass:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rib eye area</td>
<td>2.0 to 2.5 square inches/50 pounds carcass weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat thickness at 12th rib</td>
<td>.10 to .25 inches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcass grade</td>
<td>Choice or prime</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressing percent</td>
<td>52 percent or higher, depending on wool cover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUGGESTIONS FOR LIVESTOCK JUDGING

1. Judging requires sound reasoning; do not follow hunches or try to "second guess" the judge.
2. Before placing a class, consider the following points:
   a. For what purpose is the class being evaluated?
   b. What are the outstanding characteristics which make the animal valuable for that purpose?
   c. How does the animal compare with the ideal?
3. Judge each class individually according to its purpose, and not by some previous point.
   a. For what purpose is the class being evaluated?
4. Make accurate observations. Accuracy is most important for correct placings and good reasons.
5. Analyze the class. If possible, divide the animals into groups — a top, bottom, and middle pair or two pair.
6. Place the class by process of elimination. Make brief but accurate notations of each animal's desirable and undesirable points.
7. If you become confused, back off from the class and think. Ask your self points a, b and c under Rule 2.
8. Go over the class again to see if your judgment is sound. Know that you can justify your placing with reasons before filling out your card.
9. Depend on your own judgment, not someone else's.
10. In judging any slaughter class, always consider the following points:
    a. Muscling — refers to the degree (length and thickness) of muscle as indicated by conformation or shape.
    b. Finish — refers to the amount and distribution of fat. Muscling and finish greatly affect market value because of their influence on yield of preferred cuts or cutability. Well muscled animals with a minimum of fat yield the highest percent of preferred cuts. Poorly muscled, overfinished animals yield the lowest percentage; therefore, they have the lowest market value. Research shows that the negative effect of excess fat has about 3 times as much influence on cutability as the positive effect of muscling. Some fat is needed to give meat firmness and flavor; therefore, a preferred market animal has maximum muscle with just enough fat to give the desired quality to retail cuts.
    c. Dressing percentage — refers to the proportion of chilled carcass weight to the animal's slaughter live weight; it is determined by dividing the chilled carcass weight by the live weight x 100. Market animals having a high dressing percentage are worth more to the packer because they have a higher percentage of carcass. Dressing percentage is influenced by amount of "fill," degree of finish, weight of dress off items and muscling.
11. In judging breeding classes, always consider:
    a. Conformation — This is the shape or form which indicates the degree of muscling that makes an animal most desirable for production efficiency, breed requirements and current market demands.
    b. Weight for age — Animals should have proper skeletal size for their age, breed and sex. Adequate size and scale is important to the livestock producer because the ability to grow and gain rapidly is heritable and closely related to gain efficiency.
    c. Feet and legs — Soundness with adequate bone development is necessary for free and easy movement. Pay particular attention to shoulders, knees, hocks and pasterns. Usually minor weaknesses at a young age become more serious as the animal matures.
    d. Breed character — This refers to traits that distinguish one purebred from another, such as: color or color pattern; head shape; ear size, shape and carriage; polled or horned.
    e. Sex characteristics — This refers to masculine traits in males and feminine traits in females.
    f. Condition — Although the amount of finish is largely determined by feeding and management, too much or too little finish decreases the efficiency of breeding animals and definitely affects conformation.
12. In giving reasons on purebred breeding classes, always mention the breed name in discussing character and type, as this adds to breed emphasis.

NOTES FOR ORAL REASONS
Good notes are a tremendous asset in giving effective reasons. Contestants usually are given 15 minutes on reason classes. This is ample time to prepare effective notes if you budget your time. After outlining your notes, recheck your placing with what you have written down. Do this by backing away from the class so that you can see all the animals, and hurriedly organize a set of oral reasons while looking at the class. Given below are notes a contestant might have developed for giving reasons on the class of crossbred slaughter barrows discussed on page 18.
Class Name: Crossbred Slaughter Barrows

3 over 4

Placing: 3 4 1 2

(top pair)

bigger frame
more body capacity
length of rump
total ham dimension
less finish

Grants to 4

Criticisms of 3

thicker top
greater muscle

I place 1 last because:

4 over 1

(middle pair)

more body capacity
thicker top, longer rump
deeper, thicker ham
more correct muscle structure
sounder feet and legs
dressing percentage

Grants 1

Criticisms of 4

less finish
higher % lean cuts

1 over 2

(bottom pair)

depth of chest, body capacity
heavier bone
width underneath
total ham dimension
less finish \(\rightarrow\) higher % primal cuts

Grants to 2

Criticisms of ___

More correct muscle structure

I place 2 last because:

lack of body capacity (shallow-chested)
narrow-based
short rump
light, thin muscle
REASONS

Oral reasons are an explanation of the major differences between animals which influenced your placing. The value of your reasons and the grade you receive depend principally on the following:

- **Accuracy** — This is the most important phase of oral reasons. You must evaluate the major points in the class correctly. Failure to do so will result in a lower reason grade.
- **Organization and delivery** — Organize your reasons and present them in a logical manner. Poorly presented reasons lose their effectiveness if the listener can't follow you. Speak clearly and slowly. Although emphasizing certain points is important, avoid talking too loudly or rapidly. A well-organized set of reasons should never require more than 2 minutes. Keep your numbers straight.
- **Completeness** — Always talk about the major points or differences of each animal, omitting small, unimportant differences that you are not certain about.
- **Terminology** — Always use the correct terms for the livestock class on which you are giving reasons. Use past tense rather than present.

There is no best form to use in giving reasons. Develop a flexible system, adaptable to different classes, and yet including the four essentials listed previously. Oral reasons are primarily for comparison; however, a limited amount of description makes your reasons more effective.

When giving reasons, stand about 6 feet from the judge. Stand comfortably erect, with feet about 12 inches apart, and look him directly in the eye.
Parts

BEEF CATTLE

Wholesale Cuts

Carcass
1. Turn Over the Top
2. Width at Tail
3. Width Through Middle Ham
4. Base of Hams
5. Crotch
6. Width Underneath (Front & Rear Legs)

Parts

Wholesale Cuts

Carcass
Top of Shoulder
Forehead
Face

Rump
Loin
Back

Dock
Hind Saddle

Leg
Twist

Hock
Hind flank

Dew Claw
Foot

Ribs
Belly

Shoulder
Breast
Forearm

Pastern

Hock
Dew Claw

Foot
Hip

Ribs
Carcass

Wholesale Cuts

Carcass
### TERMS FOR BOTH SLAUGHTER AND BREEDING CATTLE

**SKELETAL SIZE, STRUCTURE AND SOUNDNESS**

#### Desirable (Advantages)
1. More correct set to feet and legs
2. More desirable in length and slope of shoulder and pastern
3. Sounder, freer, easier in movement
4. Stronger topped
5. Longer, leveler rump
6. More circumference of heart, larger heart girth, deeper and wider of chest, more body capacity
7. More size, larger frame, more body mass, more correct in length and height of body, more correct length of leg, more massive

#### Undesirable (Criticisms)
1. Too straight in hocks (post legged)
   - Knock kneed
   - Cow-hocked
   - Sickle-hocked
2. Too short and straight in shoulder and pastern
3. Stiff, constricted, unsound in movement
4. Weak topped, sway backed
5. Short, steep rump
6. Shallow bodied, narrow bodied, narrow and shallow chest, small heart girth, lacks body capacity
7. Smaller, small frame, short bodied, too short legged, too long legged, lacks body mass

### SLAUGHTER CATTLE

**FINISH** (fatness)

#### Desirable
1. More correctly finished (.2 inch to .6 inch fat at 12th rib)
2. More uniform in finish
3. Trimmer (less excess fat) in brisket, rear flank and twist

#### Undesirable
1. Overfinished (more than .6 inch fat at 12th rib)
   - Underfinished (less than .2 inch fat at 12th rib)
2. Lacks uniformity of finish (patchy)
3. Wasty in brisket, rear flank and twist

**MUSCLING**

#### Desirable
1. Wider and fuller in stifle
2. More circumference and length of forearm and gaskin
3. Longer muscled
4. Stands and walks wider
5. Thicker, more muscular round
6. Heavier muscled loin or more evidence of muscle in loin

#### Undesirable
1. Flat narrow stifle
2. Lacks prominence of forearm and gaskin
3. Short muscled
4. Stands and walks narrow
5. Thin, light muscled round
6. Light muscled loin or narrow, flat muscled loin
CARCASS TERMS FOR SLAUGHTER CATTLE

1. Because of less finish and/or superior muscling will yield a carcass with:
   - A higher percent of muscle
   - A higher lean to fat ratio
   - A higher percent boneless closely trimmed roast and steak cuts
   - Less excessive fat trim
   - A more desirable USDA yield grade

2. Because of more finish:
   - Will yield a higher USDA quality grade
   - Will result in a higher dressing percentage

3. Should have a higher dressing percent because:
   - Fatter
   - Less fill
   - Trimmer middle
   - Lighter hide
   - Smaller percent dress-off items
   - More muscular

4. Will dress lower because:
   - Lacks finish
   - Excessive fill
   - Wasty middle
   - Heavy hide
   - High percent dress-off items
   - Lighter muscled

BREEDING CATTLE TERMS

MUSCLING

Bulls
1. More bulge and fullness of muscle in stifles area
2. More muscular forearm and gaskin
3. Longer muscled round
4. Smoother muscled shoulder
5. More strength and thickness of muscle down the top
6. More volume of muscle in round

Heifers and Cows
1. Longer muscling in round
2. Smoother more functional muscles
3. Not as thick and bunched muscled
4. More refined in her muscling
5. Moderate thickness of muscling

FINISH OR CONDITION

Bulls and Heifers
1. Less predisposition to waste
2. No excess fat along underline
3. Trimmer, less wasty brisket, rear flanks
4. More evenly distributed finish or more uniformly finished
5. More desirable finish
6. Less fat in udder or scrotum
7. No excessive fat deposits
8. Exhibits more desirable fleshing qualities

SEX CHARACTERISTICS

Bulls
1. More masculinity about head and neck
2. Heavier jaw and crest
3. Better developed testes
4. Tighter sheath
5. More correct length of leg
6. More functional reproductive system

Heifers and Cows
1. More refined
2. More feminine about head and neck
3. Longer, leaner neck
4. Smaller jaw
5. Smoother shoulder
6. Stronger udder attachment
7. Better balanced udder
8. More productive udder
9. Smaller teats, more correct size teats
10. More correct udder development
11. More well developed vulva

PERFORMANCE TERMS FOR BEEF CATTLE

1. More weight per day of age
2. Superior growth rate
3. More efficient feed utilization
4. Gained faster
5. More weight at younger age
6. Less feed per pound of gain
7. Yield more pounds of retail cuts per day of age
SWINE TERMS

TERMS FOR BOTH MARKET AND BREEDING HOGS

SKELETAL SIZE, STRUCTURE & SOUNDNESS

Desirable (Advantages)
- larger skeletal structure
- bigger in his framework
- more body capacity (mass)
- deeper ribbed, deeper forerib
- more depth of chest
- more rectangular rib cage
- looser skeletal structure
- looser framed
- sounder and freer in movement
- more correct length of leg
- sounder on front legs
- more slope to the shoulder
- more cushion to the pastern
- longer, more level rump
- squarer rump
- wider based
- heavier bone
- stout headed

Undesirable (Criticisms)
- small framed
- round bodied, round chest
- short bodied
- shallow chest, narrow chest
- lacks capacity, constitution
- narrow based
- too short legged
- runs downhill
- unsound on the front legs
- buck-kneed
- too straight in the shoulder
- too short and straight in pasterns
- stiff, constricted in movement
- short, steep rump
- weak behind the shoulder
- cow-hocked
- sickle-hocked
- post legged

MUSCLING

Desirable
- longer, looser muscle structure
- longer, less expressive and more correct muscle structure
- more total ham dimension
- longer, wider, deeper ham
- thicker through the rump at the tail and upper 1/2 of ham
- more natural thickness down the top
- more well-defined shoulder

Undesirable
- too tight in muscle structure
- too short and thick in muscling
- tight wound, constricted
- too expressive muscling
- narrow top
- thin, light muscled ham
- flat, thin-muscled shoulder
- stands and walks narrow
- fine boned

FINISH OR CONDITION

Desirable
- more correct turn over the top
- cleaner, trimmer (less fat)
  - along the loin edge
  - underline
  - jowl
  - through the shoulder
  - at the elbow pocket
  - in the crotch
  - at the base of the ham

Undesirable
- square topped
- too much right angle spread
- loose, wasty underline
- wasty jowl
- excess fat at the elbow pocket
- wasty crotch

CARCASS TERMS FOR MARKET HOGS

1. Correct finish (1.0 to 1.3 inches backfat)

2. Due to less fat and/or heavier muscling:
   - yield a higher cutting carcass
   - yield a higher percent of 4 lean cuts
   - yield a higher percent of primal cuts
   - yield a higher percent of ham and loin
   - yield a carcass with a higher lean-to-fat ratio
   - heavier muscled carcass

3. Yield more pounds of red meat per day of age.

4. Will have a higher dressing percent because:
   - trimmer middle
   - less fill
   - fatter
   - thicker bodied

5. Will dress lower because:
   - wasty middle
   - excessive fill
   - lacks finish
   - narrow bodied
BREEDING HOG TERMS

1. More size, frame, scale, ruggedness
2. Sounder underline
   —more functional nipples (gilt)
   —more prominent underline
   —more teat development
   —more even spaced teats
   —teats placed farther to the front
3. More feminine (gilt), masculine (boar) head and neck
4. Moves more freely, more fluidly
5. More breed character
6. More well-developed vulva (gilt)
7. More well-developed, uniform-sized testicles (boar)

SHEEP TERMS

TERMS FOR BOTH BREEDING & MARKET SHEEP

SKELETAL SIZE, STRUCTURE AND SOUNDNESS

1. Larger framed (taller, longer)
2. More size (weight)
3. Longer loin
4. Longer rump, squarer rump
5. Stronger top
6. More spring of rib
7. Deeper forerib
8. Wider, deeper chest
9. More body capacity
10. More correct set to front legs
11. More structurally sound on feet and legs
12. Smoother shoulders, less open and coarse in shoulders.

BREEDING SHEEP TERMS

Ewes

1. More refined head and neck
2. Longer, smoother muscling
3. More feminine appearance
4. More reproductive efficiency
5. More functional teats and udder
6. More breed character about head, ears and color markings

Rams

1. More masculine
2. Exhibits more masculinity about head and neck
3. More ruggedness
4. Heavier bone
5. Heavier, more correct in muscling

FLEECE TERMS

1. More open faced, cleaner faced
2. Shear more pounds wool
3. Yield more pounds clean wool
4. Longer staple
5. More uniform in length
6. Denser fleece
7. Finer fleece
8. More uniformity of fineness
9. Less belly wool on sides
10. Brighter, higher quality
11. More distinct crimp
12. Cleaner, less dirt and grease, with higher yield
13. Sounder, stronger fibers
14. Less kemp
MARKET LAMB TERMS

MUSCLING

Desirable (Advantages)
Larger, plumper leg
More circumference of leg
Longer muscled leg
More muscular forearm
More muscled expression down top
More muscled shoulder
Longer muscled loin and rump
Stands wider behind

Undesirable (Criticisms)
Small, thin leg
Less circumference of leg
Shorter muscled leg
Thinning muscled forearm
Lacks muscle expression down top
Light muscled shoulder
Shorter muscled loin and rump
Stands narrow behind

CARCASS TERMS

1. Due to his trimness and superior muscling.
   - Will yield a higher cutting carcass
   - Will result in a carcass with a higher percent of the major boneless retail cuts
   - Will yield a higher percent of boneless closely trimmed leg, loin, rack and shoulder
   - Will have a more desirable yield grade

2. Since he is fatter and has more muscle
   - Will result in a higher quality carcass
   - Will have a higher dressing percent

FINISH

Desirable
More correctly finished
*.10 to .25 inch fat thickness
More uniform in finish
Finer finish
Less excess fat in twist
Cleaner over the ribs, loin edges, around dock and in the flanks and breast
Adequate in fat cover

Undesirable
Underfinished (less than .10 inch fat thickness)
Overfinished (more than .25 inch fat thickness)
lacks uniformity of finish
Soft in finish
Excessively fat in twist
Wasty excessive fat over the ribs, loin edges, around dock and in the twist, flanks and breast
Bare over ribs and along loin edges

SUGGESTED FORM FOR ORAL REASONS

1. Opening statement — Always begin a set of reasons with an opening statement such as: “I placed this class of Hereford heifers 1-2-3-4.”

2. Comparison, criticisms, grants in each pair (top pair, middle pair, bottom pair) — In each pair, comparison is of primary importance. This explains the reason or reasons why one animal placed over another. Grant to the lower placed animal in each pair those points in which it excels. Criticism is of secondary importance, but can be valuable in convincing the judge that both desirable and undesirable points of an animal were recognized. The order in which these three essentials (comparisons, criticisms, grants) are presented depends on the class being considered. Read the sample sets of reasons in this publication to get ideas.

3. Tell why the last place animal placed at the bottom — Remember, not every animal placing last in a class is undesirable; some classes may have four outstanding animals. Mention the desirable points as well as the undesirable of the last place animal.

4. Closing statement — Always conclude a set of reasons with a closing statement such as: “For these reasons, I placed this class of Hereford heifers 1-2-3-4.”

EXAMPLES OF ORAL REASONS

ANGUS HEIFERS

My placing on this class of Angus heifers was 2-1-3-4.

2 and 1 were structurally correct, growthy, feminine and of modern beef type. 3 was very heavy muscled but lacked size of frame, and 4 lacked adequate weight for age and was excessively fat.

In a close top pair, 2 placed over 1 because she was more feminine and refined about the head and neck and was more correctly and soundly set on her feet and legs. I grant that 1 had more muscle expression in her round, over her top and through her forearm, and stood on larger bone. However, 2 had adequate muscling and bone development for her age and should develop into a more fertile, more efficient cow.

1 was an easy placing over 3 because of her superiority in size of frame and refinement. This was indicated by more height at the withers, more length of body, more correct length of leg, longer smoother muscling, longer thinner neck, smaller jaw and more feminine head. 1 also walked with a longer, easier stride and should remain sounder on her feet and legs. Due to her more correct muscling overall, refine-
ment and udder and teat development, she should experience less calving problems and be superior to 3 in milk production.

In the bottom pair, 3 placed over 4 because of her superior weight for age, trimness and muscling. We fault 3 for exhibiting excessive bulge of muscle for a heifer of her age, and grant that 4 was more refined. However, the progeny of 3 should possess more weight for age and a higher muscle to fat ratio when compared to the progeny of 4.

4 placed last because she was off type, in that she was too early maturing as evidenced by her short legs and excessively short, deep, fat body. She had excessive fat in her brisket and was especially faulted for excessive fat deposits in her udder, which may impair her future milk production.

For these reasons, I placed this class of Angus heifers 2-1-3-4.

CHAROLAIS BULLS

I placed this class of Charolais bulls 4-3-2-1.

All the bulls in this class carried adequate thickness of muscle; however, there were obvious differences in size of frame, soundness of structure and composition of gain.

4 was an outstanding modern beef bull that possessed to a high degree the traits of economic importance in today's beef industry. He was ranked over 3 because of his superior size of frame and composition of gain, combined with longer muscling and easier, more correct movement. I recognize that the weight per day of age advantage went to 3, but it was primarily due to his greater degree of finish and heavier middle. Both 4 and 3 should sire fast growing, muscular calves, but we would expect 4's progeny to have an advantage in cutability and soundness.

In the middle pair, 3 easily excelled 2 because of his superior size, as evidenced by more length and thickness of body. We fault 3 for excessive thickness of shoulder and excessive depth and wastiness of brisket and underline. He appeared to have been on a very high plane of nutrition. However, due to his excellent weight for age, masculinity and muscling he should make a superior breeding bull when compared to 2.

2 and 1 were difficult to place, as both had definite desirable traits and obvious faults. I chose the more structurally correct 2 over the longer, more growthy 1 because 2 had a more correct angle to his hock and walked with a longer, easier stride, which should enable him to have fewer stifle injuries and add to his breeding efficiency. I fault 2 for evidences of early maturity and the lowest weight for age in the class. However, cows mated to 2 should experience few calving difficulties and their progeny should have no problems reaching the choice grade at 1100 pounds.

Even though 1 was a large, muscular, heavy boned bull, we placed him bottom because he was post legged, straight shouldered, and lacked proper testicle development for a bull of his age. Therefore, he will be the least sound and least efficient, and will have the most breeding problems of the bulls in this class.

For these reasons, I placed this class of Charolais bulls 4-3-2-1.

CROSSBRED SLAUGHTER STEERS

I placed this class of crossbred slaughter steers 1-2-3-4.

1 was an outstanding top as he combined growthiness, superior muscling and correct finish to a high degree. 2 was correct in conformation but slightly overfinished. 3 exhibited excellent muscling and cut-out, but lacked in finish. And 4 was excessively overfinished, below average in muscling and low cutting.

1 placed top and over 2 because he was growthier as indicated by more weight, length and height of body. He was also more correctly finished than 2, as evidenced by less fat deposits in his brisket, rear flanks and twist, and a more correct turn over his back and loin. Because of his smoother, less wasty finish, 1 will yield a carcass with a higher percent of the boneless retail trimmed loin, rib, round and chuck. His superior size and scale indicated he made a faster, more efficient rate of gain. He should yield a choice quality, yield grade 2 carcass.

In regard to the middle pair, 2 placed over 3 because he exhibited enough finish to grade choice and would also have a higher dressing percent. We grant that 3 would have higher cutability and yield a carcass with little fat trim. However, 2's higher quality grade along with his superior dressing percentage will enable him to be a more valuable steer that will yield a more palatable beef. 2 was estimated to be an average choice, yield grade 3.

3 was an easy placing over 4 because of more efficient growth, superior muscling and much higher cutout due to less trimmable fat. His superior muscling was indicated by a much larger, plumper forearm, more fullness and thickness of round, and more width between his hind legs. 3 certainly showed less fat all along his underline, over his ribs and around his tail head. We recognize that 3 did not possess the finish to grade choice; however, his carcass will be more valuable than the choice grade #4 due to an advantage of at least 2 yield grades.

4 placed last because he was overfinished as indicated by his full, pendulous brisket; deep, full rear flanks and twist; pones of fat around his tail head;
excess fat along his loin edges; and his overall smoothness and uniformity of width and depth. He will, therefore, produce a yield grade 4 or 5 carcass with excessive fat trim that will result in it being the least valuable. He also lacked definition and evidence of muscling in his shoulder and round. His composition of gain was indicative of inefficient feed conversion.

For these reasons, I placed this class of crossbred slaughter steers 1-2-3-4.

DUROC GILTS

I placed this class of Duroc gilts 1-4-3-2.

Both 1 and 4 are big framed, well balanced, broody gilts showing excellent breed character. 1 placed over 4 because she was deeper ribbed, longer bodied, and longer and leveler in the rump. She was more correct in her muscle structure, had more cushion to her front legs and moved more freely and easily. I grant that 4 had less condition over the top and showed more teat development, but the front nipples on 1 were farther to the front.

Coming to the middle pair, 4 was an easy placing over 3 because 4 was bigger in her framework with a more rectangular rib cage, had more natural thickness down the top yet was freer of fat then 3. 4 also was more feminine, had a more prominent underline and a more well developed vulva. I grant that 3 was heavier boned with a more desirable slope to her shoulder and more cushion up front.

In the bottom pair, I grant that 2 was heavier muscled, thicker down the top and had a larger vulva, but I placed 3 over 2 because she was longer sided, longer rumped, looser in her muscle structure, broodier in her underline with more cushion and correctness to her front legs. 3 also moved more freely and easily.

Even though 2 was heavy boned, well-muscled and stood and walked wider than any other gilt in the class, she placed last because she was too short and thick in her muscling, too straight in her shoulder, constricted in her movement, and had the least developed underline in the class.

For these reasons, I placed this class of Duroc gilts 1-4-3-2.

CROSSBRED SLAUGHTER BARROWS

I placed this class of crossbred barrows 3-4-1-2.

The large-framed, high-cutting 3 was an easy top, followed by a close middle pair and an easy bottom in the shallow-bodied 2.

3 had more depth of chest and greater total dimension to his frame than any other pig in the class; however, I would like to see him longer in his muscle structure. 3 placed over 4 because of his greater body capacity, total ham dimension and more correct finish. 3's ham advantage was due to his longer rump and greater depth from the tail to the base of the ham. 3 had less finish over the loin edges, and through the shoulder, crotch and base of the ham. I grant that 4 was thicker over the top and longer muscled. Both 3 and 4 should yield muscular carcasses, but 3 will have a higher valued carcass because of less fat trim.

The middle pair, 4 and 1, were similar in size and conformation. Both pigs needed more skeletal size. Although 1 will yield a higher percentage of lean cuts because of less fat trim, 4 placed over 1 because of more body capacity; more thickness down the top; longer rump; deeper, thicker ham; more correct muscle structure; and sounder feet and legs. 4 will have a higher dressing percentage because of his thicker body, lighter middle and more finish.

Although 1 was a bit tight in his muscle structure, he was an easy placing over the shallow-bodied 2. 1's greater depth of chest and more total body capacity gave him a big advantage in growth and efficiency. The heavier boned 1 also stood and walked wider and had more total ham dimension. Due to less fat trim and heavier muscling, 1 will yield a higher percent of primal cuts.

2 placed last because of his lack of body capacity. He was also the narrowest-based, shortest-rumped, lightest-muscled pig in the class.

For these reasons, I placed this class of crossbred barrows 3-4-1-2.

RAMBOUILLET EWES

I placed this class of Rambouillet ewes 3-2-1-4.

I placed 3 over 2 because she showed more size and scale, more spring of rib, a thicker top and straighter hind legs. 3 also had a more desirable fleece as indicated by a longer, finer staple, brighter color and more desirable Rambouillet character. I criticized 3, however, for being slightly woolly-faced, and grant that 2 was more open-faced.

Although 2 stood slightly crooked on her hind legs, I placed 2 over 1 because she was a more rugged ewe as indicated by more spring of rib, a deeper chest and more size and scale. 2 also had a more open face and a denser, more uniform fleece both in length and fineness. I grant that 1 had a slightly longer staple and stood straighter on her hind legs.

The bottom pair, 1 and 4, were very close, as both were woolly-faced and had belly wool high on their sides. However, I placed 1 over 4 because she was a more muscular, rugged ewe as indicated by more width of top, a squarer dock and heavier bone.
1 also had a more feminine head than 4. I will grant that 4's fleece was more uniform in fineness.

I placed 4 bottom in the class because she was woolly-faced, lacked size and scale and Rambouillet breed character about her head, had excessive belly wool and would shear the least amount of clean wool of any other ewe in the class.

For these reasons, I placed this class of Rambouillet ewes 3-2-1-4.

HAMPshire EWES

I placed this class of Hampshire ewes 2-3-1-4.

2 was the largest, growthiest, and heaviest muscled ewe in the class. In my top pair I placed 2 over 3 because she was a larger, longer topped and thicker muscled ewe than 3. 2 was smoother in her shoulder; meatier across her loin; longer in her rump; and was thicker, meatier and heavier muscled in her leg than 3. Also 2 stood on heavier bone and straighter front legs and had a longer, denser, cleaner fleece than 3. I grant that 3 was straighter on her hind legs and breedier about her head than 2.

3 placed over 1 in the middle pair because she was a more correctly balanced, straighter lined, stronger topped ewe that was meatier in her loin, longer in her rump and meatier and plumper in her leg. 3 was a wider fronted, breedier headed ewe that also stood wider and straighter on her hind legs than 1. I grant that 1 was a larger ewe and had more size and scale than 3.

I favored 1 over 4 because she was a larger, growthier, more rugged ewe, and especially because she stood on more bone than 4. 1 was a longer coupled, heavier muscled ewe that was meatier through her shoulders, meatier across her loin and longer in her rump than 4. I grant, however, that 4 was a stronger topped, straighter lined ewe than 1.

I placed 4 last because she was the smallest, shortest coupled, finest boned ewe in this class.

For these reasons, I placed this class of Hampshire ewes 2-3-1-4.

CROSSBRED SLAUGHTER LAMBS

My placing on this class of crossbred slaughter lambs was 3-4-2-1.

The correctly finished, muscular 3 and 4 were a close top pair, with the narrow, underfinished, low grading 1 an obvious bottom and the light legged 2 a logical third.

I place 3 over 4 in a close placing because he was more muscular as evidenced by a thicker, more muscular leg and fuller, meatier shoulder, rack, and loin. 3 was faulted for being weak of top and carrying excess fill. I concede that 4 was firmer and stronger of top and trimmer of middle. However, 3 should yield a more muscular, higher cutting, higher grading carcass.

In the middle pair, 4 was an easy placing over 2 because 4 was superior in almost every respect. 4 and 2 were similar in degree of finish; however, 4 was more uniformly finished. He was also superior to 2 in muscling because he had a much larger, plumper, meatier leg and stood with more width both front and rear. 4 was also trimmer of middle and lighter of pelt, giving him the advantage in dressing percentage and making him more valuable to the packer-buyer. 4 also should yield a carcass with a higher percent of leg and loin, making his carcass more desirable to the retailer.

2 was an easy placing over 1 because he was fatter and more muscular and would therefore yield a higher quality grading carcass. He was especially more muscular over his top and more adequately covered over his ribs, loin and rump.

1 placed bottom because he lacked the desired finish and meatiness of the other lambs in this class. He was narrow of shoulder, rack, loin and rump; lacked plumpness of leg; and had insufficient fat covering over his top. Therefore, he would yield the lowest quality grading, least attractive carcass of this class.

For these reasons, I placed this class of crossbred slaughter lambs 3-4-2-1.

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