

DAIRY COW UNIFIED SCORE CARD

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Breed characteristics should be considered in the application of this score card

MAJOR TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS

There are five major classification traits on which a classifier bases a cow's score. Each trait is broken down into body parts to be looked at and ranked.

1) Frame - 15%

The skeletal parts of the cow, with the exception of feet and legs, are evaluated. Listed in priority order, the descriptions of the traits to be considered are as follows:

Rump - long and wide throughout with pin bones slightly lower than hip bones. Thurls need to be wide apart and centrally placed between hip bones and pin bones. The tailhead is set slightly above and neatly between pin bones, and the tail is free from coarseness. The vulva is nearly vertical. **Stature** - height, including length in the leg bones. A long bone pattern throughout the body structure is desirable. Height at the withers and hips should be relatively proportionate. **Front End** - adequate constitution with front legs straight, wide apart and squarely placed. Shoulder blades and elbows need to be firmly set against the chest wall. The crops should have adequate fullness. **Back** - straight and strong; the loin - broad, strong, and nearly level. **Breed Characteristics** - overall style and balance. Head should be feminine, clean-cut, slightly dished with broad muzzle, large open nostrils and a strong jaw is desirable.

Rump, Stature, and Front End receive primary consideration when evaluating Frame.

2) Dairy Character - 20%

The physical evidence of milking ability is evaluated. Major consideration is given to general openness and angularity while maintaining strength, flatness of bone and freedom from coarseness. Consideration is given to stage of lactation. Listed in priority order, the descriptions of the traits to be considered are as follows:

Ribs - wide apart. Rib bones are wide, flat, deep, and slanted toward the rear. **Thighs** - lean, incurving to flat, and wide apart from the rear. **Withers** - sharp with the chine prominent. **Neck** - long, lean, and blending smoothly into shoulders. A clean-cut throat, dewlap, and brisket are desirable. **Skin** - thin, loose, and pliable.

3) Body Capacity - 10%

The volumetric measurement of the capacity of the cow (length x depth x width) is evaluated with age taken into consideration. Listed in priority order the descriptions of the traits to be considered are as follows:

Barrel - long, deep, and wide. Depth and spring of rib increase toward the rear with a deep flank. Chest - deep and wide floor with well-sprung fore ribs blending into the shoulders.

The Barrel receives primary consideration when evaluating Body Capacity.

4) Feet and Legs - 15%

Feet and rear legs are evaluated. Evidence of mobility is given major consideration. Listed in priority order, the descriptions of the traits to be considered are as follows:

Feet - steep angle and deep heel with short, well-rounded closed toes. **Rear Legs**: Rear View - straight, wide apart with feet squarely placed. Side View - a moderate set (angle) to the hock. **Hocks** - cleanly molded, free from coarseness and puffiness with adequate flexibility. **Pasterns** - short and strong with some flexibility.

Slightly more emphasis placed on Feet than on Rear Legs when evaluating this breakdown.

5) Udder - 40%

The udder traits are the most heavily weighted. Major consideration is given to the traits that contribute to high milk yield and a long productive life. Listed in priority order, the descriptions of the traits to be considered are as follows:

Udder Depth - moderate depth relative to the hock with adequate capacity and clearance. Consideration is given to lactation number and age. **Teat Placement** - squarely placed under each quarter, plumb and properly spaced from side and rear views.

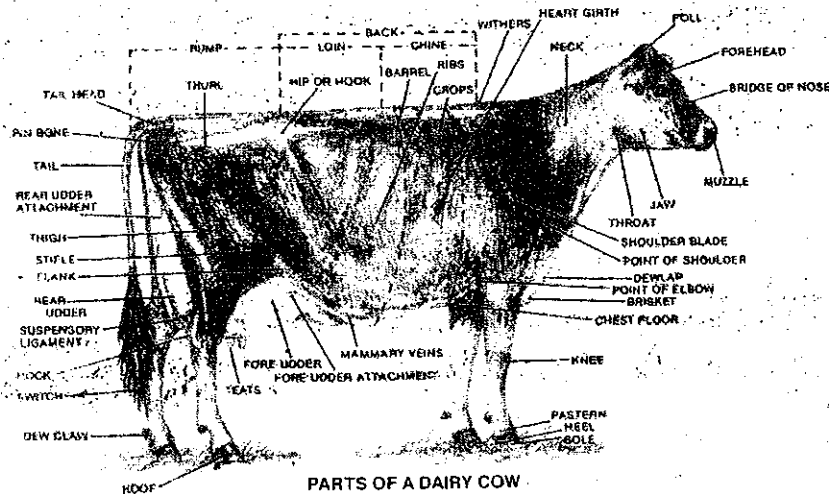
Rear Udder - wide and high, firmly attached with uniform width from top to bottom and slightly rounded to udder floor.

Udder Cleft - evidence of a strong suspensory ligament indicated by adequately defined halving.

Fore Udder - firmly attached with moderate length and ample capacity.

Teats - cylindrical shape and uniform size with medium length and diameter.

Udder Balance and Texture - should exhibit an udder floor that is level as viewed from the side. Quarters should be evenly balanced; soft, pliable and well collapsed after milking.



PARTS OF A DAIRY COW

Perfect Score

15

20

10

15

40

TOTAL 100

BREED CHARACTERISTICS

Except for differences in color, size and head-character, all breeds are judged on the same standards as outlined in the Unified Score Card. If any animal is registered by one of the dairy breed associations, no discrimination against color or color-pattern is to be made.

AYRSHIRE

Strong and robust, showing constitution and vigor, symmetry, style and balance throughout, and characterized by strongly attached, evenly balanced, well-shaped udder.

HEAD clean cut, proportionate to body; broad muzzle with large, open nostrils; strong jaw; large, bright eyes; forehead, broad and moderately dished; bridge of nose straight; ears medium size and alertly carried.

COLOR light to deep cherry red, mahogany, brown, or a combination of any of these colors with white, or white alone, distinctive red and white markings preferred.

SIZE a mature cow in milk should weigh at least 1200 lbs.

HOLSTEIN

Rugged, feminine qualities in an alert cow possessing Holstein size and vigor.

HEAD clean cut, proportionate to body; broad muzzle with large, open nostrils; strong jaw; large, bright eyes; forehead, broad and moderately dished; bridge of nose straight; ears, medium size and alertly carried.

COLOR black and white or red and white markings clearly defined.

SIZE a mature cow in milk should weigh a minimum of 1500 lbs.

MILKING SHORTHORN

Strong and vigorous, but not coarse.

HEAD clean cut, proportionate to body; broad muzzle with large, open nostrils; strong jaw; large, bright eyes; forehead, broad and moderately dished; bridge of nose straight; ears, medium size and alertly carried.

COLOR red or white or any combination. (No black markings allowed)

SIZE a mature cow should weigh 1400 lbs.

BROWN SWISS

Strong and vigorous, but not coarse. Size and ruggedness with quality desired. Extreme refinement undesirable.

HEAD clean cut, proportionate to body; broad muzzle with large, open nostrils; strong jaw; large, bright eyes; forehead, broad and slightly dished; bridge of nose straight; ears medium size and alertly carried.

COLOR solid brown varying from very light to dark. Muzzle is black encircled by a mealy colored ring, and the tongue, switch and hooves are black.

SIZE a mature cow in milk should weigh 1600 lbs.

GUERNSEY

Size and strength, with quality and character desired.

HEAD clean cut, proportionate to body; broad muzzle with large, open nostrils; strong jaw; large, bright eyes; forehead, broad and slightly dished; bridge of nose straight; ears medium size and alertly carried.

COLOR a shade of fawn with white markings throughout clearly defined. When other points are equal, clear (buff) muzzle will be favored over smoky or black muzzle.

SIZE a mature cow in milk should weigh at least 1150 lbs.

JERSEY

Sharpness with strength indicating productive efficiency.

HEAD proportionate to stature showing refinement and well chiseled bone structure. Face slightly dished with dark eyes that are well set.

COLOR some shade of fawn with or without white markings. Muzzle is black encircled by a light colored ring, and the tongue and switch may be either white or black.

SIZE a mature cow in milk should weigh about 900 lbs.

FACTORS TO BE EVALUATED

The degree of discrimination assigned to each defect is related to its function and heredity. The evaluation of the defect shall be determined by the breeder, the classifier or the judge, based on the guide for discrimination and disqualifications given below.

HORNS

No discrimination for horns.

EYES

1. Blindness in one eye: *Slight discrimination.*
2. Cross or bulging eyes: *Slight discrimination.*
3. Evidence of blindness: *Slight to serious discrimination.*
4. Total blindness: *Disqualification.*

WRY FACE

Slight to serious discrimination.

CROPPED EARS

Slight discrimination.

PARROT JAW

Slight to serious discrimination.

SHOULDERS

Winged: *Slight to serious discrimination.*

TAIL SETTING

Wry tail or other abnormal tail settings:
Slight to serious discrimination.

CAPPED HIP

No discrimination unless effects mobility.

LEGS AND FEET

1. Lameness - apparently permanent and interfering with normal function: *Disqualification.*
- Lameness - apparently temporary and not affecting normal function: *Slight discrimination.*
2. Evidence of crampy hind legs: *Serious discrimination.*
3. Evidence of fluid in hocks: *Slight discrimination.*
4. Weak pastern: *Slight to serious discrimination.*
5. Toe out: *Slight discrimination.*

UDDER

1. Lack of defined halving: *Slight to serious discrimination.*
2. Udder definitely broken away in attachment:
Serious discrimination.
3. A weak udder attachment: *Slight to serious discrimination.*
4. Blind quarter: *Disqualification.*
5. One or more light quarters, hard spots in udder, obstruction in teat (spider): *Slight to serious discrimination.*
6. Side leak: *Slight discrimination.*
7. Abnormal milk (bloody, clotted, watery):
Possible discrimination.

LACK OF SIZE

Slight to serious discrimination.

EVIDENCE OF SHARP PRACTICE

(Refer to PDCA Code of Ethics).

1. Animals showing signs of having been tampered with to conceal faults in conformation and to misrepresent the animal's soundness: *Disqualification.*
2. Uncalved heifers showing evidence of having been milked: *Slight to serious discrimination.*

TEMPORARY OR MINOR INJURIES

Blemishes or injuries of a temporary character not affecting animal's usefulness:
Slight to serious discrimination.

OVERCONDITIONED

Slight to serious discrimination.

FREEMARTIN HEIFERS

Disqualification.

FIVE MAJOR BREAKDOWNS

Association Enhanced System:

Frame - 15% Dairy Character - 20% Body Capacity - 10% Feet and Legs - 15% Udder - 40%

Frame (15%)

Frame consists of the skeletal parts of the cow, excluding feet and legs. The following areas, in priority order, should be considered when evaluating "Frame":

- Rump**
 - Vital to reproductive and mammary functions
 - Long and wide throughout, with pin bones slightly lower than hip bones
 - Tailhead should be refined and blend smoothly with rump
 - Vulva is nearly vertical
 - Thrusts wide apart and centrally placed between the hip and pin bones
- Stature**
 - Adequate height, including length in leg bones with a long bone pattern
 - Height at withers and hips should be relatively proportionate
- Front End**
 - Sufficient constitution with strength and refinement
 - Chest is full with ample width between the front legs
 - Withers should come to a sharp point and blend smoothly from neck to body
- Back**
 - Indicator of general strength and body conformation
 - Topline appears straight and strong
 - Loin should be broad, strong and nearly level, especially in young cows
- Breed Characteristics**
 - Similar in many aspects
 - Major differences found in size and color
 - Subtle differences include head characteristics, strength, and leg structure

Dairy Character (20%)

Evaluates the physical evidence of milking ability. Emphasis is on angularity, general openness while maintaining strength, flatness of bone and lack of coarseness. Consideration should be given for stage of lactation:

- Ribs**
 - Wide apart
 - Rib bones should be wide, flat, deep, and slanted toward the rear
- Thighs**
 - Lean, flat thighs indicate efficient conversion of feed to milk
 - Incurving to flat and wide apart from the rear view, providing ample room for udder attachments
- Withers**
 - Sharp with chine prominent
 - Exhibiting evidence of milking ability
- Neck**
 - Long, lean and blended well into the shoulders
 - Neck, throat, dewlap, and brisket free of excess flesh
- Skin**
 - Thin, loose, pliable

Body Capacity (10%)

Good body capacity is often judged by strength and capaciousness of an animal. Body capacity allows an animal to make optimal conversions of feed to milk. The volumetric measurement of the cow (length x depth x width) is evaluated with age taken into consideration.

- Barrel**
 - Long, deep, and wide
 - Depth and spring of rib should increase toward the rear with a deep flank
- Chest**
 - Sufficient width
 - Deep heart girth formed by long, well-sprung fore ribs
 - Ribs should blend smoothly into the shoulders

Feet and Legs (15%)

The structure of the rear legs and feet are extremely important to the longevity and efficiency of a cow. The cow should have good mobility and be able to move smoothly. Slightly more emphasis is placed on feet than on rear legs when evaluating this category.

- Feet**
 - Well-shaped with the toes close together
 - Pasterns should be strong and springy for greater mobility
 - Foot angle is steep with a deep heel
- Rear Legs**
 - Rear View — Straight and squarely placed with adequate room for udder
 - Side View — Moderate set (curve) to the hock
 - Hocks — Clean hocks, free from coarseness and puffiness
 - Bone — Flat and clean with adequate substance
 - Pasterns — Short and strong with some flexibility to absorb shocks

Udder (40%)

Major consideration is given to the traits that contribute to high milk yield and a long productive life. Lactation number and age are also two factors to consider. A strongly attached, well-balanced, capacious udder with quality texture is necessary to stand up to today's production standards.

- Udder Depth**
 - Moderate depth in relation to the hock
 - Udder should have adequate capacity and clearance
- Teat Placement**
 - Teats should be placed squarely below each quarter and hang plumb to the center
 - Teats should be properly spaced from rear and side views
- Rear Udder**
 - High and wide
 - Slightly rounded to udder floor
 - Solidly attached
- Udder Cleft**
 - Evidence of a strong suspensory ligament marked by adequately defined halving
- Fore Udder**
 - Firmly attached with moderate length and ample capacity
 - Strong and smooth
- Teats**
 - Uniform in shape and medium in length and diameter
 - Cylindrical in shape and placed squarely beneath each quarter
- Udder Balance and Texture**
 - Udder floor level when viewed from the side
 - Udder should be symmetrical and balanced
 - Soft, pliable, and have a quality texture after milking

Teats and Teat Placement

Positive Terms

- teats more desirable in size, shape, and placement
- teats hang more perpendicular to the ground
- teats more nearly in line (from rear)
- teats more neatly set on the udder floor
- more nearly correct front teat placement
- more desirable teat shape
- teats placed more toward the center of the udder
- teats more squarely placed on the quarters
- teats placed more correctly beneath each quarter
- more correct teat placement as viewed from the rear

Negative Terms

- funnel, bottle, or pencil-shaped teats
- teats too small
- teats placed on the edge of the quarters
- teats too long
- teats of undesirable size and shape
- teats hang too close together

Rear Udder

Positive Terms

- higher in the rear udder attachment
- higher and wider in the rear udder
- stronger in the rear udder attachment
- more fullness to the rear udder
- more symmetry and balance of rear udder
- more shapely rear udder
- more height and strength of rear udder attachment
- wider in the rear udder attachment
- fuller at the top of the rear udder
- fuller rear udder
- more balance of rear quarters
- more capacity of rear udder

Negative Terms

- unbalanced and loosely attached in the rear udder
- pinched and narrow rear udder
- light in the left or right rear quarter
- lower in the rear udder attachment
- weak and narrow in the rear udder attachment

Fore Udder

Positive Terms

- fore udder blends more smoothly into the body wall
- tighter fore udder attachment
- more firmly attached fore udder
- longer, more tightly attached fore udder
- less bulgy fore udder
- snugger in the fore udder attachment
- smoother fore udder attachment
- stronger fore udder attachment
- longer fore udder
- more capacity to the fore udder

Negative Terms

- loosely attached fore udder
- bulgier appearing fore udder
- deep in the fore udder
- steeper in the fore udder
- shorter in the fore udder
- unbalanced fore udder
- cut-up in the fore udder

TERMINOLOGY

Dairy Character

Positive Terms

- more angularity
- more refined
- cleaner and more angular
- less excess flesh
- more openness of rib
- longer and leaner neck
- less fat about the neck, throat and brisket
- sharper at the point of withers
- more prominent about the vertebrae
- more well defined over hip and pin bones
- more incurving in the thighs
- cleaner in the hock

Negative Terms

- shorter, thicker neck
- tighter, closer ribbed
- throatier
- carrying excess flesh in the throat, brisket or dewlap
- thick and fleshy about the throat and neck

- more dairyness throughout
- milkier appearance
- less excess conditioning
- longer and more open
- more open in her conformation
- less throaty
- sharper over the shoulders
- cleaner down the topline
- more prominent about the hips and pins
- flatter (leaner or thinner) in the thighs
- thinner in the thighs
- flatter boned

- thicker thighs
- thicker, rounder shoulder
- plainer
- coarse and thick about the head and neck

Udder Support

Positive Terms

- more youthful udder
- udder carried higher off the ground
- udder held tighter to the body wall
- more cleavage in rear udder
- stronger center support in the udder
- deeper cleft in the udder
- stronger center attachment
- more cleft in the udder
- fore udder held closer to the body wall
- more balance of udder
- less quartering when viewed from the side
- larger, more capacious udder
- udder shows more apparent quality
- more prominent veining
- more nearly level on the udder floor when viewed from the side

- carries her udder higher above the hocks
- more distance between the hock and udder floor
- stronger median suspensory ligament
- more clearly defined median suspensory ligament
- deeper crease in her udder
- more clearly defined halving in the udder
- more crease in the udder
- more balance and symmetry to the udder
- leveler on the udder floor
- more shapely udder
- milkier appearing udder
- showing more bloom
- appears to have less meatiness in the udder
- exhibited more bloom and capacity of udder
- she has an advantage in stage of lactation, with more bloom and capacity of udder

Negative Terms

- weaker attachments
- less halving
- wide udder (udder lacks bloom)
- udder lacking cleavage
- low, loose pendulous udder

- lacks udder support
- light quarter
- flatter on the udder floor
- broken, weak median suspensory ligament
- lacks a crease to the udder when viewed from the rear

Stature

Positive Terms

- taller, more upstanding
- more stature
- taller front-ended cow
- taller at the point of withers
- more height at the point of withers
- more upstanding in the front end

Topline

Positive Terms

- straighter down her topline, especially harder in the loin (chine)
- more nearly level from withers to pins
- stronger in the chine
- leveler down the topline
- straighter and stronger over the top
- stronger in the loin

Negative Terms

- less strength of topline
- easy over the topline
- weak in the chine and crops
- weak in the loin
- weak over the topline

Rump

Positive Terms

- more nearly level from hooks to pins
- more correct slope from hips to pins
- more smoothness through the rump
- wider through the rump
- higher in the thurls
- more correct tail head setting
- neater at the tail head
- flatter tail head setting
- less slope from hips to pins
- longer and leveler from hooks to pins
- wider in the pins (thurls or hips)
- more width at the thurls
- less prominent in her tail setting
- more correctly set tail head
- tail head placed more neatly between the pins
- thurls more centrally/correctly placed

Negative Terms

- shorter, narrower rump
- higher and coarser at the tail head
- narrow between the hooks and pins
- sloping and pinched in the rump
- higher at the pins
- more sloping in the rump
- reverse tilt to the rump

Feet and Legs

Positive Terms

- straighter in her rear legs as viewed from behind
- less set to the hock
- more set to the hock
- cleaner hock
- walks more freely on the rear legs
- tracks straighter
- more correct foot shape
- more strength in the pasterns
- more refined hock
- cleaner leg bone
- more strength and substance of bone
- more correct set to the hock
- stands more squarely on her rear legs when viewed from the side
- handles her rear legs more correctly on the walk
- exhibits more mobility/more mobile
- walks more correctly on her front feet
- stronger in the pasterns
- deeper in the heel
- more feminine and clean about the hock
- flatter hock
- more flex of the hock and strength of pastern

Negative Terms

- shallow heel
- post-legged
- weak, refined or coarse boned
- weak pasterns
- light-boned and lacking substance
- hocks-in when viewed from the rear
- thick in the hock
- too much set to her rear legs when viewed from the side
- close at the hocks (cow-hocked)
- toes out
- stands too close at the hocks
- more coarseness at the hock
- puffy about the hock

BODY CAPACITY

Positive Terms

- stronger, more powerful cow
- more powerful through the front end
- more total body circumference
- more length of body
- greater spring of rib
- more spring of fore rib
- more width and strength in the chest
- stronger through the front end
- fuller behind the shoulders
- deeper in the chest
- deeper in the rear rib
- deeper in the flank
- more depth of fore and rear rib

- more strength and power
- more total cow
- more total body dimension
- longer from end to end
- more spring of rib
- more width and strength throughout
- wider through the chest floor
- fuller in the crops
- fuller in the heart girth
- deeper in the barrel
- deeper in the fore rib
- more depth of body

Negative Terms

- less spring of rib
- narrow chest floor
- narrow and pinched in the heart
- weak front-ended cow
- lacks length in the rib region
- shallow-ribbed
- narrow, weak, and frail
- tight-ribbed

- shallow fore and rear rib
- weak crops
- pinched in the chest
- shallow in the heart
- short-bodied
- shallow-bodied
- ribs lacking in fullness and spring
- round-ribbed

Connecting Terms

furthermore...

in addition to this...

equally as important...

yes, 2 is also...

one also...

more importantly...

moreover...

I recognize that...

Grants

I admit that 2...

however, 2 has...

I do realize...

this is a close placing, however, because...

I did see that 2 is...

noting that 2 is more...

I grant that 2...

I did not fail to recognize...

yes, I admit...

I do concede...

giving 2 the advantage in...

Front End (Shoulders)

Positive Terms

- smoother blending shoulder.
- tighter in her shoulder structure
- tighter at the point of elbow
- more harmonious blending through the front end.
- blending more smoothly into the fore ribs.
- tighter at the point of shoulder
- fuller at the point of elbow
- fuller in the crops
- less prominent at the point of elbow

Negative Terms

- coarser shoulder
- looser shoulder
- winged-shoulders
- more prominent at point of shoulder
- shallow shoulder lacking strength
- open behind the shoulders

Head

Positive Terms

- more breed character about the head
- more alertness and style
- more dish to the face
- stronger through the jaw
- more strength of muzzle
- wider muzzle
- more femininity about the head
- more style about the head
- cleaner, more refined head
- deeper, stronger jaw
- more flare to the muzzle

Negative Terms

- plainer about the head
- narrow in the muzzle
- parrot jaw
- wry face
- head lacks style and breed characteristics
- roman-nosed
- coarse about the head
- short and plain about the head

EVALUATION OF DEFECTS

In the showing, defects found in dairy cattle can mean discrimination or disqualification. Defects which result in disqualification, such as total blindness, permanent lameness, or a blind quarter, are judged severely because they seriously interfere with an animal's ability to function. Other defects, such as a temporary injury or a wry tail, interfere with a cow's performance to a lesser extent. When judging, you should watch for any defects. It will often make placing the class much easier.

Eyes

Total Blindness	unable to see out of either eye	Disqualification
Evidence of Blindness	swelling; white spots	Slight to Serious Discrimination
Blindness in One Eye	unable to see out of one eye	Slight Discrimination
Bulging or Cross Eyes		Slight Discrimination

Face

Wry Face	nose turned to the right or left	Slight to Serious Discrimination
Parrot Jaw	lacking length of lower jaw	Slight to Serious Discrimination
Cropped Ears	end of ear has been removed	Slight Discrimination

Tail

Wry Tail	tail lies to the right or left of vulva	Slight to Serious Discrimination
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Feet and Legs

Permanent Lameness	interferes with normal function	Disqualification
Temporary Lameness	does not affect normal functions	Slight Discrimination
Arthritis or Crampy Rear Legs		Serious Discrimination
Puffy or Fluid-Filled Hocks		Slight to Serious Discrimination

Udder

Blind Quarter	a quarter without milk	Disqualification
Abnormal Milk	bloody, clotted, watery	Possible Disqualification/Discrimination
Light Quarters, Hard Spots, Teat Obstruction		Slight to Serious Discrimination
Side Leak	hole in the side of a teat	Slight Discrimination

Other

Freemartin		Disqualification Unless A Proven Breeder
Temporary Blemishes or Injuries		Slight Discrimination

WHY REASONS ARE SO IMPORTANT

The job of any judge is not complete when the class is placed. An important part of judging is justifying your placing to the audience, exhibitors or contest officials. Whether it be at a judging contest or a dairy show, a judge must be able to explain his or her decisions. This takes practice in using proper terms in an organized, and interesting style.

Judging is not an exact science. If it was, there would not be a need for contests or shows. No two people ever judge exactly the same.

When you are giving your reasons, you need to believe that your placing is the official placing. Have confidence in your placing and convince the official or audience that you examined the animals and have reasons for placing them as you did. Your goal in giving reasons is not to change their minds, but to make them understand your point of view and why the animals were placed as they were.

Confidence is very important when giving reasons. It takes time to develop, but if you practice you will acquire the determination and poise you need. Start by visualizing yourself in the position of the official judge. See yourself through every process of judging and giving reasons. Watch yourself making good, confident decisions. After placing a class, visualize yourself with the microphone or in front of the official giving reasons.

Accuracy:

Accuracy cannot be stressed enough when giving reasons. Giving reasons that are not true will deduct points more quickly than any other factor. If two animals are very close in a specific trait it is not worth mentioning unless you can use the term, "slight advantage" or "small difference." Accuracy must be considered when selecting the terms to compare or describe specific traits.

A common mistake is to use only a few terms to describe entire categories. For example the term, "size, stretch and scale" is used to compare the height, length and depth of an animal. This term is appropriate only if one animal is taller, longer, and deeper than the other. If the animal is only taller and longer, and not deeper you must use a term which says only that.

Another common inaccurate term is "higher and wider rear udder." People often put those two terms together, however, it is not always true. It is quite common for one cow to have a higher but not wider rear udder or vice versa. One way to prevent using inaccurate phrases is to develop a large term vocabulary. When it comes time to give reasons you will be able to use the term that best describes the trait.

Presentation:

Speak clearly and loud enough so you are easily understood. Speaking in a bold voice will tell the audience that you are confident in your placing. It is difficult to be convincing if you speak softly and unsure. Eye contact with the official is another very important point to remember while giving reasons. To help establish good eye contact, practice giving reasons or just talking while looking in a mirror. You are your biggest critic so if you can maintain eye contact with yourself, it becomes easier to keep eye contact with the official.

Starting Out:

Official reasons are a brief, yet complete statement which justifies your placing. Start out by visualizing each cow in your mind. Make notes about special features that help you remember the animals from the class. Such features can be a different color pattern, horns or an extremely good or poor trait of the animal.

Effective reasons contain comparative terms rather than descriptive terms. Judges should compare each animal to the one placed above it and use terms that tell why. Descriptive terms should only be used to help others visualize exactly what cow you are referring to. The following is an example of comparative reasons versus descriptive reasons. Think about which set gives you a more complete view of the two cows in question.

Descriptive Example:

One places over 2. 1 has good style. She bleeds well in the shoulder. 1 has a straight topline and good rump angle. She also has a good set to her hock. Furthermore, 1 has a high rear udder and strong suspensory ligament. Finally, 1 shows dairy character.

Two is fairly tall and has an extremely deep rib. 2 has a good teat placement but is rather low and loose in her rear udder attachment. She also has too much set to her hock and has a poor foot angle. Additionally, 2 is weak in her fore udder attachment and is a bit overweight today.

This example tells you about the two cows, but doesn't give you a reason why cow 1 places over cow 2. Now read the second example and see how the placing is justified more clearly.

Comparative Example:

"In my top placing, 1 places over 2. 1 presents herself with much more style and balance from end to end. 1 blends more smoothly from neck to shoulder and shoulder to barrel. 1 also is straighter over the topline, slopes less from hooks to pins and stands with less set to the hock than 2. Furthermore, 1 is clearly higher and wider in the rear udder with a more well-defined halving to the udder. Finally, 1 is carrying less excess flesh from end to end, particularly through the thighs. I do realize, however, that 2 is much taller at the point of withers and has more depth of barrel than 1."

Organization:

Whether you realize it or not, in every class that you judge you are making mental notes which help you sort through the class and decide upon a placing. Official reasons are simply organizing these mental notes and saying them out-loud. Remember, if you are unable to find reasons for a placing, you should consider changing your placing.

Once you have decided on a placing or have an idea for a placing, start writing notes. Notes should help you visualize the class and each animal in it. Design your notes in a way that best suits you. Everyone's technique is different. Depending on your ability to remember animals, you need to write notes that will work for you. Some people have to write every single detail down, while others simply need to list a couple of traits.

Generally, you are allowed between 12 and 15 minutes to judge a reasons class. This does not always allow a lot of time to take notes. Develop abbreviations for traits. Do not write out entire sentences or phrases because this takes too long.

Abbreviation Examples:

Fore Udder Attachment.....	4-ud. att.
Higher and Wider Rear Udder.....	H/W rear ud.
Dairy Character.....	Dairy Ch
Feet and Legs.....	F & L

The Basic Format For Giving Reasons:

1. State the class (age and breed)
2. Your placing
3. General statement about the entire class or how the class may have sorted itself into pairs
4. Outstanding traits about the top cow
5. Placing comparisons with a couple grants for each placing
6. Positive general statement which justifies placing the last cow on the bottom
Re-state the class and placing

In the following section you will find examples of specific portions of the reasons process.

Introduction:

For a class where one cow clearly is the top cow in nearly every trait.

"After careful inspection of this class of Brown Swiss 2 year olds, I placed them 1-2-3-4. I found one cow which demands to be placed on top with her tremendous size and balance, correctness of mammary attachments and overall style. This being 1."

Look for the placing, age, and breed of cows being judged. Also note how the official made it clear that this cow was easily placed first and why.

When the class has two cows that are very close in the top placing and can be considered a pair.

"In this class of Milking Shorthorn 4 year olds which I placed 1-2-3-4, two cows sorted their way to the top. 1 and 2 both have outstanding angularity and show tremendous bloom to the mammary and strength of udder attachments to top this class. But today, I give the nod to 1 because she is taller, etc...."

This example meets all the requirements of a complete introduction; class, age, and placing. It also explains how the class had a pair of cows which both deserved some recognition for their traits. It shows how they were superior to the third and fourth cows and then states why 1 placed over 2.

Body:

The body or main portion of your reasons is where you compare the animals. In a judging contest, the body will have three parts: first over second, second over third, and third over fourth. In each part you will compare the two cows using comparative terms. The most important reason for your placing should be first. For each placing you should also give a grant. The grant statement points out a trait in which the lower placed animal excels, and in reasons you should give them the credit they deserve. Look at the following example of a proper set of reasons for the placing of 1 over 2.

"1 places over 2 - the dark cow - in a close top placing. 1 shows more angularity throughout - being especially more open in the rib, leaner in the neck and brisket, sharper through the shoulder, more well defined about the hip and pin bones and more incurving in the thigh. Equally important, 1 is much higher and fuller in the rear quarters, criticizing 2 for lacking both height and bloom to the rear udder. 1 also is longer in the fore udder attachment. Finally, 1 slopes less from hips to pins and has a more desirable tail head setting. 2 makes this a close placing because she has considerably less set to the hock and is stronger over the topline."

You may notice that many sentences are not complete. This is normal in oral reasons because people naturally talk using sentence fragments. Your oral reasons should sound natural and conversational. Also note that the cows are not referred to as "she". Use the animal's number as often as possible so the audience or judge doesn't lose track of which animal you are referring to.

Conclusion:

The conclusion is very important in oral reasons. It is the last impression that you will make on an audience or judge and you want it to be good. Keep the conclusion short. You don't want to focus on the last placed animal. A conclusion should include the reason for placing the last placed animal in that spot and give credit to the entire class or the last placed animal for good qualities. In the conclusion: repeat the class name and your placing. The following are examples of short and to-the-point conclusions.

For a very functional cow that really has no major faults, but isn't as stylish as the rest of the class.

"...I justify placing 4 on the bottom of this class, although I admire her correct, functional type, however, she lacks the style and smooth blending of parts to place any higher in this class of Brown Swiss 2 year olds which I placed 1-2-3-4."

When the last cow is clearly the poorest quality in the class and has some major faults and possibly a good trait use the following as an example.

"...I justify placing 4 on the bottom of this class because even though she is extremely angular, I have to criticize her severely for being extremely weak in her mammary attachments and low in the foot angle. For these reasons I placed this class of Brown Swiss 2 year olds 1-2-3-4."

Notice that each example restates the class name and placing. They briefly mention the reasons why the cow placed last without spending too much time focusing on the negative. They also give credit to any good traits that cow may have, and strong characteristics found in all the animals in the class. For more examples of complete sets of reasons, go to the practice classes.

JUDGING DAIRY HEIFERS

Choosing a heifer with the most correct conformation and future potential can be very challenging. Not only is the udder not developed on heifers, but as they grow, certain faults may disappear while new ones become apparent. Animals who placed at the top of their calf class may not develop the depth of rib desired by dairy farmers, likewise plain yearlings may grow into Grand Champion cows. The goal should be to choose heifers which will develop into productive and profitable cows.

In the showing, judges do not place emphasis on a heifer's udder unless it exhibits problems. Heifers are judged on other aspects of their conformation, including feet and legs, frame, dairy character, and body capacity. Heifers which excel in these areas usually develop into desirable mature cows. It is important to remember that senior yearlings may carry some extra weight because they are close to calving. Likewise, young calves do not need much body because they have time to develop.

When buying replacement heifers or choosing show heifers, one must realize that although the udder has not developed, its appearance can be a good indicator of future promise or problems. The udder of an open heifer should not show any signs of development. Characteristics which a person should look for when considering a heifer's udder are correct teat size and placement with the teats pointing slightly inward. Teats which point inward are a good indication that the heifer will develop an udder which exhibits strong udder attachments.

Discourage against heifers whose udders are fatty or overdeveloped, as this could lead to a poor quality udder and cause difficulties during milking. It may also be a sign of infection or of being sucked at a younger age. Strutting teats and flat udder floors are signs of a potentially weak median suspensory ligament which could shorten the productive life of a dairy cow.



The following is an example of a beginners set of written reasons:

Holstein 5 Year Olds

Sample Introductory Reasons

I placed this class of Holstein 5 Year Old cows 4-1-3-2. I started with 4 the best uddered cow displaying the most amount of Holstein breed character and style throughout by placing her over the white 1, followed by 3 and 2.

In placing 4 over 1, and at the top of the class, I felt this to be my closest placing; however, 4 excels for her overall advantage in mammary system. She has a milkier appearing udder and is snugger and smoother in her fore udder attachment. Furthermore, 4 has a higher and wider rear udder attachment with a stronger median suspensory ligament. To compliment this, 4 has an advantage in that she is deeper in her fore and rear ribs, deeper in her heart, and wider about the chest floor. However, I must grant 1 has a more desirable slope from her hips to pins.

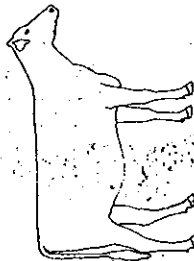
One places second and over 3 because she is longer and leaner in her neck, sharper at her point of withers, more prominent about her hooks and pins leading down to a flatter and cleaner thigh. One also possesses a more youthful udder. She has a fore udder that is held closer to the body wall. As you view 1 from the rear, she has a more defined crease with all four teats more perpendicular to the ground. She is also more desirable in her teat size and shape. However, I do not fail to recognize that 3 is a deeper bodied cow and displays more spring of rib when viewed from the rear.

This advantage in body capacity is one of my primary reasons for placing 3 third and over 2. Three is a stronger, more powerful cow as she is fuller in the crops, has more sweep to her rib, and shows more overall depth of body. Three exhibits more stature; style and balance throughout being taller at her point of withers, longer from end to end, straighter and stronger down her topline, longer and more nearly level from hooks to pins, and neater in her tail head setting. Furthermore, 3 is a truer tracking cow as she walks on a more correct set of feet and legs. Finally, 3 exceeds in her height and width of rear udder attachment displaying more overall bloom and capacity to her mammary system. I must concede that 2 is snugger in her fore udder attachment, has a stronger median suspensory ligament, and more correct teat placement.

Two places at the bottom because she lacks the overall style, balance, and quality of mammary system to place any higher in this class today. For these reasons I placed this class of Holstein 5 Year Olds 4-1-3-2. Thank you.

The following are placing cards for the practice classes:

Judging Card



1234	
1243	
1324	
1342	
1423	
1432	
2134	
2143	
2314	
2341	
2413	
2431	
3124	
3142	
3214	
3241	
3412	
3421	
4123	
4132	
4213	
4231	
4312	
4321	

Contestant Name _____

Class # #1

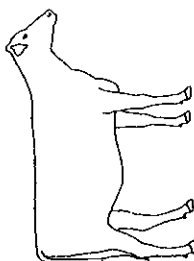
Class 5 year olds

Breed _____

Holstein _____

Score _____

Judging Card



1234	
1243	
1324	
1342	
1423	
1432	
2134	
2143	
2314	
2341	
2413	
2431	
3124	
3142	
3214	
3241	
3412	
3421	
4123	
4132	
4213	
4231	
4312	
4321	

Contestant Name _____

Class # #2

Class _____


Yearlings _____

Breed _____

Ayrshire _____

Score _____

Judging Card



1234	
1243	
1324	
1342	
1423	
1432	
2134	
2143	
2314	
2341	
2413	
2431	
3124	
3142	
3214	
3241	
3412	
3421	
4123	
4132	
4213	
4231	
4312	
4321	

Contestant Name _____

Class # _____

Class _____

Yearlings _____

Breed _____

Holstein _____

Score _____

The official placing of the Holstein 5 Year Olds is 4-3-1-2. The cuts are 3-2-6. The following are two examples of official reasons written by recognized dairy judges for the Holstein 5 Year Olds practice class.

Holstein 5 Year Olds

Practice Class Official Reasons Example #1

I placed this class of Holstein 5 Year Olds 4-3-1-2. 4 walks into the winners circle with ease. Today she wins the class with her undisputed advantage in udder and dairyness throughout. I followed her with a close pair of cows with 3 getting the nod over 1 with her advantage in bloom of udder and openness of rib over the extreme framed white cow. I ended the class with 2 a tremendous dairy cow, but lacks the overall blending of parts to go any higher today.

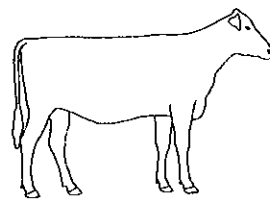
Four places over 3 because of her undisputed advantage in udder. Her fore udder is attached tighter and closer to her body wall, as if it were welded on. Her rear udder is higher and smoother at the attachment. In addition she has an advantage in udder seam, teat size, shape, placement, and shows more apparent udder quality. The black cow also has an advantage in being sharper and cleaner over her withers down over her topline, her hooks and pins, and down through her thighs. Although I will grant that 3 is showing more depth, width, and strength throughout.

Moving on to my closest placing, 3 moves over 1 with a decided advantage in bloom to her mammary system, and a more uniform width of rear udder. Also she has an advantage in having a more dairy, open, sweeping rib. However, I will admit that 1 is carrying less flesh about her hooks and pins, and is a taller and longer cow.

One places over 2 because of her advantage in eye appeal. She exhibits a more correct set to her hind legs when viewed from the side. The white cow also is showing more bloom and width to her rear udder. One is also a more upstanding cow exhibiting more strength and power throughout, as evidenced by her width of chest floor, depth of heart, and fore and rear rib. She is also wider throughout her rump region. Although I will concede that 2 does have a deeper ligament and a more correct teat size and placement.

These reasons justify my placing 4-3-1-2 in this class of Holstein 5 Year Olds.

Judging Placing Scorecard



Class #

#1

Class

5 year olds

Breed

Holstein

1234	21
1243	24
1324	29
1342	40
1423	35
1432	43
2134	15
2143	18
2314	17
2341	22
2413	23
2431	25
3124	31
3142	42
3214	25
3241	30
3412	47
3421	41
4123	40
4132	48
4213	34
4231	36
4312	50
4321	44

The official placing of the Ayrshire Yearling Class is 4-3-1-2. The cuts are 7-2-4. The following are two examples of official reasons written by recognized dairy judges for the Ayrshire Yearling practice class.

Ayrshire Yearlings

Practice Class Official Reasons Example #1

I placed this class of Ayrshire Yearlings 4-3-1-2. 4 never had to look back in this class. She handles the field with her awesome power and extreme correctness. I followed her with a dairy 3, followed by a correct but small 1 and ended the class with 2 a heifer lacking in dairy character.

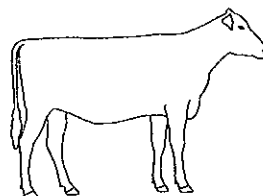
Four places over 3 because of her tremendous advantage in size and scale throughout. She is a taller heifer that is longer from end to end. She is deeper in her entire body and wider on her chest floor. 4 also gets the nod over 3 because she has a more moderate set to her hind legs and is neater through her shoulder. Although I will grant that 3 is carrying less flesh and is more angular throughout.

Three places second and over 1 because of her angularity. She is far superior in dairy character, being sharper and cleaner over her withers down over her topline, over her hooks and pins and down through her thighs. 3 also has an advantage in showing more openness and sweep to her rib. Although, I will concede that one is harder topped and is a deeper and wider heifer throughout.

Moving on to my last placing, 1 places over 2 because of her advantage in set to her rear legs when viewed from the side and rear. One has an obvious advantage in being a more upstanding heifer that is cleaner and shows more character about the head and neck. One also has an advantage of carrying less flesh about the hooks and pins and is thinner in the thighs. Although I admit that 2 is wider on her chest floor.

These reasons justify my placing of 4-3-1-2 in this class of Ayrshire Yearlings.

Judging Placing Scorecard



Class #

#2

Class

Yearlings

Breed

Ayrshire

1234	13
1243	20
1324	19
1342	32
1423	33
1432	39
2134	9
2143	16
2314	11
2341	20
2413	25
2431	27
3124	21
3142	34
3214	17
3241	26
3412	43
3421	39
4123	42
4132	48
4213	38
4231	40
4312	50
4321	46

Holstein 5 Year Olds

Practice Class Official Reasons Example #2

After careful inspection of this class of Holstein 5 Year Olds I placed them 4-3-1-2. I felt one cow easily sorted her way to the top, displaying tremendous breed character, style and balance from end to end, accented by her excellent mammary system.

Four, the cow with the black udder, gets the nod today as she stands with her rear legs placed more squarely beneath the rump structure when viewed from the side. Furthermore, 4 is deeper in the rib, being especially noticeable in the rear rib. 4 also has teats placed closer to the midline of the udder and shows an advantage in shape of udder.

In a closer middle placing, 3 places over 1. 3 more closely follows the type pattern set by the top individual. 3 has an advantage in bloom to her udder as well as a higher and wider rear udder attachment. She is deeper in both fore and rear ribs, and has more strength through the front end. I admit, 1 is a taller cow that is carrying less flesh in her hooks and pins.

In the final placing in the class, 1 places over 2. 1 is a more stylish individual blending more smoothly from neck to shoulder, shoulder to barrel. 1 also stands with less set to the hock. More recognizable, however, is the tremendous size and strength advantage 1 has over 2. 1 is taller in the front end, deeper in the barrel, and stands with much more width of chest floor. I grant that 2 has a more correct rear leaf placement.

However, I justify placing 2 on the bottom of this class of outstanding Holstein 5 Year Olds, because she lacks the style and balance as well as size and strength to merit a higher placing. Once again my placing is 4-3-1-2.

The official placing of the Holstein Yearling Class is 1-4-3-2. The cuts are 3-3-4. The following are two examples of official reasons written by recognized dairy judges for the Holstein Yearling practice class.

Holstein Yearlings

Practice Class Official Reasons Example #1

My final decision in this class of Holstein Yearlings is 1-4-3-2. I started the class with a heifer that excelled the class in general appearance, followed by an extremely stylish 4, followed by a deep open-ribbed 3 and I ended the class with 2, a tremendous dairy heifer but lacks the balance to go any higher today.

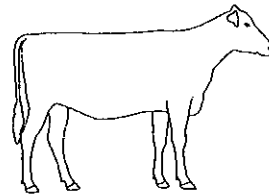
One places over 4 primarily on her advantage in strength and power throughout. She is a taller heifer that is longer from end to end and also displays more depth, width, and strength throughout. She is deeper in her body, wider on her chest floor, and stronger and wider out over her topline. The white heifer also has a distinct advantage in blending of parts, being straighter and stronger in her topline and more neatly laid in at the shoulder. However, I will grant that 4 is cleaner and more feminine about her head and neck.

Four places over 3 because of her advantage in sharpness, cleanness, and angularity throughout. 4 is sharper and cleaner over her withers, topline, and hooks and pins. 4 is also a taller heifer that is longer from end to end. Although, I will concede that 3 displays more depth, spring, and openness to her ribs.

Three places over 2 because of her clear cut advantage in eye appeal. 3 shows a more correct set to her rear legs primarily due to her depth of heel and strength of pasterns. The black heifer also has a tremendous advantage in depth and width throughout. She has a tremendous advantage in depth of rear rib and flank. Attention should also be focused on 3's advantage in depth of heart and strength of loin. Although, in making this placing I must admit 2 is carrying less flesh throughout.

These reasons justify my placing of 1-4-3-2 in this class of Holstein Yearlings.

Judging Placing Scorecard



Class #

#3

Class

Yearlings

Breed

Holstein

1234	36
1243	39
1324	40
1342	47
1423	46
1432	50
2134	26
2143	29
2314	20
2341	17
2413	26
2431	20
3124	34
3142	41
3214	24
3241	21
3412	38
3421	28
4123	43
4132	47
4213	33
4231	27
4312	41
4321	31

Ayrshire Yearlings

Practice Class Official Reasons Example #2

Four's straightness of lines and overall power carry her to the top of this fine class of Ayrshire Yearlings, which I placed 4-3-1-2.

In the top pair, 4 beats 3 with her levelness of topline and width throughout. 4 is higher in the chine, stronger in the loin, and especially neater and smoother over the tail setting. The taller, stronger 4 displays more width of chest, more smoothness at the point of shoulder, and greater depth and spring of both fore and rear rib with wider hooks, pins, and thurls. 4 is also stronger-boned and appears to stand more comfortably on her rear legs. However, 3 is longer in her neck and trimmer through the brisket.

In the second pair, 3 edges 1 with her size and scale. She is taller at the withers and more upstanding and longer-bodied throughout, and she tracks straighter on her rear legs. 3 also displays a cleaner brisket, more prominent hooks and pins, and thinner more incurving thighs. I admit that 1 is neater in the tail setting and deeper in her rear rib.

Finally, 1 places over the lower set 2 because of her leg structure and overall balance. 1 stands much straighter on both her front and rear legs and carries less set in her hocks. She has a decided advantage in her upstandingness and height of front end and displays a higher chine and stronger loin. 1 displays more breed character with a longer, more balanced head and more overall refinement, although I concede that the lighter-colored 2 is smoother over the tail head.

Although 2 is a long-bodied heifer, she lacks the upstandingness and correctness of legs to place higher in this class. For these reasons I placed these Ayrshire Yearlings 4-3-1-2.

Holstein Yearlings

Practice Class Official Reasons Example #2

The straightest, deepest-bodied heifer wins this outstanding class of Holstein Yearlings which I placed 1-4-3-2.

In the top pair, 1 exhibits a distinct advantage in capacity and strength over 4. 1 displays more depth of heart, width of chest, and depth and spring of rib. 1 is also deeper in the flanks and wider through the hooks, pins, and thurls than 4. In addition, the straight white heifer exhibits a stronger loin and blends more smoothly from chine to loin. Finally, 1 stands straighter on her front legs. However, 4 appears to be longer-bodied.

Four uses this overall length and stretch to place over 3. 4 is also a cleaner front-ended heifer and has the advantage in rump by displaying more centrally placed thurls and more levelness from hooks to pins. Additionally, she stands straighter on her rear legs from the side view. I readily concede that 3 is deeper-bodied.

In the final pair, 3 uses her overall style to logically place over 2. 3 is a straighter-lined heifer with a stronger loin, and she stands much more squarely on her rear legs. 3 shows more depth of rear rib and balance of body than 2. 3 exhibits more breed character about the head and is trimmer about the throat and dewlap, although I admit that 2 has sharper withers, and is cleaner over the rump.

Although 2 is a long, stretchy heifer, she is not as balanced and is less comfortable on her rear legs than the three fine heifers standing above her. For these reasons, I placed this class of Holstein Yearlings 1-4-3-2.

Scoring

After placing a class in a judging contest, the placing card is taken and scored by a designated scorer. However, knowing how to score creates an awareness of how you are doing in contests and practices:

The judge for a class of four animals will give the official placing, such as 3-2-4-1. After placing the class, the judge needs to decide how difficult it was to place each pair. The number value given for the difficulty in placing a pair is known as a cut. The judge will give a higher cut on easy placings with a lower cut on difficult placings. An example of cuts would be 7-2-5. This would mean that the first and last pair were easy placings because they had a higher cut with the middle pair being a difficult placing.

When scoring, always use your placing as the guide. You will then compare your placing to the official placing by setting up a table of six comparisons like in the examples. The six comparisons are your 1st place animal to your 2nd place animal, your 1st to your 3rd, your first to your 4th, your 2nd to your 3rd, your 2nd to your 4th, and your 3rd to your 4th. After writing down the six comparisons ask this question to each comparison: I placed ___ over ___ is that correct? If the answer is yes, you do not lose points. If the answer is no, you lose the cut total between those two numbers in the official placing. Once you have figured out how many points you have dropped, you will subtract that number from fifty. This will result in your final score. Here are some examples to help you understand. Always remember, **PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!**

Example 1. Official Placing: 3-2-4-1 Cuts: 7-2-5

If you placed the class 2-3-1-4, your score would be figured as follows:

Placing	Your Answer	Points deducted
Is 2 over 3?	NO	-7
Is 2 over 1?	YES	
Is 2 over 4?	YES	
Is 3 over 1?	YES	
Is 3 over 4?	YES	
Is 1 over 4?	NO	-5
Score: 50 - 12 = 38		

Example 2

Official Placing: 3-2-4-1 Cuts: 7-2-5

If you placed the class 4-3-1-2, your score would be figured as follows:

Placing	Your Answer	Points deducted
Is 4 over 3?	NO	-7, -2
Is 4 over 1?	YES	
Is 4 over 2?	NO	-2
Is 3 over 1?	YES	
Is 3 over 2?	YES	
Is 1 over 2?	NO	-2, -5
Score: 50 - 18 = 32		

Example 3

Official Placing: 3-2-4-1 Cuts: 7-2-5

If you placed the class 1-4-2-3, your score would be figured as follows:

Placing	Your Answer	Points deducted
Is 1 over 4?	NO	-5
Is 1 over 2?	NO	-2, -5
Is 1 over 3?	NO	-7, -2, -5
Is 4 over 2?	NO	-2
Is 4 over 3?	NO	-7, -2
Is 2 over 3?	NO	-7
Score: 50 - 44 = 6		

Figure 3. Key Traits from the Scorecard (illustrations from the Linear Classification System of the Holstein Association USA, Inc.)

Frame, Rump Angle



Pins higher than hooks Slight slope from hips to pins Extreme slope from hips to pins

Pin bones should be slightly lower than hip bones. A slight to moderate slope from hips to pins is associated with less calving difficulty, fewer reproductive problems, and greater longevity. Pins higher than hooks is often, but not always, caused by the thurl placement being too far back. Cows with extreme slope to the rump sometimes also have undesirable set to the hock or are awkward in their hind leg movement.

Dairy Character, Ribs



Tight Rib Intermediate Extremely open

Ribs should be wide apart and slanted toward the rear. This characteristic is also referred to as openness and sweep to the rib. Rib bones should have adequate depth. Also, note in the above diagram that the neck should be long and lean. The brisket should be free of excess fat. The throat should be clean-cut, however, a little bit of extra loose, pliable skin in the throat area is not a serious fault.

Body Capacity, Barrel



Shallow Intermediate Deep

Depth of body is evaluated by looking primarily at the rib cage. Traditional thought has associated an increased body capacity with an increased capacity to consume large amounts of forage and hence produce more milk. However, scientific research has not supported this association. Body capacity receives the least amount of weight on the scorecard.

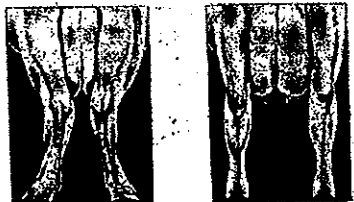
Feet & Legs, Foot Angle



Low Intermediate Steep

Cows that have a steep foot angle require less hoof trimming, have better mobility, and greater longevity. A 45° angle, as illustrated in the middle illustration, is the minimum angle desired. A foot angle steeper than the illustration on the right might interfere with the proper cushioning effect of the pastern and could put undue stress on the joints. This seldom occurs.

Feet & Legs, Rear View



Hocked-in Correct

Cows that hock-in and toe-out have increased stress on their feet and legs and may have increased trauma to the rear udder as they walk.

Feet & Legs, Side View



Posty Intermediate set Sickle

The average cow has more than the desired set to the hock, putting too much stress on leg muscles and tendons. The most desirable set is somewhere between the posty and intermediate set illustrated above. Posty-legged cows lack flex to the hind legs which may cause swelling in the hock or stifle and may cause them to be uncomfortable on their legs. If a straight legged cow moves with ease and flex to the hock with no evidence of swelling in the joints, her legs probably are not too straight.

Figure 3. Key Traits from the Scorecard (continued)

Rear Udder Height



Low Intermediate High

The distance between the bottom of the vulva and top of the milk secreting tissue determines rear udder height. A high rear udder attachment is thought to be an indicator of more udder capacity.

Rear Udder Width



Narrow Intermediate Wide

Rear udder width is evaluated at the point of attachment. Like rear udder height, rear udder width is an indicator of udder capacity.

Udder Depth



Deep Udder below hocks Udder floor above hocks Udder well above hocks

Udder depth is the most important physical trait of the udder. It is evaluated as the relationship of the udder floor relative to the hocks. Higher udders are related with less mastitis, less udder injury, and greater longevity. When evaluating udder depth, the age of the cow needs to be taken into account. Udders below the hock are a serious fault.

Udder Cleft



Weak Intermediate Strong

A deep udder cleft is an indicator of a strong median suspensory ligament. This is an elastic ligament, up the center of the udder, that provides 60% of the udder's support. Occasionally, you may see cows, especially in the Brown Swiss breed, that are relatively flat on the bottom of the udder but still have a strong median suspensory ligament.

Teat Placement



Wide placement on quarter Centrally placed on quarter Inside placement on quarter

Teat placement is the second most important physical trait of the udder. A serious fault is front teats that are placed on the outside of the quarters causing liner slippage and squawking during milk. Rear teats can be placed too close making teat cup attachment difficult but this is seldom a serious problem. Distances between teats often increase with succeeding lactations.

Fore Udder Attachment



Loose Intermediate Strong

Fore udder attachment is an evaluation of the strength of the fore udder attachment to the body wall by the lateral ligaments. It is the third most important physical trait of the udder when predicting herd life. Moderate amount of bulge to the fore udder is expected in high producing dairy cows.