

Introduction

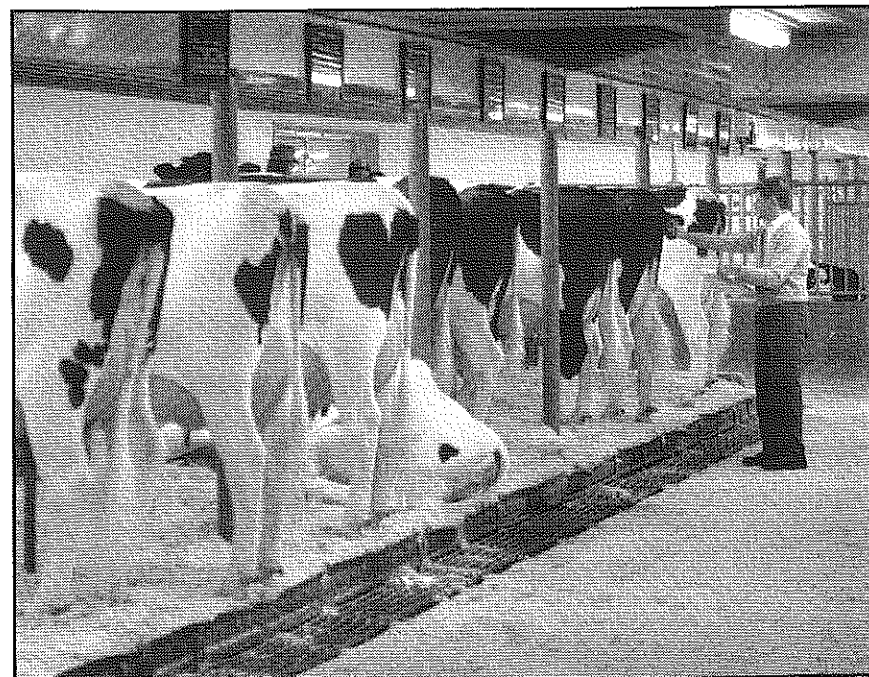
The ability to judge animals is a skill which will benefit you throughout life. Observation, confidence, and communication are some of the many skills which you will develop from judging.

In order to judge dairy animals, you must begin with the fundamentals. Learning the parts of the ideals and how they properly function together will provide the necessary comparison when placing classes.

There are many different aspects of dairy judging covered in this book.

- The revised Dairy Cow Unified Score Card will tell you the importance of the five categories and give you hints when considering breed characteristics and defects.
- Recognizing serious defects will help to place animals based on the severity of the discrimination.
- The challenge of choosing a young animal with the most correct conformation and future potential can be very rewarding.
- Learning how to score may be one of the most difficult parts of judging; however, it is always helpful to know your score during a judging competition or practice.
- Oral reasons are the key to defending your placing when judging a class. Learning comparative and descriptive terms will help you to persuade your audience that your placing is correct.

As you can see, dairy judging has many benefits. By developing a systematic procedure to analyze each and every animal, you will become a competent judge, allowing you to select animals which will work in your herd.



DAIRY COW UNIFIED SCORE CARD

Copyrighted by The Purebred Dairy Cattle Association, 1943. Revised, and Copyrighted 1957, 1971, 1982, and 1994.

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:

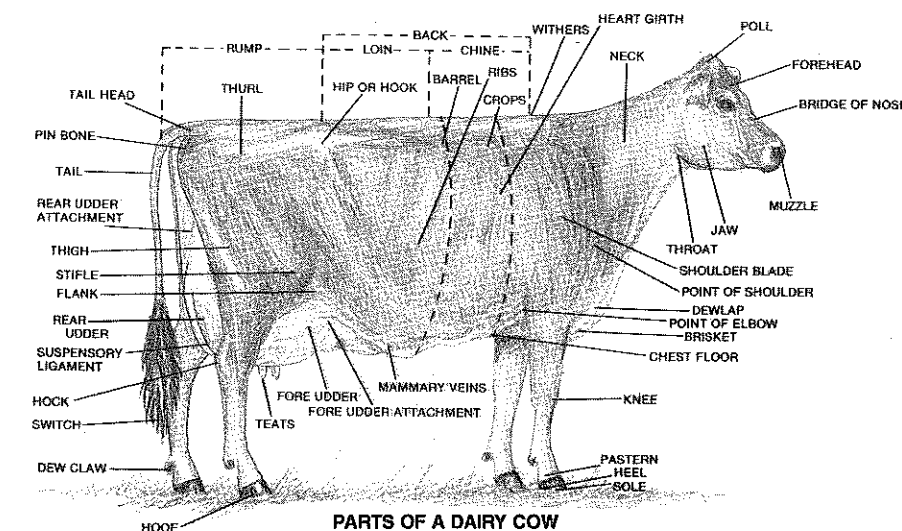
Feet - steep angle and deep heel with short, well-rounded closed toes. **Rear Legs: Rear View** - straight, wide apart with feet squarely placed. **Side View** - a moderate set (angle) to the hock. **Hocks** - cleanly molded, free from coarseness and puffiness with adequate flexibility. **Pasterns**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

TOTAL 100

Perfect Score

15

20

10

15

40