



National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (England & Wales)

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Stockjudging Guidelines: Breeding Gilts

PROCEDURE IN JUDGING

Judging a group of animals consists of comparing them with the **IDEAL** for the type and breed to which they belong, and then placing the one that most nearly approaches this ideal at the top of the class.

Before starting to judge, make certain of what it is that has to be judged: butcher or breeding animals. Then view the animals from a distance (20 to 30 feet), so that all the animals in the class can be seen and compared - general appearance and conformation; type etc.

Watch the animals walking towards and then away from you, particularly for breeding. The hind legs should move forward in a straight line, maintaining good width throughout each movement and not swinging in and out.

When you come up close to inspect and handle, work over the animal with method and in a certain order, e.g. from head to tail. When judging pigs, stand back occasionally or crouch on your heels so as to bring the animals nearer to eye-level

Do not be in a hurry to place the animals, for it is difficult to make one go back on one's first judgment. When ready, pick out the top and bottom animals, placing the second and third later.

If you are taking part in a competition, make quite certain of the time allowed for parade, judging from a distance, and close inspection and handling.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Points	Good	Bad
Head & neck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neat • Light jowel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy in jowel
Shoulders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good width between shoulder blades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide, coarse
Top line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good length & width • Slightly arched back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short & narrow • Dipped back
Ribs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well sprung 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat
Loin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long, deep, full & firm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow, short, weak, shallow, lacking flesh • Soft to touch (fat)
Legs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm, full & well-rounded • Good width & depth of flesh to hocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flabby flesh • Narrow, weak • Lacking fleshing

Points

Legs & feet
Underline (udder)

Good

- Strong & Straight
- 14 – 16 evenly spaced drills of equal size & quality

Bad

- Weak & lumpy
- 12 or less drills unevenly sized & shaped
- Inverted drills
- Supernumery (small) lumps on/in udder

REASON PLAN

Usually, two minutes are allowed for giving Reasons, and the marks are commonly awarded on the basis of Accuracy, 25; Comparisons*, 15; Style, 10. Competitors may, of course, make notes during the inspection of the animals, and these may be referred to while Reasons are given. They must be made, however, on the card provided.

*This implies that statements should be comparative rather than descriptive, e.g. "A is more symmetrical than B".

- 1 Reasons should be memorised as well as possible, and one should try to have in one's mind a clear picture of the animals to be compared.
- 2 Make comparisons as much as possible when giving Reasons, compare animals either from head to tail (carcase - tail to head) to maintain uniformity to your Reasons.
- 3 Stand up straight, look at the judge, and keep your hands out of your pockets.
- 4 Be careful to use the terms that apply to the different kinds of livestock, e.g. a leg-of-lamb is found only on a lamb, and bullocks do not have hams.
- 5 Always try to use the full two minutes available when giving Reasons.
- 6 A white coat should be worn at all times and should have all buttons fastened.
- 7 Thank the Judge at the end of your Reasons.

HOW TO BEGIN GIVING REASONS AND THEIR STRUCTURE

Mr Judge, these are my reasons for placing the ring of four breeding gilts in the order A, B, X, Y.

I placed A first: describe and compare to rest of class as to why it was the outstanding gilt in the ring of four.

Then compare

	2nd (b) to 1st (A)
	3rd (X) to 2nd (B)
	4th (Y) to 3rd (X)

N.B. Remember, there is sometimes a good point on your last gilt, which should be mentioned.

EXAMPLE REASONS

Good evening, Mr Judge and Madam Timekeeper. Here are my reasons for placing the four breeding gilts in the order of A, B, X and Y.

- 1 I have no hesitation in placing A first; she is a well-proportioned breeding gilt with an excellent conformation. She has a neat head and neck leading into well-proportioned shoulders; she has an excellent length and width along the top line, which is slightly arched. She has an excellent spring of rib and handled well over the loin.

Her legs are well-rounded with an excellent width and depth of flesh going down to the hocks. She walked and stood well on four sound, strong legs. This gilt has a tidy underline with fourteen even placed and shaped teats.
- 2 I placed B second. She is very similar to my first gilt and has a good conformation. Again, like A, she is well-proportioned through the shoulders, top line and ribs. However, I felt she lacked the fullness of loin compared to A. Like my first gilt, her legs are well developed with firm fleshing going down to the hocks. Like A, this gilt walked well on sound legs. I felt the underline was not the quality of A but this gilt has, like A, fourteen useful teats.
- 3 Third I placed X. Not the quality gilt compared to my first two gilts. She is coarse through the shoulders compared to A and B. This gilt is shorter through the top line, unlike A and B. She handles well over the ribs and like B, she is weak in the loin. She lacks the flesh development and maturity in the legs. This gilt has lumps on her back legs and does not walk as well as my first two gilts. Like B, this gilt's underline is untidy, has ten teats with two supernumerary.
- 4 I have no hesitation in placing Y last. She lacks constitution and has the poorest conformation here today. I should not even consider using her in a breeding programme. She is very wasteful through the head and neck and, like X, is coarse through the shoulders. Also like X, she is short through the top line and lacks a strong arched back. Unlike my other three pigs, she handled soft over the ribs and in the loin. This gilt has well developed legs but, unlike my first three pigs, the fleshing is not firm. This gilt, like my third choice, has lumps on her legs, which are a sign of weakness. This gilt, like B and X, has an untidy underline but, unlike my other three gilts, she has ten teats of which two are inverted.

Mr Judge, these are my Reasons for placing the four Breeding Gilts in the order of A, B, X and Y.

Competitions Department

Revised April 2004