



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

YFC Centre Stoneleigh Park Kenilworth Warwickshire CV8 2LG
Tel: (00 44) 024 7685 7200 Fax: (00 44) 024 7685 7229 E-mail: post@nfyfc.org.uk

Stockjudging Guidelines: Butchers' Beef

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 neatly 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.

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	• Light, small	• Heavy
Brisket	• Light	• Wasteful
Shoulders	• Broad, well-developed • Well-fleshed	• Lacking flanking • Narrow over shoulders • Dairy-like
Topline	• Good length & width	• Extremely short, narrow • Wide - fat
Spring of Ribs	• Well sprung	• Flat and fat
Loin	• Long, deep, full & firm	• Narrow • Lacking fleshing
Plates	• Full, well-fleshed	• Shallow, weak
Hindquarters	• Well rounded	• Flat, falling off over

Points	Good	Bad
Rump	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fleshing in the 1st & 2nd thighs Muscle development to the hocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow Fat on tail head Lacking muscle development and maturity Very gutty & wasteful

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.

- 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.
- 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.

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

- Stand up straight, look at the judge, and keep your hands out of your pockets.
- 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.
- Always try to use the full two minutes available when giving Reasons.
- A white coat should be worn at all times and should have all buttons fastened.
- 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 butchers steers 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 steer 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 steer, which should be mentioned.

EXAMPLE REASONS

Good evening, Mr Judge and Mr Timekeeper. Here are my Reasons for placing the four Charolais cross steers in the order of **A, B, X & Y**.

- 1 **A** I placed first, a quality steer that is the most evenly balanced and well-proportioned beast throughout. Neatest head and neck leading on to a well-developed, well-fleshed shoulder, being light in the brisket. He handled firm and was well covered over the ribs. The loin felt long, deep and full. The plates are also well fleshed.

Excelling over the class with his firm, full, well-rounded rump, with an excellent width and depth of flesh going through the thighs down to the hocks.

- 2 **B** I placed second, a well-fleshed commercial steer, lacking the quality of **A**'s conformation throughout. When compared to **A**, **B**'s shoulders were also well-fleshed, with broad, well-covered and firm, spring of rib, However, its loin was weaker, lacking the length of fullness of **A**'s loin. The hindquarters were well developed but not of the outstanding quality of my first steer.
- 3 I placed third, the tallest steer in the class, lacking the width and the quality conformation of my first two steers. Compared to **B**, he was also firm, handling well over the ribs, but lacking width and development in his loin, and was shallower over the plates. He lacked the width and depth of fleshing through the rump. Overall, this steer needs a few more weeks to reach his potential.
- 4 **Y** I have no hesitation in placing last. Narrow throughout, it has by far the poorest conformation here today. Compared to **X**, it is weak over the shoulder and lacked width along its topline. Poorest spring of rib and is by far the guttiest, most wasteful, steer here today. Loin lacked the fleshing and was shallower over the plates. Its hindquarters totally lacked the development and maturity of the rest of the class.

Mr Judge, these are my Reasons for placing these four Charolais cross steers in the order of **A, B, X, Y**.

Competitions Department

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