

A close-up photograph of a cow's fur, showing a mix of black and white patches. The texture of the fur is visible, and the colors are vibrant. The text is overlaid on the white patches.

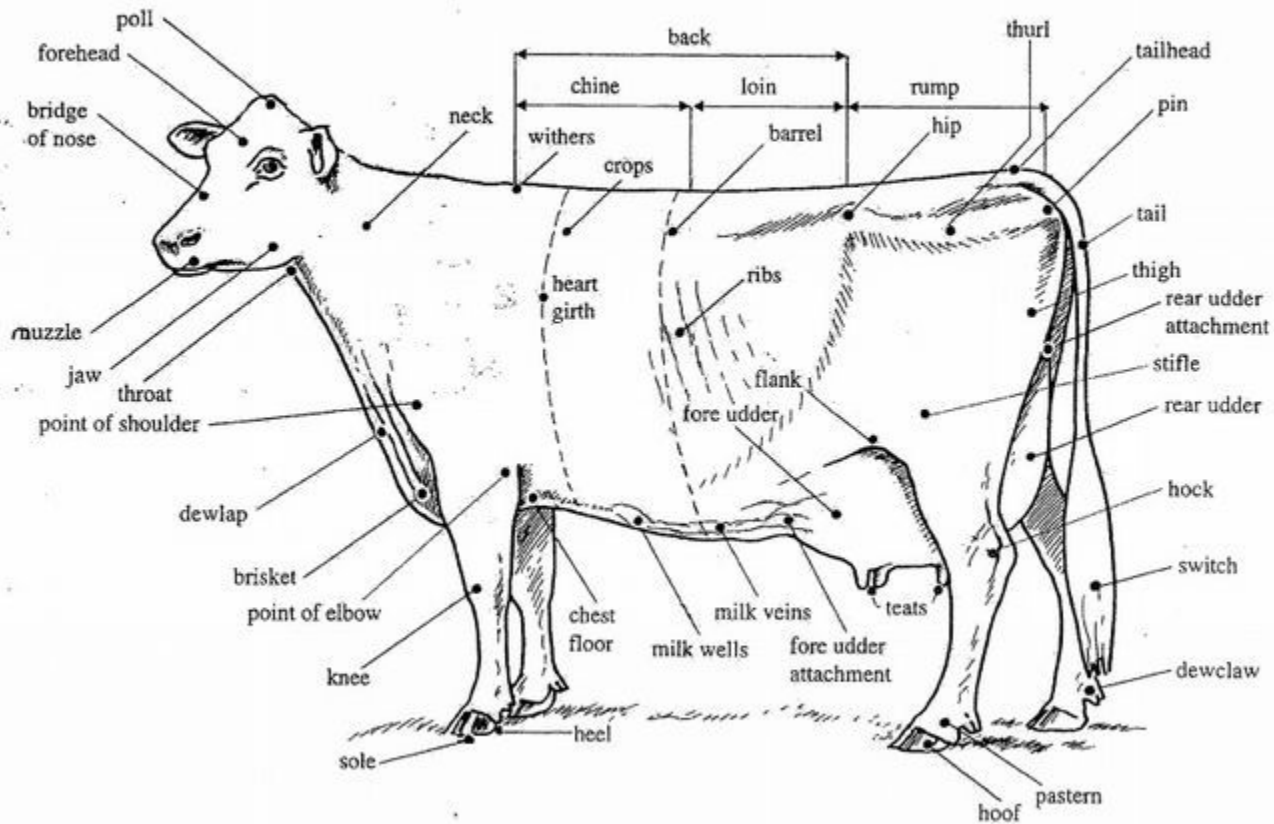
**Dairy Judging 101
and
Picking your Show
Heifer**

Topics

- Parts of a Dairy Cow
- Dairy Cow Unified Scorecard
- Heifer Scorecard
- Picking a Show Heifer
- Dairy Judging Summer Program
- Judging a Class
- Dairy Industry Jobs



PARTS OF A DAIRY COW



DAIRY COW UNIFIED SCORECARD

Breed characteristics should be considered in the application of this scorecard.

MAJOR TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS

There are four major breakdowns on which to base a cow's evaluation. Each trait is broken down into body parts to be considered and ranked.

Perfect
Score

1) Frame - 15%

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

Rump (5 points): Should be long and wide throughout. Pin bones should be slightly lower than hip bones with adequate width between the pins. Thurls should be wide apart. Vulva should be nearly vertical and the anus should not be recessed. Tail head should set slightly above and neatly between pin bones with freedom from coarseness. **Front End (5 points):** Adequate constitution with front legs straight, wide apart, and squarely placed. Shoulder blades and elbows set firmly against the chest wall. The crops should have adequate fullness blending into the shoulders. **Back/Loin (2 points):** Back should be straight and strong, with loin broad, strong, and nearly level. **Stature (2 points):** Height including length in the leg bones with a long bone pattern throughout the body structure. Height at withers and hips should be relatively proportionate. Age and breed stature recommendations are to be considered. **Breed Characteristics (1 point):** Exhibiting overall style and balance. Head should be feminine, clean-cut, slightly dished with broad muzzle, large open nostrils and strong jaw.

15

2) Dairy Strength - 25%

A combination of dairyness and strength that supports sustained production and longevity. Major consideration is given to general openness and angularity while maintaining strength, width of chest, spring of fore rib, and substance of bone without coarseness. Body condition should be appropriate for stage of lactation. Listed in priority order, the descriptions of the traits to be considered are as follows:

Ribs (8 points): Wide apart. Rib bones wide, flat, deep, and slanted towards the rear. Well sprung, expressing fullness and extending outside the point of elbows. **Chest (6 points):** Deep and wide floor showing capacity for vital organs, with well-sprung fore ribs. **Barrel (4 points):** Long, with adequate depth and width, increasing toward the rear with a deep flank. **Thighs (2 points):** Lean, incurving to flat and wide apart from the rear. **Neck (2 points):** Long, lean, and blending smoothly into shoulders; clean-cut throat, dewlap, and brisket. **Withers (2 points):** Sharp with chine prominent. **Skin (1 point):** Thin, loose, and pliable.

25

3) Rear Feet and Legs - 20%

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:

Movement (5 points): The use of feet and rear legs, including length and direction of step. When walking naturally, the stride should be long and fluid with the rear feet nearly replacing the front feet. **Rear Legs-Side View (3 points):** Moderate set (angle) to the hock. **Rear Legs-Rear View (3 points):** Straight, wide apart with feet squarely placed. **Feet (3 points):** Steep angle and deep heel with short, well-rounded closed toes. **Thurl Position (2 points):** Near central placement between the hip and pin bones. **Hocks (2 points):** Adequate flexibility with freedom from swelling. **Bone (1 point):** Flat and clean with adequate substance. **Pasterns (1 point):** Short and strong with some flexibility, having a moderate, upright angle.

20

4) Udder - 40%

The udder traits are evaluated. 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 (10 points): Moderate depth relative to the hock with adequate capacity and clearance. Consideration is given to lactation number and age. **Rear Udder (9 points):** Wide and high, firmly attached with uniform width from top to bottom and slightly rounded to udder floor. **Teat Placement (5 points):** Squarely placed under each quarter, plumb and properly spaced. **Udder Cleft (5 points):** Evidence of a strong suspensory ligament indicated by clearly defined halving. **Fore Udder (5 points):** Firmly attached with moderate length and ample capacity. **Teats (3 points):** Cylindrical shape; uniform size with medium length and diameter; neither short nor long is desirable. **Udder Balance and Texture (3 points):** Udder floor level as viewed from the side. Quarters evenly balanced; soft, pliable, and well collapsed after milking. (Note: In the Holstein breed, an equal emphasis is placed on fore and rear udder (7 points each). All other traits are the same as listed above.)

40

TOTAL

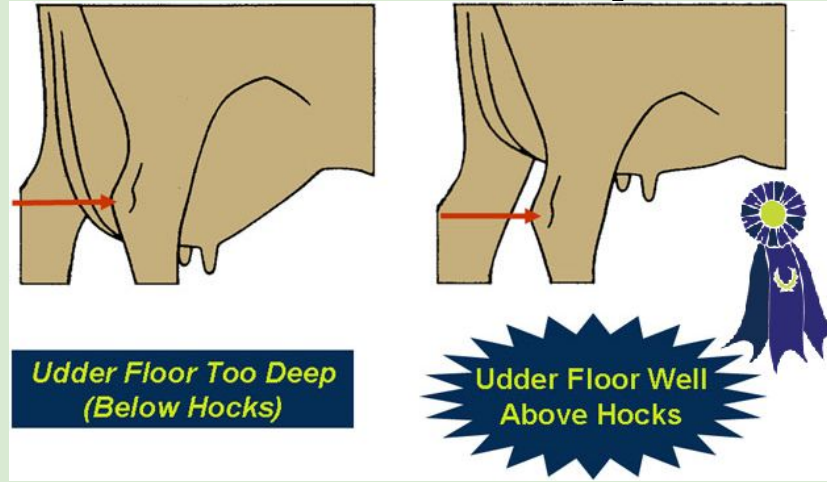
100

Udder (40%)

- Udder Depth
- Rear Udder
- Teat Placement
- Udder Cleft
- Fore Udder
- Teats
- Udder Balance and Texture



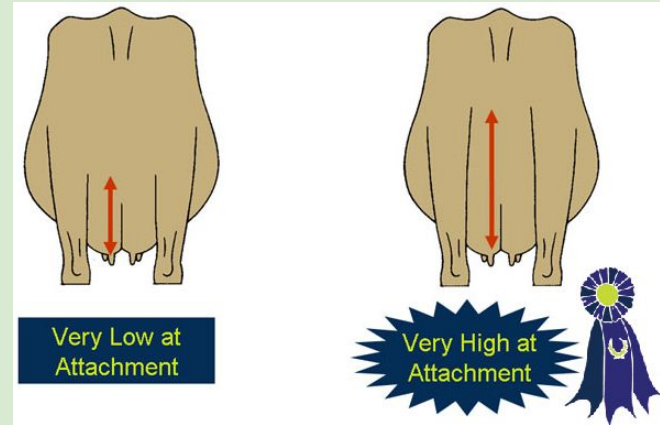
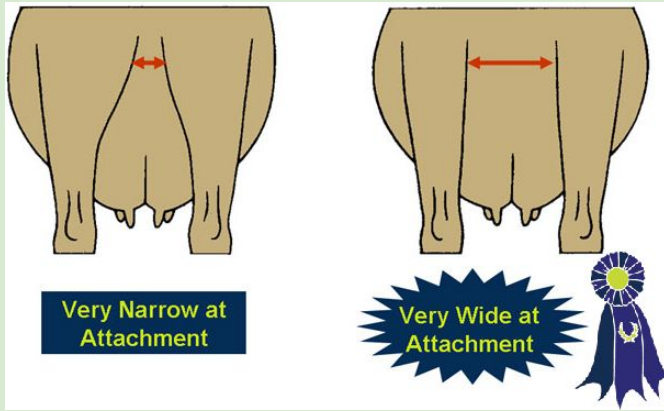
Udder Depth



■ UDDER DEPTH



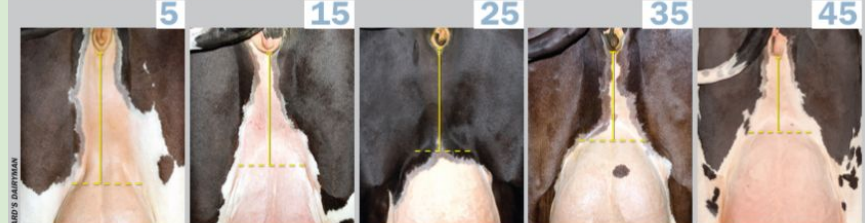
Rear Udder



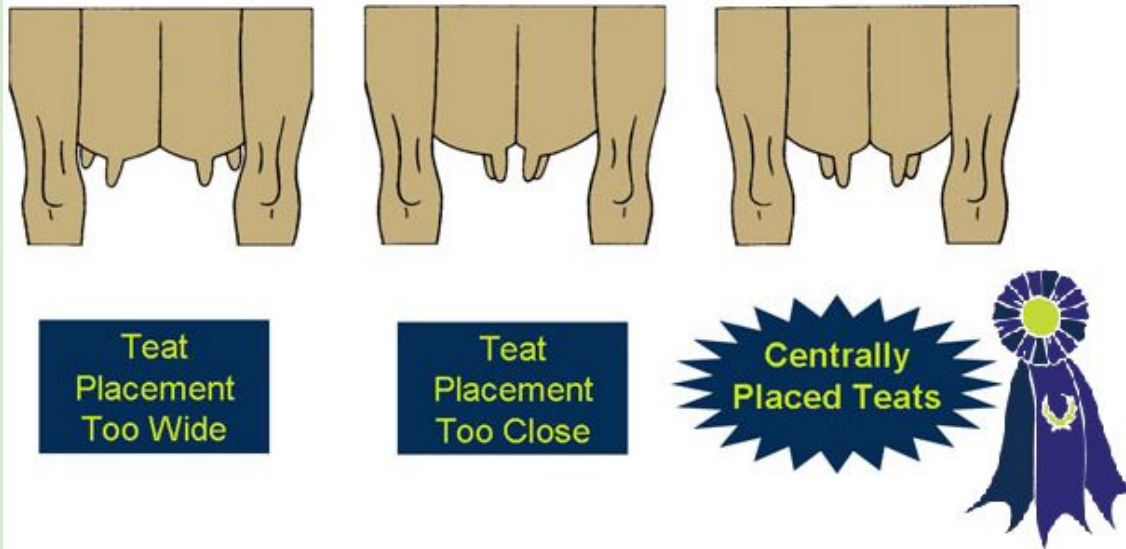
REAR UDDER WIDTH



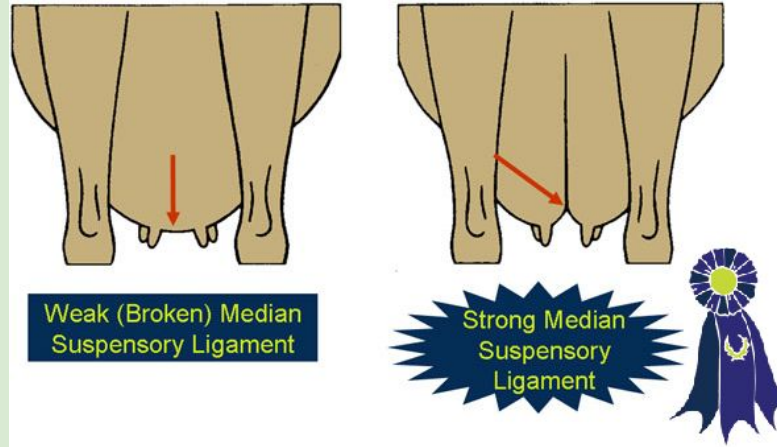
REAR UDDER HEIGHT



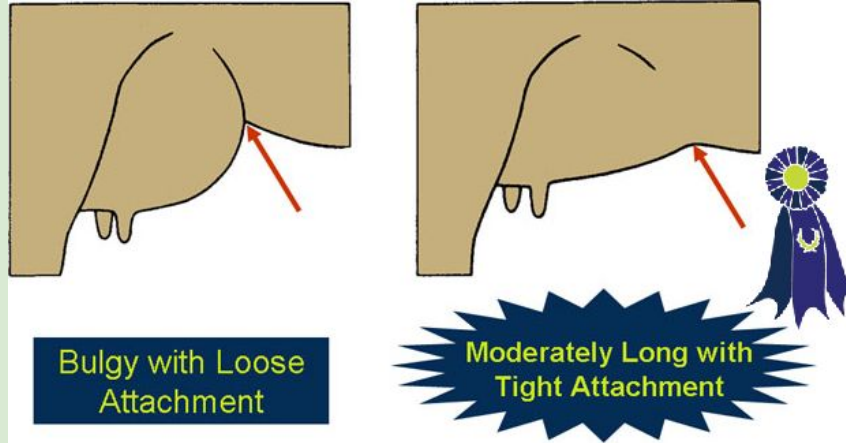
Teat Placement



Udder Cleft (Median Suspensory Ligament)



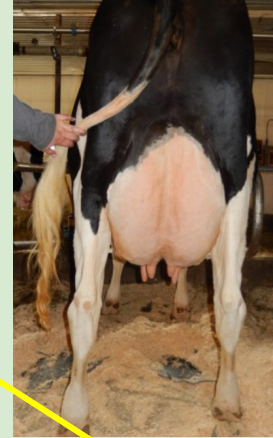
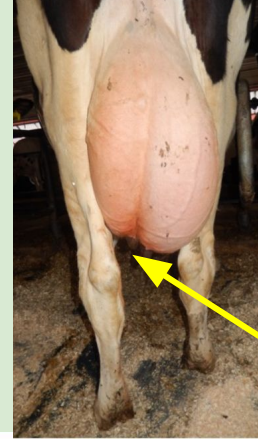
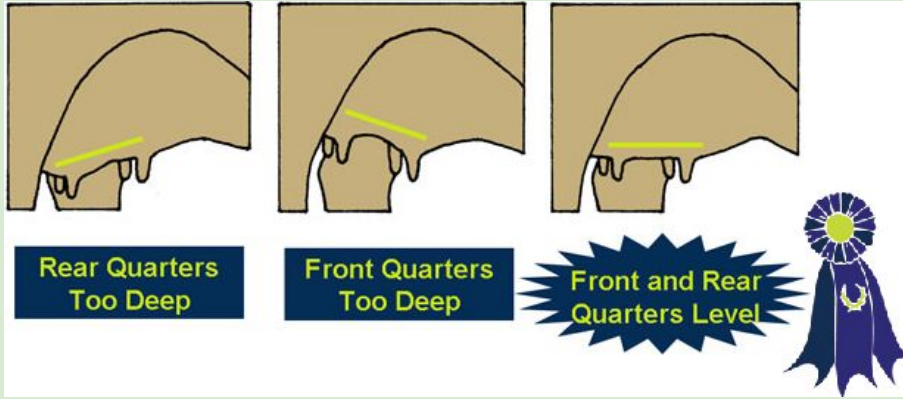
Fore Udder



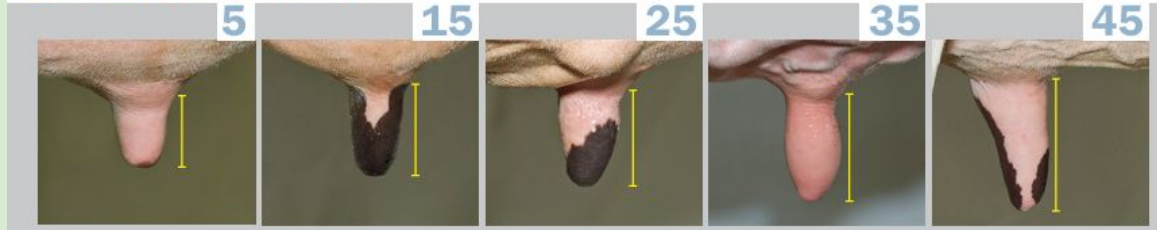
■ FORE UDDER ATTACHMENT



Teats and Udder Balance



TEAT LENGTH



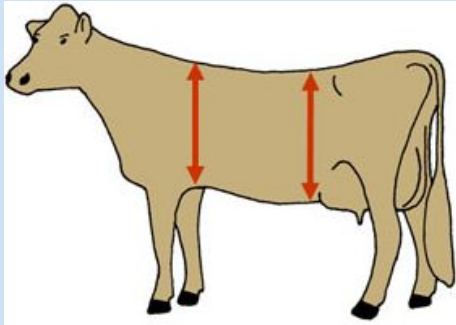
This cow has a light quarter which is a highly undesirable. The cow on the left has a well balance udder.

Dairy Strength (25%)

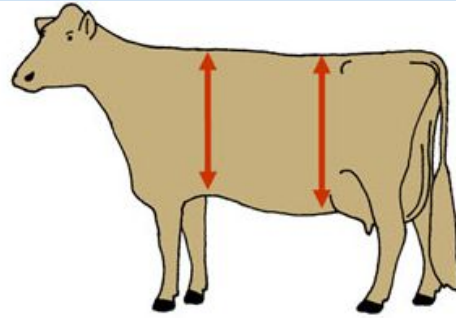
- Ribs
- Barrel
- Chest
- Thighs
- Neck
- Withers



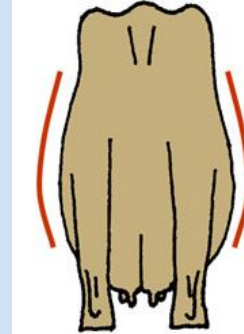
Ribs and Barrel



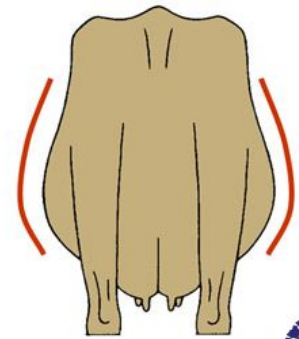
Shallow in Fore
and Rear Rib



Deep in Fore
and Rear Rib



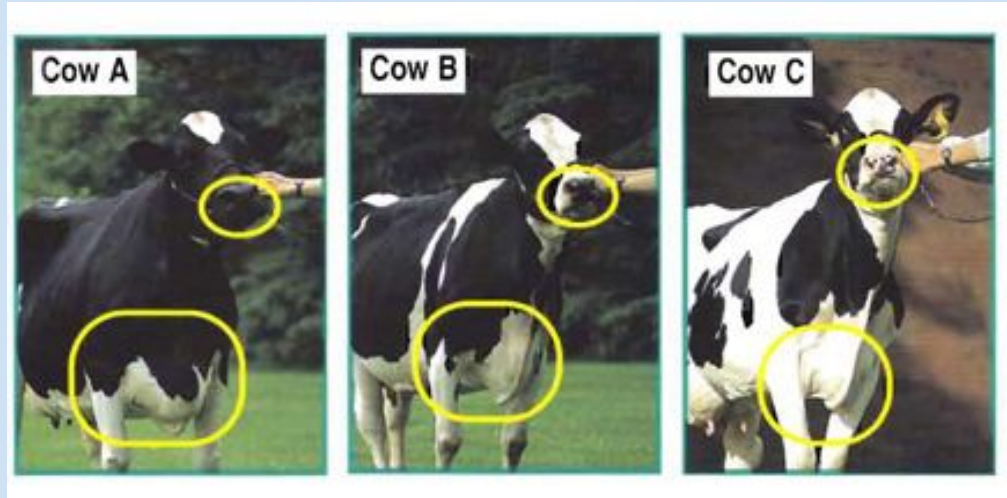
Lacks Spring of Rib
(Slab Sided)



Excellent Spring
of Rib



Chest

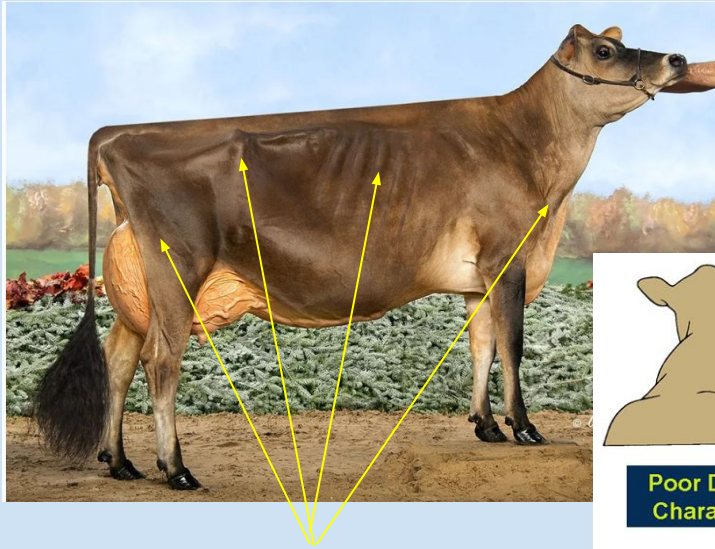


Really Wide
in the chest
floor

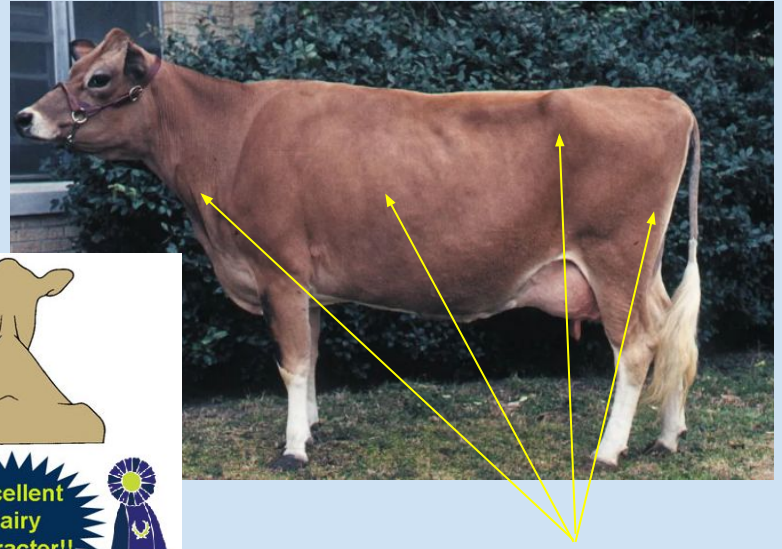
Good width to
the chest floor

Narrow in the
chest floor

Thighs, Neck, Withers (Dairy Character)



We look for dairy character in many places. We look for lean incurving thighs, prominent hooks and pins, openness of rib, and a long and lean neck. This Jersey exhibits great dairy character.



This cow lacks dairy character and carries more flesh and body conditioning compared to the other Jersey cow.

Feet and Legs (20%)

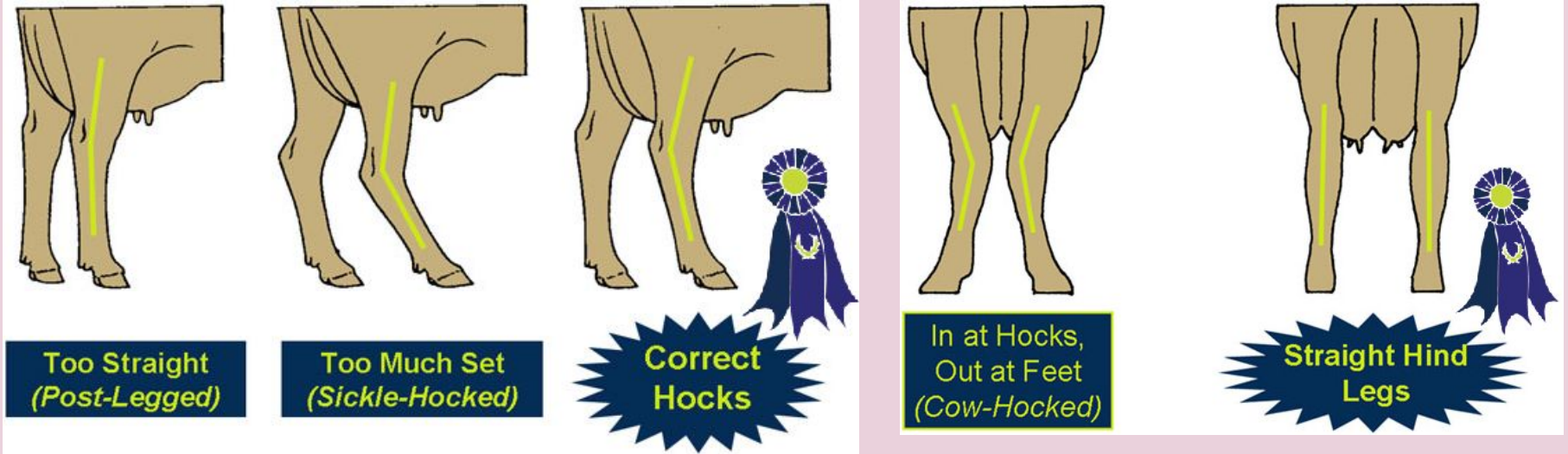
- Movement
- Rear Legs-Side View
- Rear Legs-Rear View
- Feet/Pasterns
- Thurl Placement



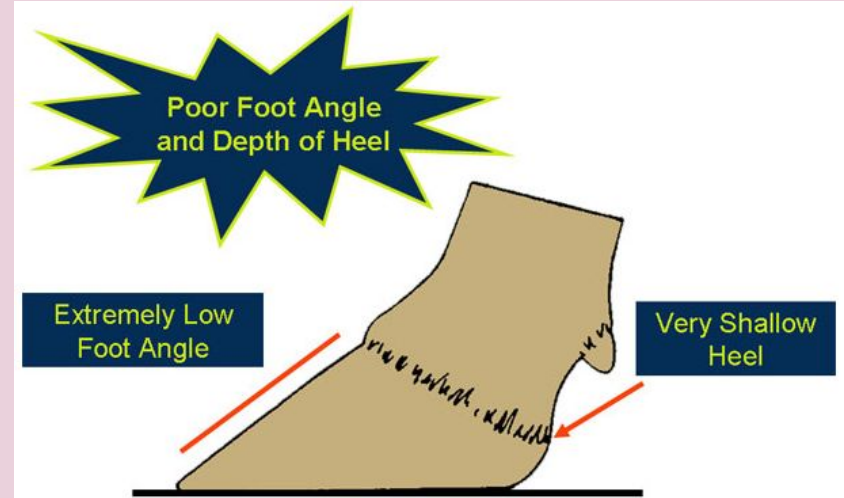
Movement

- No signs of lameness
 - Does not walk with a limp
- Walks comfortable on all four legs

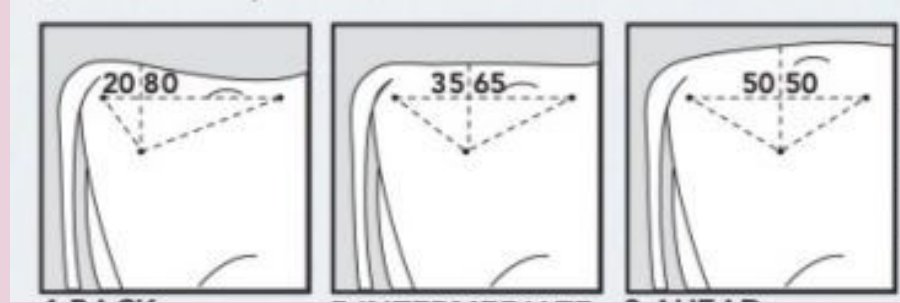
Rear Legs Side and Rear View



Feet/ Pasterns



Thurl Placement



This cow exhibits a centrally located thurl



This Jersey has a thurl placement that sits further back

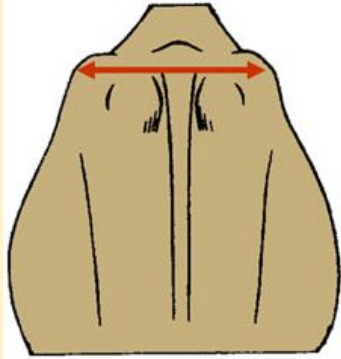


Frame (15%)

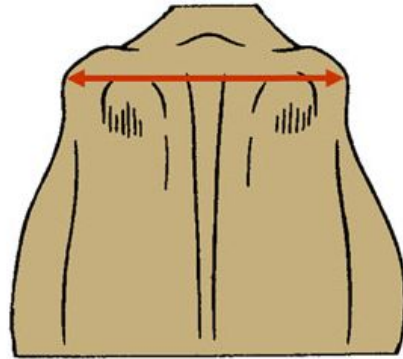
- Rump
- Back/Loin
- Stature



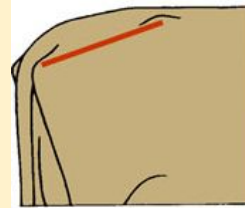
Rump



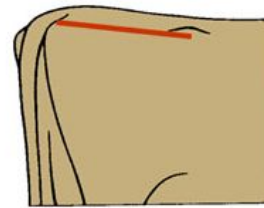
Narrow Rump (*Narrow in Hooks, Thurls, and Pins*)



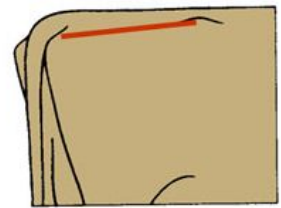
Very Wide Rump



Steep Slope from Hooks to Pins

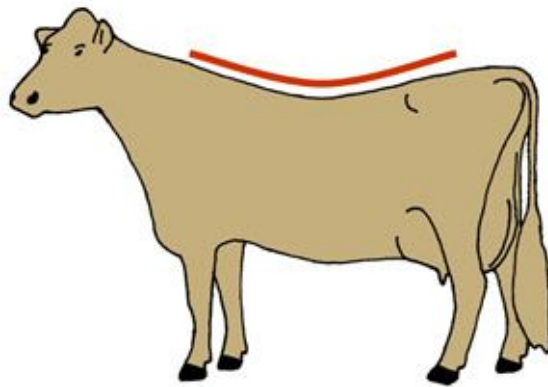


Pins Higher Than Hooks (Reverse Slope)

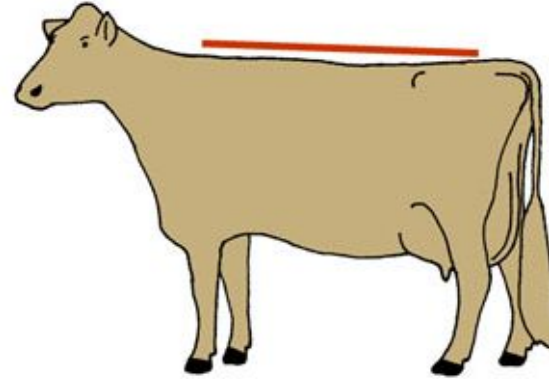


Nearly Level Rump

Back/Loin



Sway-Backed and
Lacks Balance



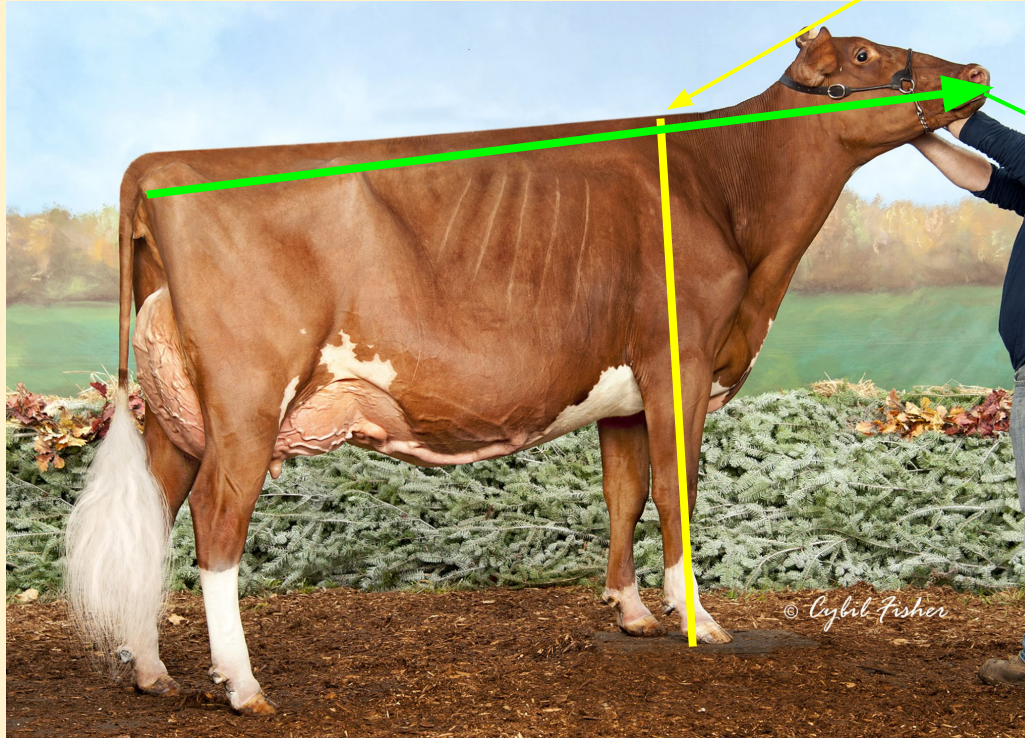
Straight Lines
and Well
Balanced



Stature

We measure height from the feet to the point of withers. Taller cows are more desirable

We measure length from pins to point of nose. Longer bodied cows are more desirable



Judging Heifers



Calf & Heifer SCORE CARD

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Attractive individuality and harmonious blending of parts, with the exception of rear feet and legs, is evaluated. Listed in priority order, the descriptions of the traits to be considered are as follows:

Style and Balance: Harmonious blending of parts; proportionate height, length and depth. **Rump:** long and wide throughout with pin bones slightly lower than hip bones. **Thurls** wide apart and centrally placed between hip bones and pin bones. **Tailhead** set slightly above and neatly between pin bones. **Tail** free from coarseness. **The vulva** is nearly vertical. **Back:** straight and strong. **Loin:** broad, strong and nearly level; slight arch preferred. **Front End:** adequate constitution with front legs straight, wide apart and squarely placed. **Shoulder blades** and **elbows** set firmly against the chest wall. **The crops** should have adequate fullness. **Breed Characteristics:** clean cut head, broad muzzle with large, open nostrils, and strong jaw.

35

DAIRY CHARACTER

Evidence of potential milking ability is evaluated. Major consideration should be given to general openness and angularity without weakness, flatness of bone, and freedom from coarseness. Listed in priority order, the descriptions of the traits to be considered are as follows:

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

Allowance should be made for winter and fall yearlings to carry more condition as they approach calving.

25

REAR FEET AND LEGS

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:

Movement: The use of feet and rear legs, including length and direction of step. When walking naturally, the stride should be long and fluid with the rear feet nearly replacing the front feet. **Rear Legs-Side View:** Moderate set (angle) to the hock. **Rear Legs-Rear View:** Straight, wide apart with feet squarely placed. **Feet:** Steep angle and deep heel with short, well-rounded closed toes. **Thurl Position:** Near central placement between the hip and pin bones. **Hocks:** Adequate flexibility with freedom from swelling. **Bone:** Flat and clean with adequate substance. **Pasterns:** Short and strong with some flexibility, having a moderate, upright angle.

20

SIZE

Growth, vigor and good health are evaluated. Major consideration should be given to height at the point of wither. The description of the trait to be considered is as follows:

Stature: height including length in the leg bones with a long bone pattern throughout the body structure; height at withers and hips should be relatively proportionate. **Barrel:** long, deep and wide; depth and spring of rib increasing toward the rear with a deep flank. **Chest:** deep and wide floor with well sprung fore ribs blending into the shoulders.

20

Differences in Judging Heifers

General Appearance/Size



- Harmonious blending of parts
- Portionate height, length, depth ratio
- Well framed
- Stature- taller and longer bodied heifers

Picking Your Show Heifer

1. Well Balanced: Portionate height, length, depth ratio, and smooth blending of parts
2. Dairyness: Shows evidence of not carry condition or fat over the topline, ribs, rump, and thighs
3. Frame: Straight across the top, level over hooks to pins, tall and long bodied
4. Strength: Width in chest and rump, depth of rib

Which heifer would you choose?

Heifer 1



OR

Heifer 2



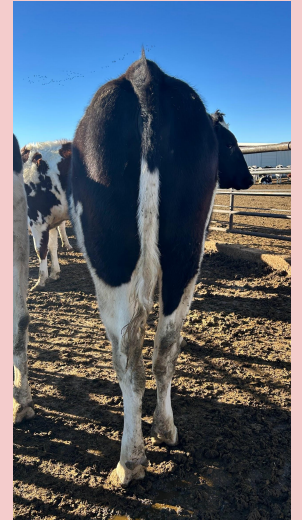
Which heifer would you choose?

Heifer 1



OR

Heifer 2



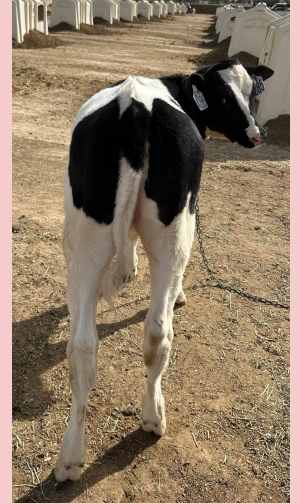
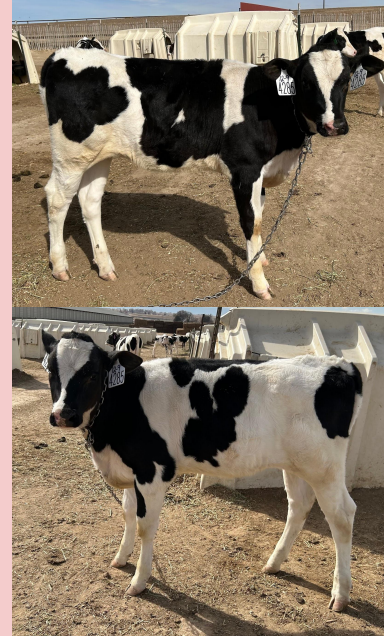
Which heifer would you choose?

Heifer 1



OR

Heifer 2



Colorado State Dairy Judging Summer Program

What it involves:

- Live Dairy Judging Practices at various dairies
- Each practice we judge classes and give a set of reasons
- Contest after four live practices
- Seniors (14+ in 4-H age) may have opportunities to judge nationally

What does judging a class look like?

- Judge 4 animals
- They will either be tied or walking
- Each animal will be assigned a number/letter
- Will have 15 minutes to judge each class and take notes
- Will turn in a scorecard with your placing
- Give 2-3 sets of reasons
- Will get scored on each class from the official's placing out of 50
- Will also get scored on each set of reasons out of 50



Oral Reasons and Note Taking

Why do we note take and give oral reasons?

- We want to paint a picture of the class to the officiant and explain why you placed the class the way you did
- Note taking will help you organize your thoughts and help you recall the class
- Help with life skills: public speaking, confidence, decision making

Careers in the Dairy Industry



Dairy Farm Labor

- Milker
- Calf Manager
- Herdsman
- Breeder
- Machine Operator
- Feeder
- Hoof Trimmer



Outsourced Services for the Dairy Farm

- Nutritionist
- Dairy or Machinery
Equipment
Mechanic
- Veterinarian
- Commodities Broker



Dairy Industry Sales Roles

- Semen Sales
- Dairy Equipment
- Drug Representative
- Feed/Commodities
- Equipment



Beef on Dairy

- Meat Butcher
- Sale Barn Labor
- Auctioneer
- Cattle Buyer
- Feedlot Operator



Dairy Processing Jobs

- Dairy Farmers of America Representative
- Milk Hauler
- Dairy Product Manufacturer



Other

- Dairy Check off/Dairy Industry Advocate
- Health Inspector

