

SHOW STEER SELECTION

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BREEDS OF CATTLE

There are many breeds of cattle. Listed on this page are some that are used in the show calf industry. Some show calves are straight breeds while others are crossbreeds.

Angus



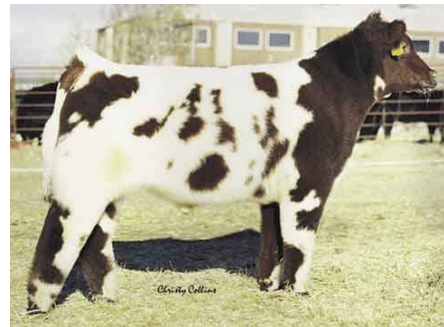
Maine Anjou



Charolais



Shorthorn



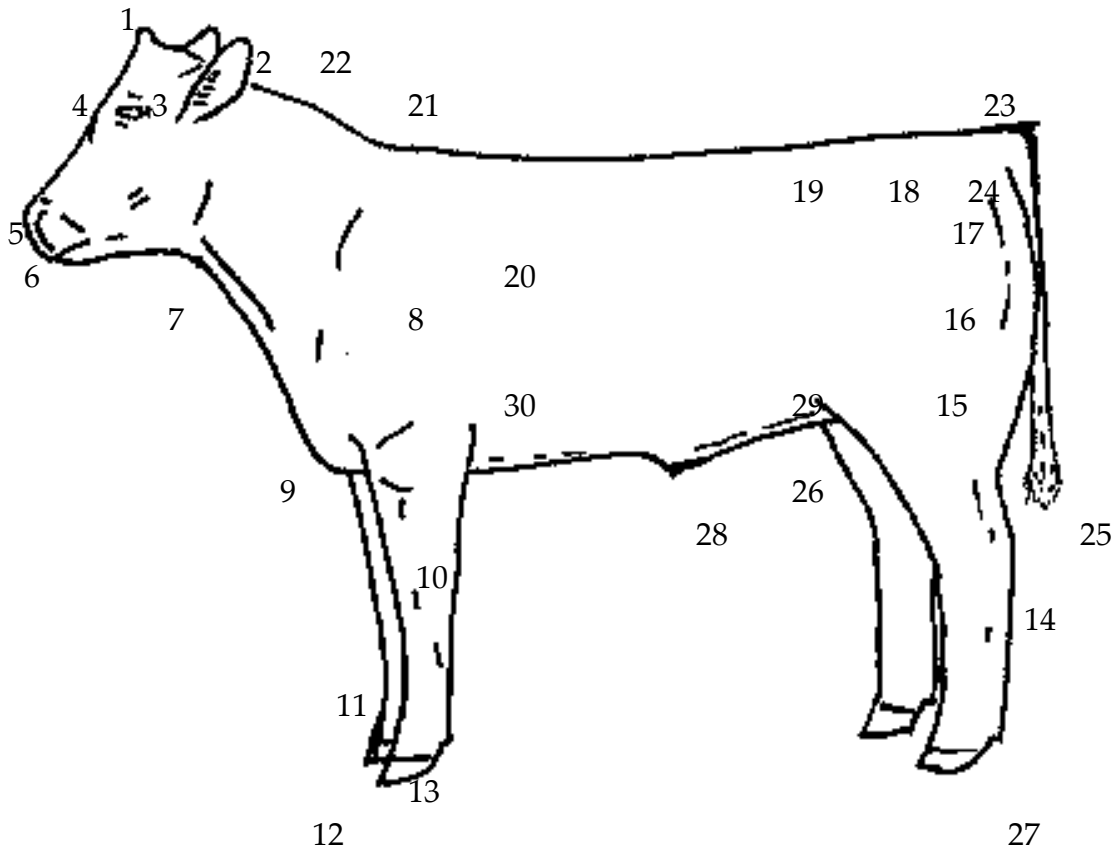
Hereford



Simmental



PARTS OF THE STEER



- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Poll | 12. Hoof | 23. Tailhead |
| 2. Ear | 13. Pastern | 24. Pinbones |
| 3. Eye | 14. Hock | 25. Switch |
| 4. Face | 15. Stifle | 26. Cod |
| 5. Muzzle | 16. Round | 27. Dewclaws |
| 6. Mouth | 17. Rump | 28. Navel or Sheath |
| 7. Throat | 18. Hip or Hook | 29. Flank |
| 8. Shoulder | 19. Loin | 30. Heart girth |
| 9. Brisket | 20. Rib | |
| 10. Forearm | 21. Crops | |
| 11. Knee | 22. Crest | |

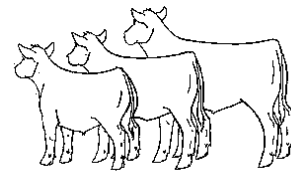
WHY SHOW JUNIOR LIVESTOCK?

The junior livestock program is a unique opportunity to use live animals to help youth develop. Youth learn something about agriculture and livestock production and develop an appreciation for the livestock industry. However, the main objectives are to teach life skills and help youth become productive citizens. The experience of youth owning and working with animals, being responsible for their care, health, and growth, and exhibiting them in a competitive environment is a tremendous character building process. Junior livestock projects help develop life skills such as; leadership, communication, decision making and problem-solving skills. Character building, record keeping and the development of personal responsibility are other skills youth can develop as a result of their involvement in the broad range of programs in junior livestock.

AREAS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING A CALF

Frame Size

Select a calf that has adequate frame. It should be moderate in size, long bodied, clean and free of excess waste through the neck and brisket.

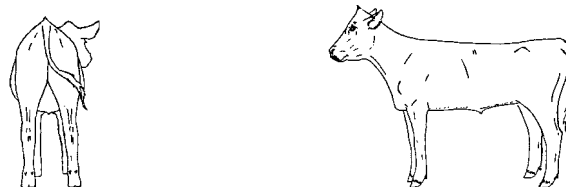


Muscle

The muscle expressed in the lower quarter of the round should be visible when the animal walks. A calf should be wide based, his feet wide apart. He should be wide over the top and straight, long, and level in the rump.



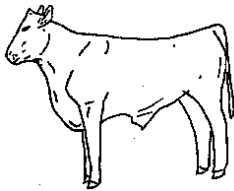
These represent a wide based, well muscled steer.



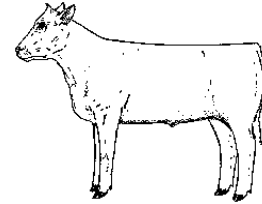
These represent a narrow based, light muscled steer.

Balance

Select a calf with balance and style. There should be as much in the front quarter area as there is in the rear quarter. A deep bodied calf that is full in the flank is desirable. He should be uniform in his capacity and ruggedness from front to back.



Unbalanced, weak topped, heavy fronted light muscled steer

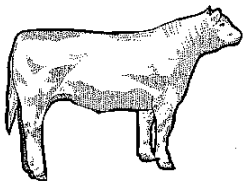


Properly balanced, well muscled steer

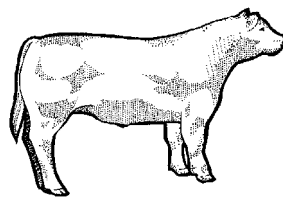
Structural Correctness

He should have a nice straight rear leg with a little set to his hock that allows him to flex freely when walking. Proper set to the hock means an angle is present in the hock joint and that the joint is deep. There should be some slope to his shoulder. His pasterns should have some slope to them as well. A structurally correct calf will walk smooth and have a long stride. His feet should point straight ahead when he stands and walks. The calf needs to have a large circumference of bone to handle the additional weight when reaching market readiness.

Here are some examples of structure to avoid.



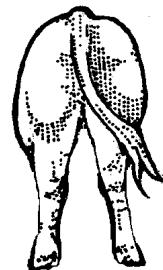
Post legged



Sickle hocked



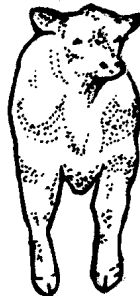
Bow legged



Cow hocked



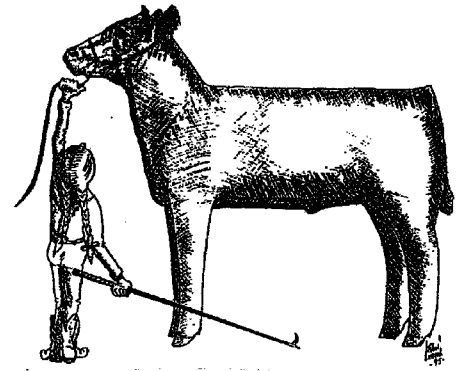
Toes out



Toes in

Disposition

Select a calf that you can gentle down and be able to handle. Ask the breeder or seller about the mother and the sire's disposition.



How big should a calf be ?

- * A March born calf is 8 months old in November when you buy him.
- * He should weigh about 550 pounds.
- * From November to August is 9 months.
- * Depending on the steers frame, an ideal market weight could be 1100 to 1350 pounds. The number of 1250 is often used as an ideal weight.
- * He needs to gain about 77 pounds per month to reach 1250 pounds.
- * Remember that frame size determines how much your steer will weigh.

A look at the math.

1250 finish weight	700 pounds to gain
<u>-550</u> beginning wt	<u>÷ 9</u> months to fair
700 pounds to gain	77 pounds/month

How Much Will He Eat?

- * Beef convert 6 pounds of feed into 1 pound of gain.
- * He needs to gain 77 pounds in a month (30 days).
- * That's 2.5 pounds per day.
(2.5 x 6 = 15 pounds.)
- * He needs to eat 15 pounds of feed per day to gain 2.5 pounds.
- * 15 pounds x 30 days = 450 pounds of feed per month.
- * 450 x 9 months = 4050 pounds of feed.

Weigh your steer regularly to help determine how he is growing. This will help you decide how much to feed him so he reaches his desired weight for the show.

REFERENCES

The author does not claim all material inside as original. Thank you and credit goes to the following sources.

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