

# LIVESTOCK JUDGING GUIDE

FOR 4-H CLUB  
MEMBERS

**Cooperative Extension Service**  
Kansas State University • Manhattan



# Table of Contents

<b>Achieving skill in judging</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Taking notes, marking the judging card	
Presenting oral reasons .....	7
Selecting breeding animals .....	7
Selecting slaughter animals.....	8
<b>Judging cattle</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Ideal market steer .....	10
Terms to use when judging market steers.....	13
Sample reasons .....	13
Ideal heifer .....	14
Ideal bull .....	15
Terms to use when judging breeding cattle .....	16
Sample reasons.....	16
<b>Judging swine</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Ideal market barrow .....	18
Terms to use when judging market barrows .....	22
Ideal gilt .....	23
Terms to use when judging breeding gilts.....	24
Sample reasons.....	24
<b>Judging sheep</b> .....	<b>26</b>
Ideal market lamb .....	27
Terms to use when judging market lambs.....	30
Sample reasons.....	31
Ideal breeding sheep.....	32
Terms to use when judging breeding sheep .....	33
Sample reasons.....	33

# Achieving Skill in Judging

Judging is making a careful analysis of animals or carcasses and measuring them against a standard that is commonly accepted as ideal.

Four steps are involved in judging animals or their carcasses:

1. **Information**—The judge must know the intended use of the individuals that comprise the class.
2. **Observation**—The judge must carefully observe each individual in the class and note how it meets or fails to meet the requirements of its intended use.
3. **Comparison**—Each individual must then be compared with all others in the class to establish differences and similarities.
4. **Conclusion**—After completion of the first three steps, the judge must arrive at a logical placing for the class of animals or carcasses.

The ability to explain the placing of a class orally or in writing is very important to the improvement of livestock. Opinions must be expressed in clear, concise and understandable language if they are to be of benefit to others.

In addition to the improvement of livestock, the ability to justify decisions is extremely important in all aspects of life. Regardless of the profession, the importance of expressing one's ideas in a persuasive manner cannot be overemphasized.

In the training of livestock and meats judges, considerable emphasis is given to the formal procedure for stating reasons for placement. This is to give the trainee experience in organizing a clear, concise and accurate set of reasons. Consider the following points when preparing a set of reasons:

- Keep the reasons short and to the point.
- Avoid words, phrases or comments that do not add to the meaning of the reason.
- Discuss the class in a logical order, starting with the top individual and ending with last place.
- Reasons should be comparative, not descriptive, so as to establish a logical order of placing.
- Tell the truth, discussing only those things which you observed in that class.

## Taking notes

Good notes are a must for presenting reasons orally.

A small notebook which opens as a book is best. You can use two pages for a class without having to turn pages.

Use the left page of your notebook for general comments about each animal. Place the numbers in order down

the extreme left side of the sheet. Jot down the first impression that you have about each animal.

After you have placed the class, use the right page for the comparisons, grants and criticisms of each pair. Then you can refer to the left page to see if you have mentioned the more important things that you noticed first.

To save time, develop some sort of system for abbreviating. For example, write "½" for quarter, "dp" for deeper, "lg" for longer, and "s&s" for size and scale.

Do not attempt to write out all of your reasons before you give them orally. This is unnecessary and takes up valuable time. Be sure you know the correct procedure for giving reasons orally.

Use your notes to list the important items that you want to say about each pair. Prior to the actual presentation of your reasons, you can use your notes to help you remember the class.

(White)	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	4	3	
	1	3	2	4	
CONTESTANT _____	1	3	4	2	
	1	4	2	3	
	1	4	3	2	
	2	1	3	4	
	2	1	4	3	
<b>KANSAS</b>	2	3	1	4	
<b>4-H JUDGING CARD</b>	2	3	4	1	
	2	4	1	3	
	2	4	3	1	
	3	1	2	4	
	3	1	4	2	
CLASS _____	3	2	1	4	
	3	2	4	1	
	3	4	1	2	
	3	4	2	1	
	4	1	2	3	
	4	1	3	2	
	4	2	1	3	
REASON SCORE	4	2	3	1	
	4	3	1	2	
	4	3	2	1	

## Marking the judging card

An example of the Kansas 4-H judging card is shown here. With a class of four animals, there are 24 possible ways to place the class. Always be sure to mark both your contestant number and the name of the class being judged on each card.

After making your final decision, circle the proper placing on the judging card. Be sure to circle only one placing. Before handing your card in to the officials, write down your chosen placing in your notebook for all classes.

## Suggestions

Accuracy is the most important consideration when giving reasons. However, unless reasons are presented in a manner which is pleasant to hear, and clear and easy to follow, the value of accuracy is lost because much of what is said doesn't get through to the listener.

Here are suggestions on the organization and composition of oral reasons:

There are many different systems of organizing reasons. The system presented here is logical and clear, and can be used in all judging situations. Here is a basic outline for an entire set of reasons. It is followed by examples and comments on the specific steps involved.

(The placing for this example is 1-2-3-4).

- Step 1.** Give name of class and how you placed it.
- Top Pair** **Step 2.** Give reasons for placing 1 over 2, using comparative terms.
- Step 3.** Grants for 2 over 1, pointing out advantages of 2 over 1.
- Step 4.** Criticism of 2. Critical terms
- Middle Pair** **Step 5.** Reasons for placing 2 over 3.
- Step 6.** Grants for 3 over 2.
- Step 7.** Criticisms of 3.
- Bottom Pair** **Step 8.** Reasons for placing 3 over 4.
- Step 9.** Grants for 4 over 3.
- Step 10.** Criticism of 4.

In giving reasons, a class of 4 is divided into 3 pairs—a top pair, a middle pair and a bottom pair. Use the same procedure for each pair.

For purposes of presenting the following examples, assume that a class of market steers placed 1-2-3-4.

**Step 1. Class name and placing.** To begin the reasons, state the name of the class and your placing.

**Step 2. Reasons for placing 1 over 2.** This should be done much the same as in a newspaper story—with the important, general points first, then details to complete the story. In judging market steers, examples of "general" terms are: nicer balanced, smoother, higher quality, thicker and higher yielding.

Mention differences with regard to these general factors in the lead statement, then details in the succeeding sentence or sentences. (Details may also be mentioned in the latter part of the lead statement.)

Example: "I placed 1 over 2 because he was a trimmer steer and was thicker and nicer balanced. He was a larger-framed steer that was wider over his loin, deeper and thicker through his quarter, and had a more uniform finish over his top and down over his ribs than 2."

It is important not to use too many terms in close succession because the terms come so fast the listener cannot possibly hear and evaluate all of them. (Example: "One was trimmer, middled thicker, nicer balanced, more up-standing, deeper ribbed, wider topped, thicker quartered steer than 2.")

Note the first example, which is rather long. The terms are divided by the words, "steer" and "and had." Especially in the case of terms used as adjectives, not more than two or three should be used in succession.

More terms of the kind, "wider over his loin" and "deeper in his quarter," can be used in succession because more words are required to mention each point, and it is easier for the listener to follow.

Try to avoid extremely long sentences when giving reasons. A variety of short and long sentences is easier to listen to and give.

**Step 3. Grant for 2 over 1.** "I grant (or realize or recognize) that 2 was a smoother, more stylish steer that was trimmer middled and stronger over his top than 1." (Always end a grant statement with "than" plus a number.)

**Step 4. Criticism of 2.** ". . . but I placed 2 second because he was a narrow topped, poorly balanced steer that was narrow through his quarter." Use **descriptive** terms while criticizing an animal. For example, say a steer is small framed or lighter muscled than the steer you placed above him.

An exception to this rule is if you are able to make a class comparison, such as: "I placed 3 fourth because he was a poorly balanced steer that was 'the lowest set, shortest sided, most conventional patterned steer in the class.'"

Use the same procedure for the middle and bottom pairs as you did for the top pair. These two pairs may be introduced by: "In the middle pair I placed 2 over 3 because . . ." and "In the bottom pair I placed 3 over 4 because . . ."

State reasons in complete sentences rather than phrases. A fundamental principle to keep in mind is that if it isn't grammatically correct, it isn't correct in a set of reasons.

## Words and phrase that should not be used in oral reasons

There are differences of opinion regarding the use of some words and phrases in stating reasons. Each of the examples is considered undesirable by some people and all of them can be replaced with better words and phrases. Eliminating all of them will improve the presentation of your reasons.

- **Animal or individual.** Instead say “barrow,” “gilt,” “wether,” “ewe,” “steer,” “heifer,” etc.
- **It.** Instead say either “he” or “she.”
- **I would like to see.** Instead of saying, “I would like to see 2 wider topped,” point out the fault directly: “I criticize 2 because he is narrow over the top.”
- **Lacks.** Avoid this term. Usually it is more effective to directly point out the fault than to say an individual lacks something. For example, instead of saying, “I criticize 4 because she lacks depth,” say, “I criticize 4 because she is shallow.”
- **For being or for.** Instead of “I criticize 3 for being shallow,” say “I criticize 3 because she is shallow.”
- **Carrying.** Example: instead of “carries down into a thicker quarter,” say “is thicker through the quarter,” or “has a thicker quarter.”
- **Kind of (steer, barrow, etc.).** Instead of, “a smoother kind of a barrow,” say simply, “a smoother barrow.”
- **Is a heifer that is.** For example, “1 is a heifer that is smoother and typier.” The phrase, “is a heifer that is,” only adds unnecessary words and emphasize that 1 is a heifer. Say, “1 is a smoother, typier heifer.”
- **I placed number 1 steer over number 2 steer.** The words, steer and number, be omitted. It is sufficient to say, “1 over 2.”
- **I placed this class of Angus steers in the order of 1–2–3–4.** Leave out “in the order of” because the phrase adds nothing to the meaning.
- **Leaving or left.** Instead of, “I left 4 third because . . .” Say, “I placed 4 third because . . .” or “I criticize 3 because . . .”
- **For these reasons I placed this class.** This is unnecessary. Conclude the reasons with criticism of bottom individual.
- **Placing.** It is better to say, “I placed . . .”
- **Criticizing.** It is better to say, “I criticize . . .”

## Presenting oral reasons

In presenting oral reasons it is extremely important to make the best impression possible. Always try to look your best when you step up to give your reasons.

It is not essential to be extremely dressed up, but a clean, well-groomed appearance is important. Never give reasons while chewing gum or tobacco. In addition, remove your hat prior to presenting the set. Try as hard as you can to be both pleasing to listen to and look at.

Here are additional things to consider in presenting oral reasons:

1. Be ready to present your reasons when called upon. However, if you have not had at least 10 minutes since

presenting your last set of reasons, you can ask the judge for more time.

2. Never use notes when actually presenting oral reasons.
3. Most officials will give you your placing card. Check to make sure it’s yours, then place it behind your back and start to give your reasons.
4. Don’t stand too close to the official. The preferred distance is about 10 feet away.
5. Stand erect with your feet spread to about the width of your shoulders. Keep your hands behind your back with your card. Check your card when you change pairs, if necessary, to be sure you keep the numbers straight.
6. Impress the official by showing confidence in your placing. Look him/her squarely in the eye when you talk. If you can’t look him/her in the eye, look at a spot on his/her forehead. This will give the appearance that you are maintaining eye contact.
7. Do not shout when you are giving your reasons but rather talk in a louder-than-normal, conversational voice.
8. Speak in a convincing tone.
9. Don’t talk too fast. You want to be sure the official hears everything you have to say.
10. Vary the tone of your voice to emphasize the points you consider the most important.
11. Body movement or hand gestures may distract an official. Facial expressions are permissible, but be careful of excessive head movement.
12. If there are identifying marks or characteristics in a class, use them in your reasons to help you remember the class. (For example, a red-necked steer or a golden heifer.) These things also help to show that you were very observant.
13. A good set of reasons should not be more than two minutes long. If they are longer, the reasons become boring, the things you say are not the major points and your chances of error are greater.

## Selecting breeding animals

The foundation of animal production is the breeding herd or flock.

Select animals that possess:

- indications of high reproductive efficiency.
- efficient conversion of feed.
- a type of pattern that will reproduce desirable carcass composition, fleece characteristics or performance capabilities.
- sound feet and legs and structural correctness. (See examples on page 6.)

The ability of the individual to meet these requirements is determined by two factors: heredity and environment.

Our modern production systems call for the use of records as an aid in determining the genetic potential of an individual and his/her response to environment. However, records cannot tell the complete story. Visual evaluation of the live animal is important in selecting superior breeding stock.

A live animal has many features in his/her make-up that aid in predicting his/her value in a breeding herd or flock. Train your eyes and mind to detect and evaluate these features. By measuring one animal against another, you can select the animal that will best fit into a profitable breeding program.

### Selecting slaughter animals

The meat-type animal of today has a high percentage of muscle and a low percentage of fat.

The best indicators of muscling are:

- thickness through the rear quarter.
- natural thickness and turn over the edge of the top.
- muscling in the forearm.
- natural width of leg placement.

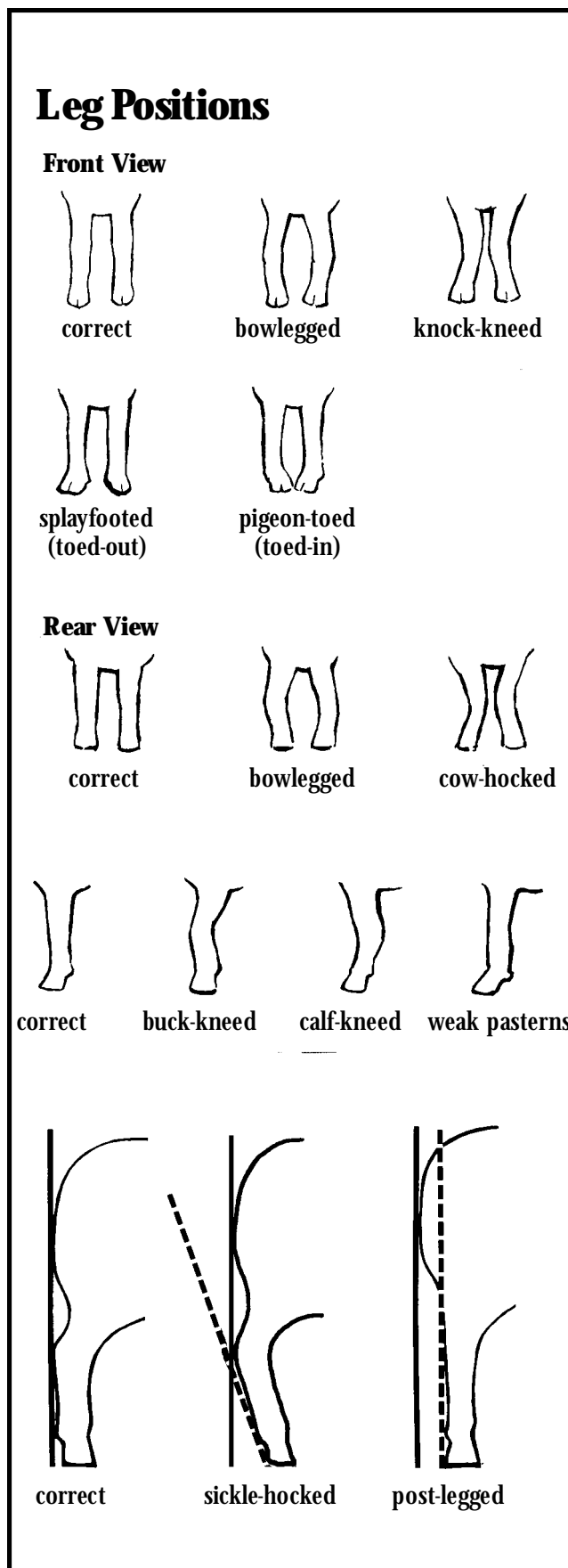
When observing these areas on a calf, be sure the thickness you see is due to natural muscling and not excess condition of fat.

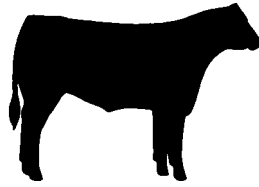
Fat is measured by three criteria: kind, amount and location. To appraise the fat on a market animal observe the finish:

- along the edge of his top from his shoulders back to his tail head.
- along his side from his head to his rear quarter.
- along his underline from his neck to his twist.

Enough fat must be present to indicate quality in the carcass and to ensure acceptable palatability of the meat. Usually, it is considered desirable for a steer to have between .30 and .45 of backfat in order to meet both the carcass quality and cutability requirements. All fat in excess of this requirement is undesirable.

When judging in the show ring, not only is the carcass value of the individual important, but also the general pattern as it relates to efficiency of production. The animal going to slaughter must meet the demands of all segments of the meat animal industry—the producer, the feeder, the processor and the consumer.



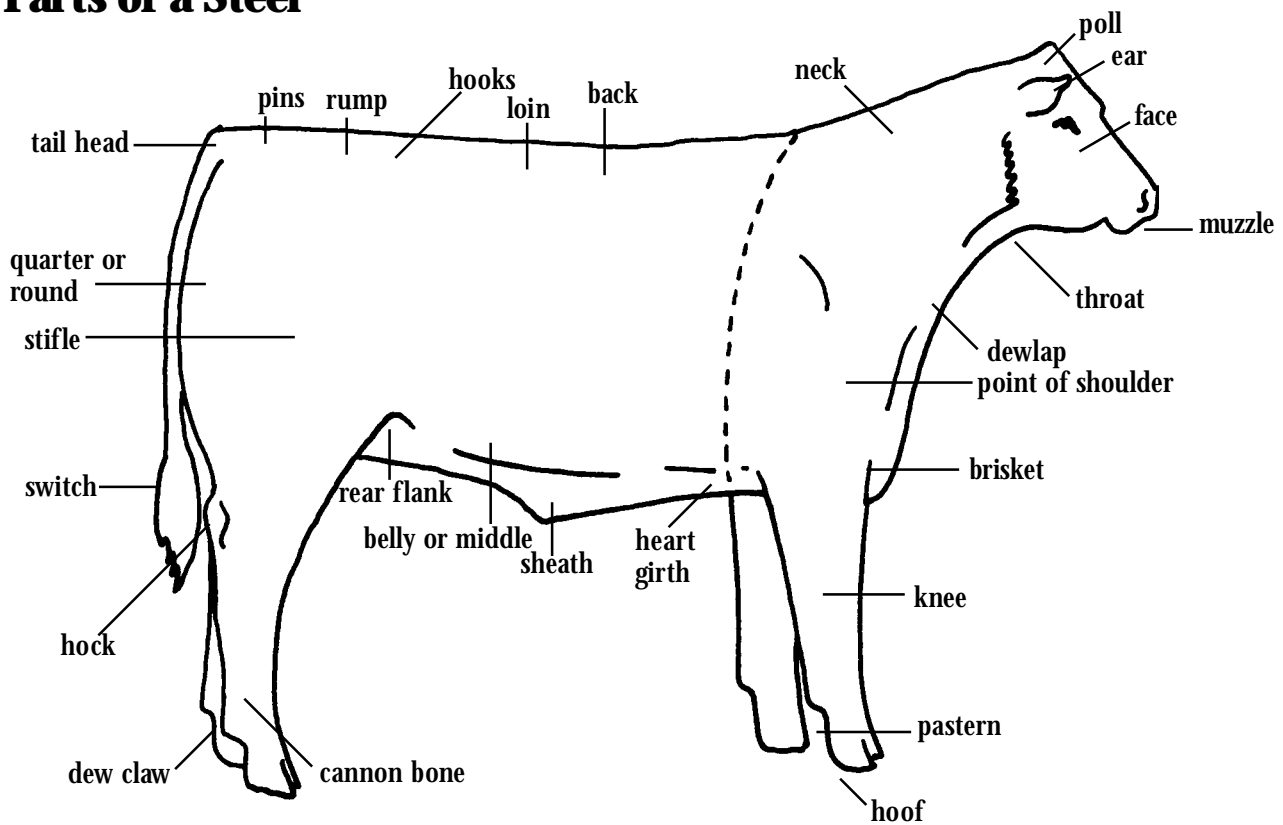


## Judging cattle

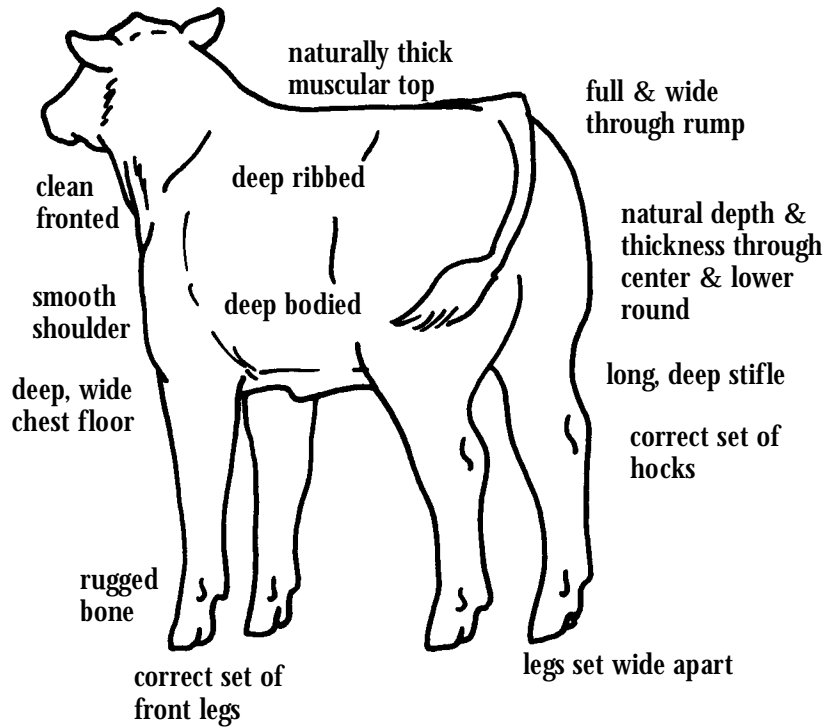
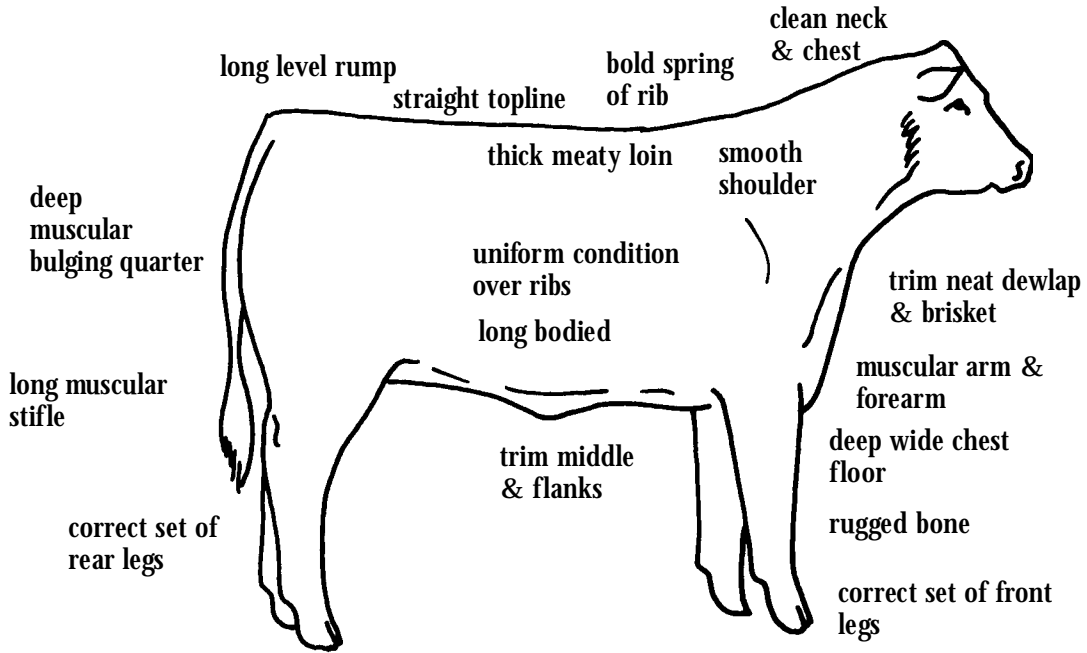
The ideal market steer weights 1,100 to 1,250 pounds and possesses enough size and scale to carry this weight with a minimum of finish. The steer should demonstrate enough finish to indicate a high quality carcass (choice grade), but yet a minimum of finish to increase carcass cutability. In addition, heavy muscling is desired in the high-priced cuts (rib, loin, round). The ideal steer should also be relatively trim about the middle and clean fronted.

The ideal breeding bull and heifer should be well balanced with ample size and scale. They should possess the same meat-type characteristics of the ideal steer, but in addition, possess sound feet and legs. Breed and sex character and reproductive organs should all receive emphasis in a sound, progressive breeding herd selection program.

### Parts of a Steer

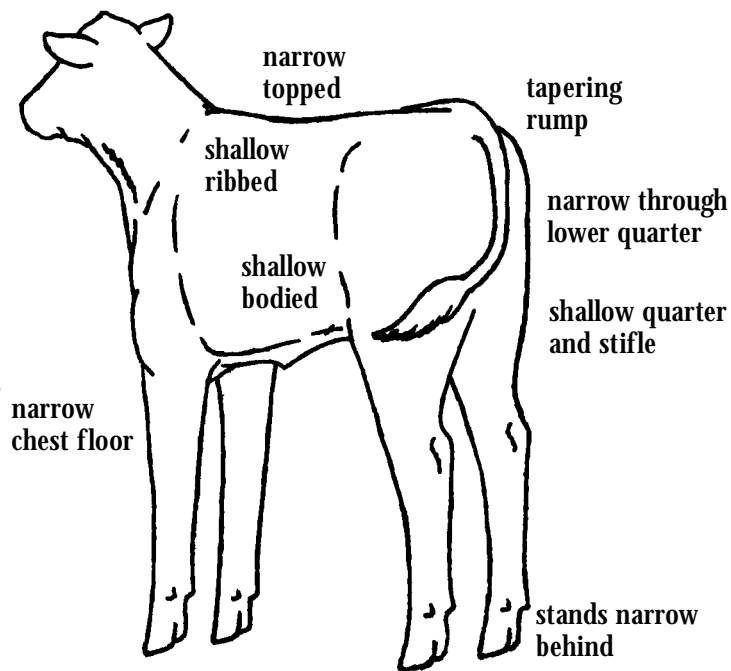
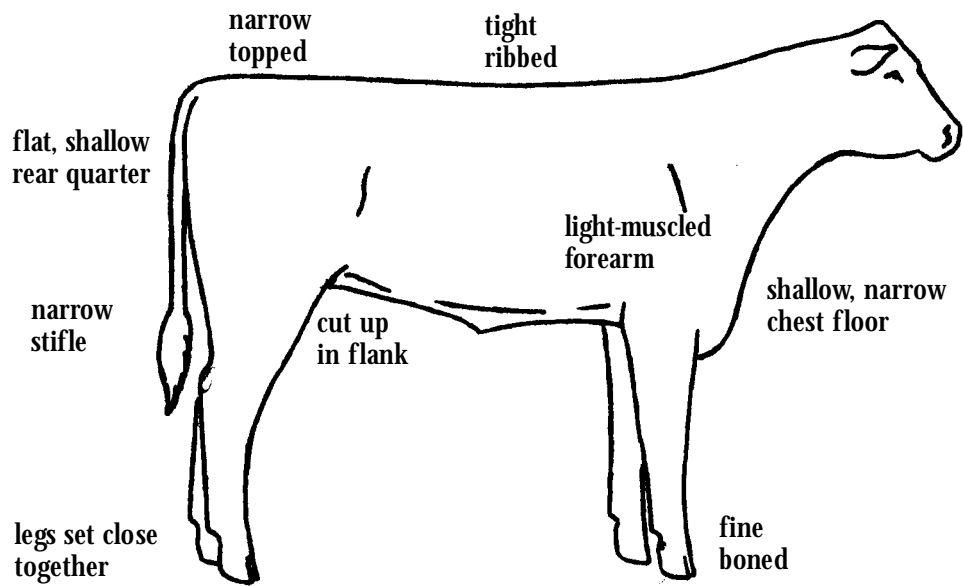


# Ideal Market Steer

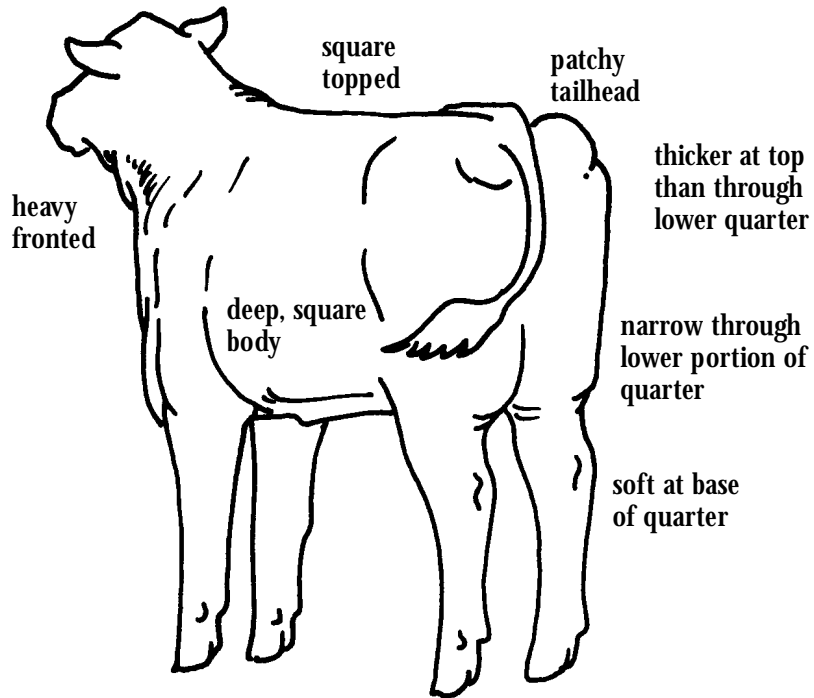
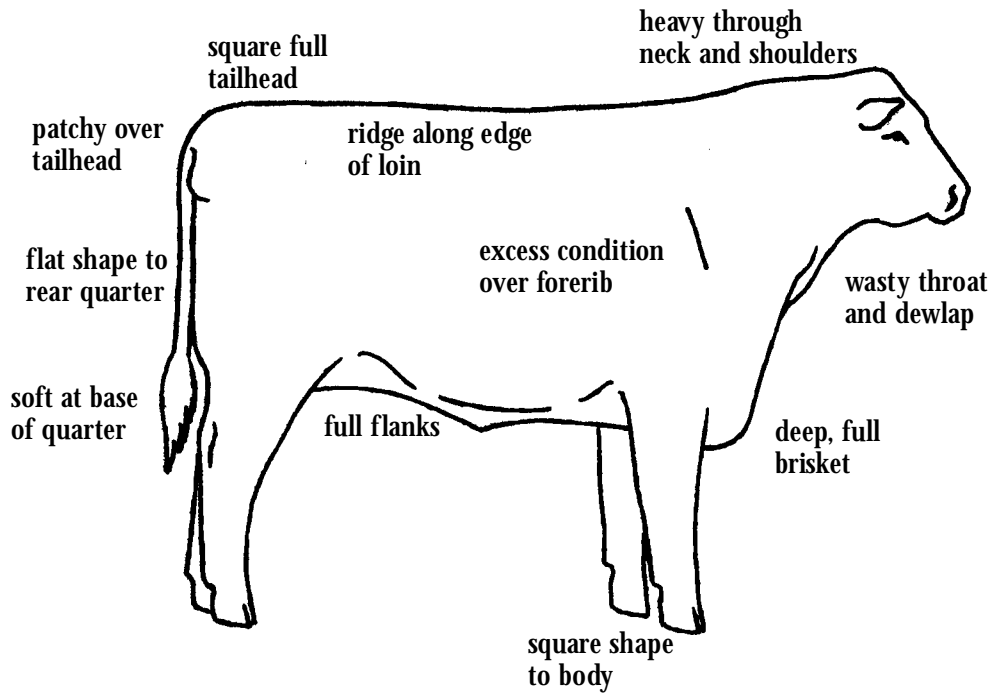




# Narrow, Shallow, Light-muscled Steer



# Over-conditioned, Light-muscled Steer



## Terms to use when judging market steers

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>General Appearance</b>	
nicer balanced	small
more stylish	short-coupled
straighter lined	plain
cleanest made	light-muscled
meatier	over-finished
more eye appeal	poor balanced
nicer profile	
beefier made	
stouter constructed	
most powerfully built	
<b>Head, Neck, Shoulder</b>	
cleaner front end	coarse-headed
trimmer fronted	leathery-fronted
flat-shouldered	heavy-shouldered
smoother shouldered	open-shouldered
wider chested	coarse-shouldered
deeper ribbed	narrow-chested
<b>Top, Loin, Ribs</b>	
stronger top	narrow-topped
thicker back or loin	weak-topped
more natural thickness down his top	shallow-ribbed
more muscular loin	
more correct turn along his topline	
more muscular shape to his top	
more spread of muscle over his rib and loin	
beefier shape to his topline	
<b>Middle</b>	
trimmer middled	wasty-middled
cleaner through his lower one-third	heavy-middled
neater about his underline	
<b>Hindquarter</b>	
thicker rumped	steep-rumped
longer from hooks to pins	short rumped
leveler rumped	narrow rumped
more muscular quarter	light-muscled
wider standing	narrow-standing
thicker, wider stifle	flat quarter
more outer turn to his quarter	tapered through his quarter
more expressively muscled quarter	
more volume of muscle through his hip	
<b>Finish</b>	
firmer handling	thin, bare
more uniform covering of finish	soft finish
a more correctly finished steer	soft handling
stands a better chance of making the choice grade	overfinished
more desirable degree of finish	underfinished
higher degree of finish over his 12th and 13th ribs	
<b>Carcass Merit</b>	
more total pounds of lean meat	
thicker, heavier muscled carcass	
higher percentage of saleable lean	
higher ratio of lean to fat	
more total pounds of edible portion	
greatest quantity of high priced cuts	

## Sample Reasons

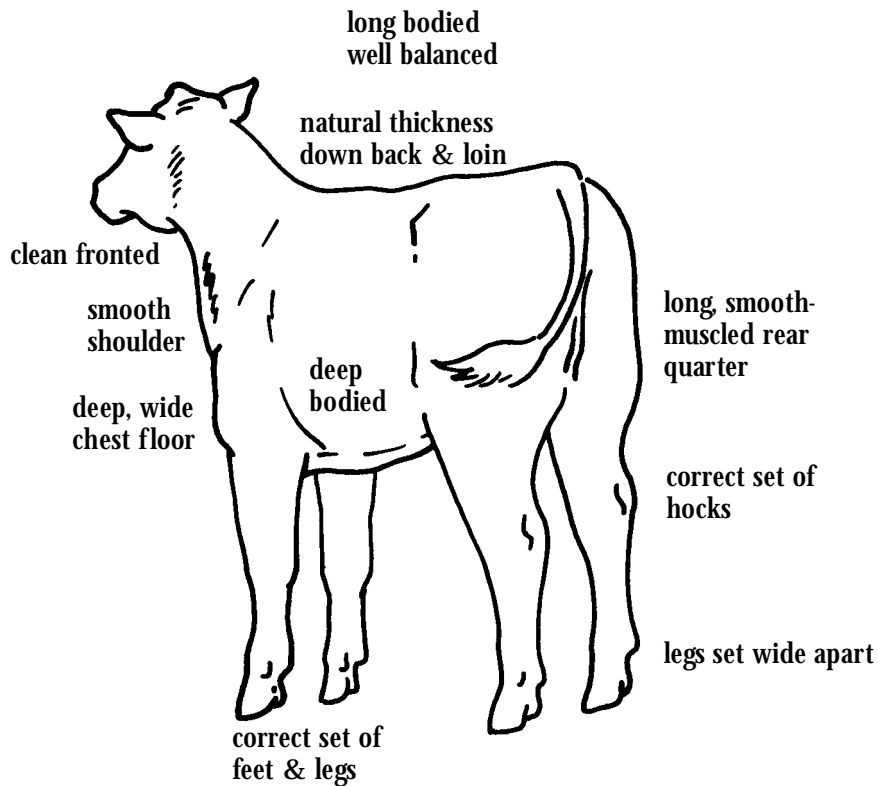
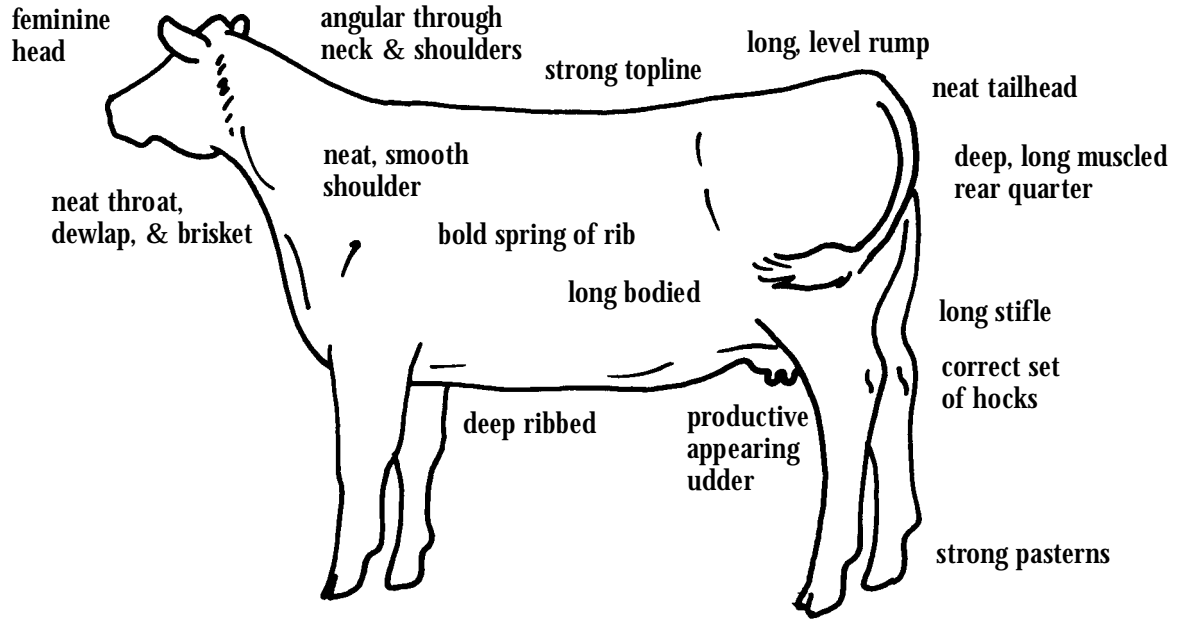
I placed the mixed market steers 4-3-2-1.

Four wins the class because he is the heaviest muscled, most powerfully constructed steer of the four. In the top pair of black steers that are more desirable in their degree of finish, I placed 4 over 3. Primarily, 4 is a beefier made steer that has a more muscular shape to his top and disperses this advantage to all aspects of his quarter. To compliment this, 4 is a deeper ribbed, bolder sprung steer that stands on more substance of bone. Finally, 4 should hang a carcass with more total pounds of red meat than 3. I realize that 3 is a nicer balanced steer that is especially cleaner about his neck and smoother in his shoulder. However, I placed him second as he not only is a shallow bodied steer, but he gave up the total muscle dimension needed to beat 4.

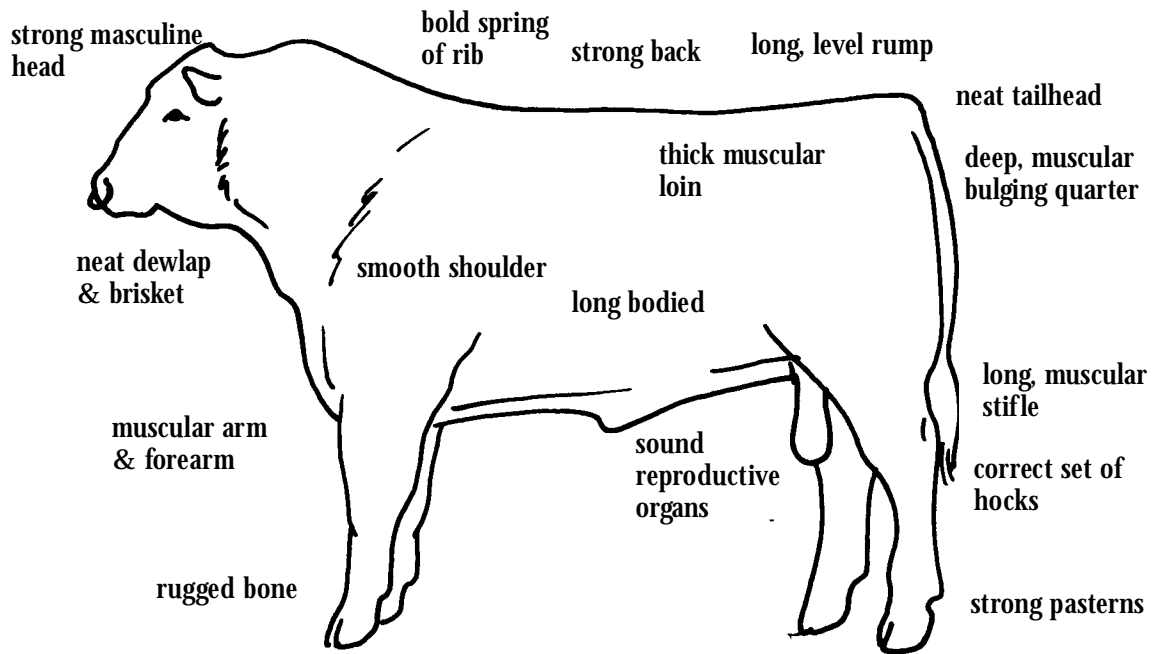
Even so, I placed 3 over 2 in the middle pair of steers that were contrasting in type. Three is a nicer profiling steer that is more structurally correct than 2. He has a more desirable slope to his shoulder, is stronger topped and moved more correctly off his rear legs. But more importantly, 3 handled with a higher degree of finish over his 12th and 13th ribs, consequently his carcass should be more apt to grade choice. I'll admit that 2 is a thicker topped steer that exhibited more outer turn to his quarter. As well, 2 is a higher volume steer that appears to be of a heavier weight. However, this does not compensate for the fact that he is the barest finished, poorest balanced steer in the class that is coarse in his shoulders and weak in his top, and thus, I placed him third.

Nonetheless, it was his advantages in muscle dimension, capacity and length of body that compelled me to place 2 over 1 in the bottom pair. The red steer is unquestionably the heavier muscled steer that is longer and meatier down his top and thicker ended. Furthermore, 2 is a stouter made, bolder sprung steer that travels wider at his base. He should hang the meatier shaped carcass that would cut open the larger ribeye. I understand that 1 does have a higher degree of finish. However, this works to his disadvantage and I placed him fourth because he is the most excessive in his finish and the lightest muscled steer of the four. Moreover, 1 is the shortest bodied, poorest balanced steer that should hang a carcass with the least desirable yield grade of any in the class.

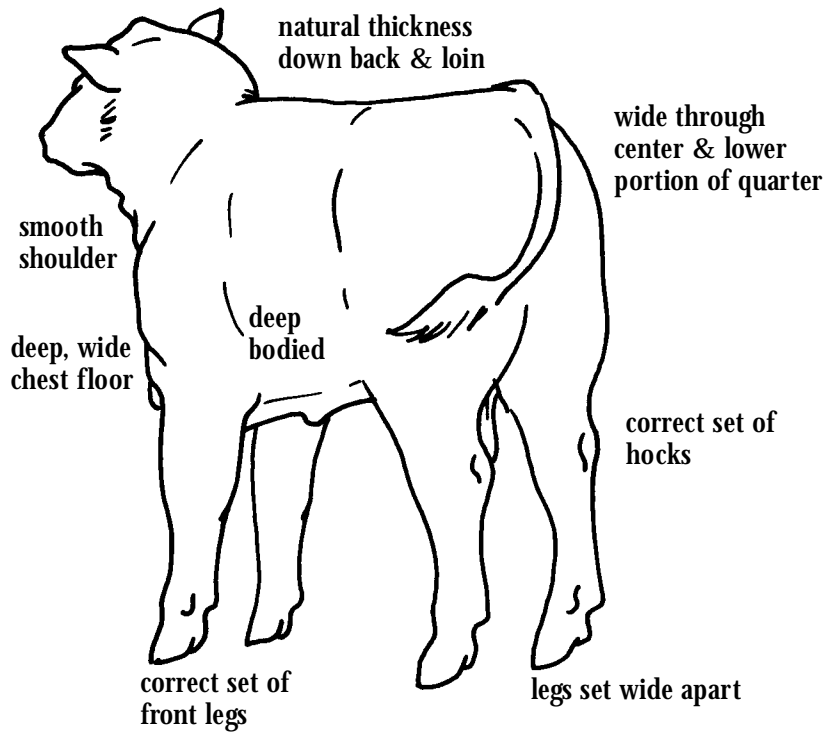
# Ideal Heifer



# Ideal Bull



long bodied  
well balanced



# Terms to use when judging breeding cattle

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>General Appearance</b>	
meatier, heavier muscled	narrow
thicker	plain
more size and scale	light-muscled
growthier	narrow made
nicer balanced	poorly balanced
more stylish	overconditioned
stretchier, longer	dummy
straighter lined	small-framed
more rugged	short-sided
higher quality	loose-framed
smoother made	slack-framed
	tight, round-muscled
<b>Head, Neck, Chest</b>	
more feminine fronted	plain-headed
more masculine	coarse-headed
more refined head	lacks breed character
wider and deeper chest	narrow-chested
trimmer brisket	heavy brisket
shows more growth potential	short, square head
more angular fronted female	early maturing, blocky head
longer headed, longer necked	coarse-fronted
more upfronted	low-fronted
<b>Shoulders, Middle, Ribs</b>	
smoother shouldered	coarse-shouldered
tighter shouldered	tucked through the heart
wider topped	constricted heart girth
stronger topped	weak-topped
more spring of rib	easy in the top
more natural thickness down the top	narrow-topped
heavier muscled down the top	shallow-bodied
wider over back and loin	heavy-middled
bolder spring of rib	low at the loin
deeper ribbed	rough at the hooks
fuller heart girth	
trimmer middled	
more capacious (higher volume)	

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>Rump, Quarter</b>	
more bulge to the quarter	light-muscled
thicker through the stifle	flat-quartered
more bulge to the stifle	shallow-quartered
more muscular shape to the quarter	tapers from hooks to pins
squarer rumped	peaked rump
more nearly level from hooks to pins	pinched at tail head
longer rumped	rough at tail head
higher at the pins	high at tail head
smoother at the tail head	droopy rump
	slopes from hooks to pins
	short-rumped
	patchy around tail head
	round and bunchy in muscle structure
<b>Feet and Legs</b>	
stands on more bone	light-boned
stands on more rugged bone	fine-boned
more correct on his/her feet and legs	sickle-hocked
more correct set of hocks	posty-legged
stands wider both front and rear	weak pastern
stronger pasterns	bowlegged
stands on squarer placed legs	cow-hocked
stand more squarely on all fours	buck-kneed
more correct slope of shoulder	splayfooted
	pigeon-toed
	straight-shouldered
<b>Action or Walking</b>	
handled herself/himself more	walks under behind
correctly on her/his feet and legs	rolls in front
longer strided	spraddles
straighter moving	moves close in front or behind
freer or truer striding	knuckles over in the pasterns
	sluggish
	restricted in movement

## Sample Reasons

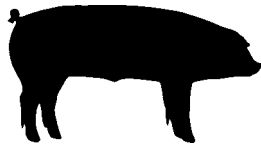
I placed the Simmental heifers 2-3-1-4.

Two put together a better combination of structural correctness, volume and femininity, so I placed her over 3 in the top pair of red spotted heifers. Primarily, 2 has a more correct slope to her shoulder, is more nearly level down her top and handled herself more correctly off her rear legs. This compliments the fact that she is a cleaner fronted heifer that is deeper ribbed, bolder sprung and is more correct in her body condition. I realize that 3 is the heaviest muscled heifer in the class that stands on more bone and travels wider at her base. However, I placed her second because she was short and thick about her neck, straight in her shoulder and the heaviest condition heifer in the class.

Even so, I preferred her advantages in muscle dimension and apparent weight over 1 in the middle pair. Three is the beefier shaped heifer that has more spread of muscle in her top and disperses this advantage into all aspects of her quarter. Furthermore, she is a wider built heifer that

has more width to her chest, is bolder sprung and wider set at her pins. Finally, 3 appears to have a greater apparent weight per day of age than 1. I'll admit that 1 is more feminine through her front one-third. She is especially cleaner about her neck and laid in smoother through the shoulder. However, she is also the narrowest made, flattest ribbed heifer in the class, and thus I placed her third.

However, in the final decision, I placed 1 over 4. The red blaze-face heifer is nicer balanced, and more structurally correct. Unquestionably, 1 is straighter down her topline, more nearly level from hooks to pins and more correct in the set of her hind leg. As a result she takes a longer, freer stride than does 4. As well, 1 is a cleaner pattern heifer that is smoother fronted and longer bodied. Yes, 4 is more muscular down her top and wider based. Nonetheless, I placed her fourth as she was the shortest bodied, plainest fronted, most structurally incorrect heifer in the class.

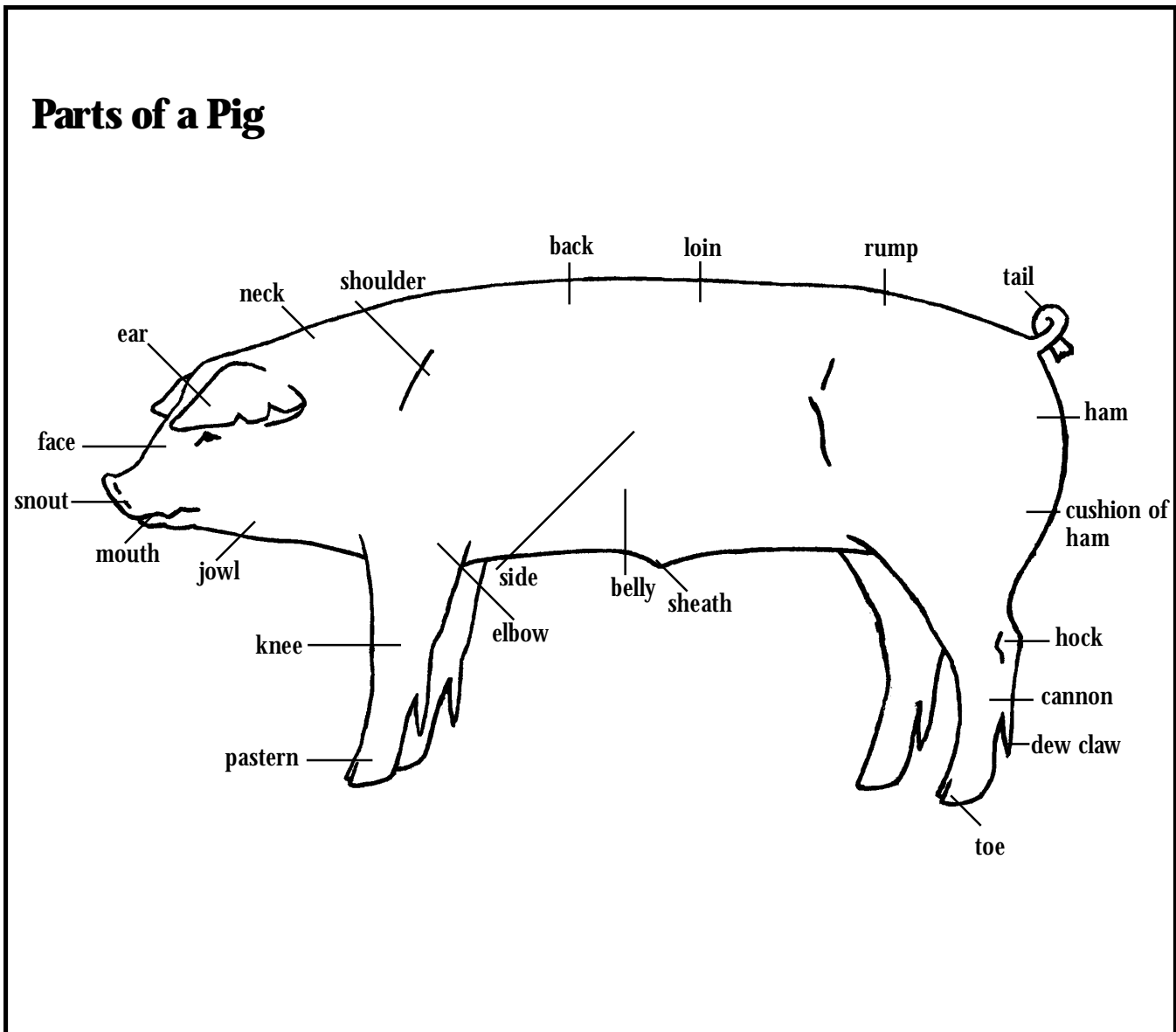


## Judging Swine

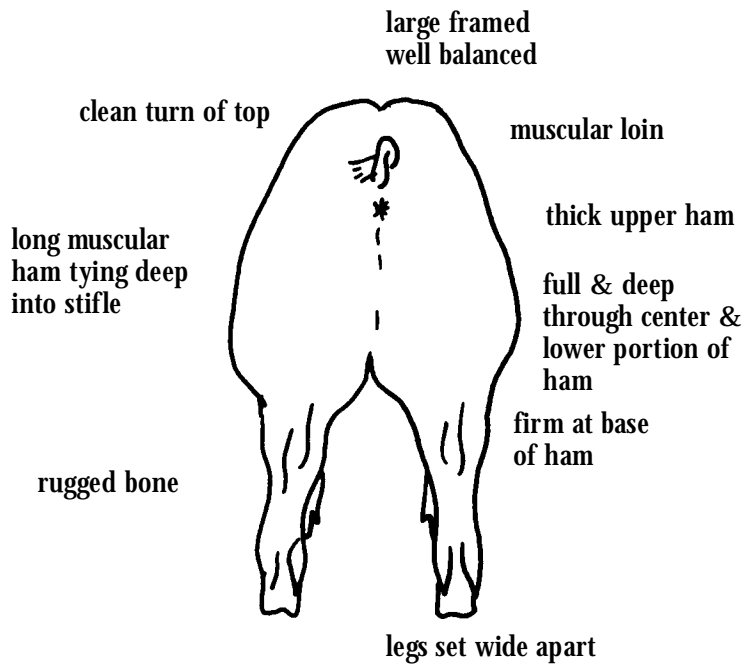
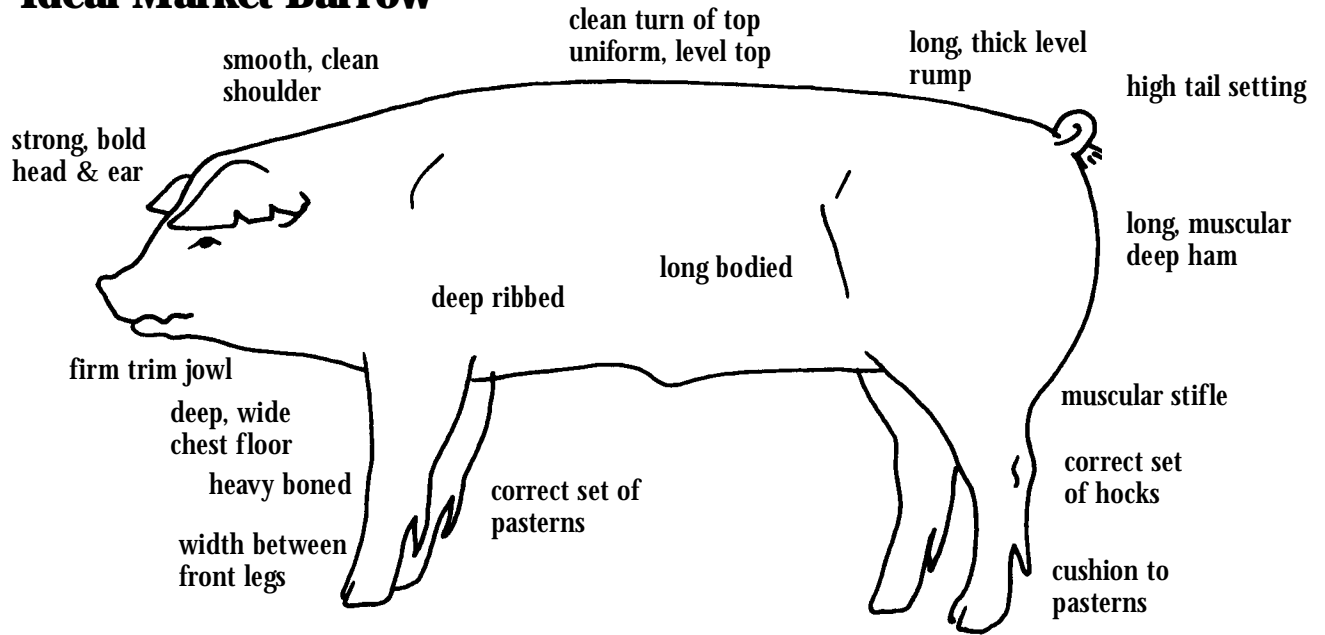
The ideal market barrow weighs approximately 220 to 250 pounds and will meet meat-type hog certification standards. These standards are: (a) a minimum of 29.75 inches long, (b) less than 1.0 inches of last rib fat depth, and (c) greater than 4.75 square inches of loin eye area. To meet these standards a barrow must be clean down his top with an abundance of muscling in the ham and loin region. High-yielding barrows in terms of ham, loin, Boston shoulder and picnic shoulder that are functionally sound are the goal of the swine industry. Reducing backfat

and increasing muscle mass has enabled swine producers to make giant strides toward this goal.

The ideal breeding gilt has the same image as the ideal market barrow, an individual that possesses trimness and moderate development in the high priced region. In addition, size for age, capacity, underpinning and mammary system receive emphasis because of importance in the production of an economical pork product. Frame size, growth rate, muscling, leanness and structural correctness are all major points of emphasis in gilt selection programs.

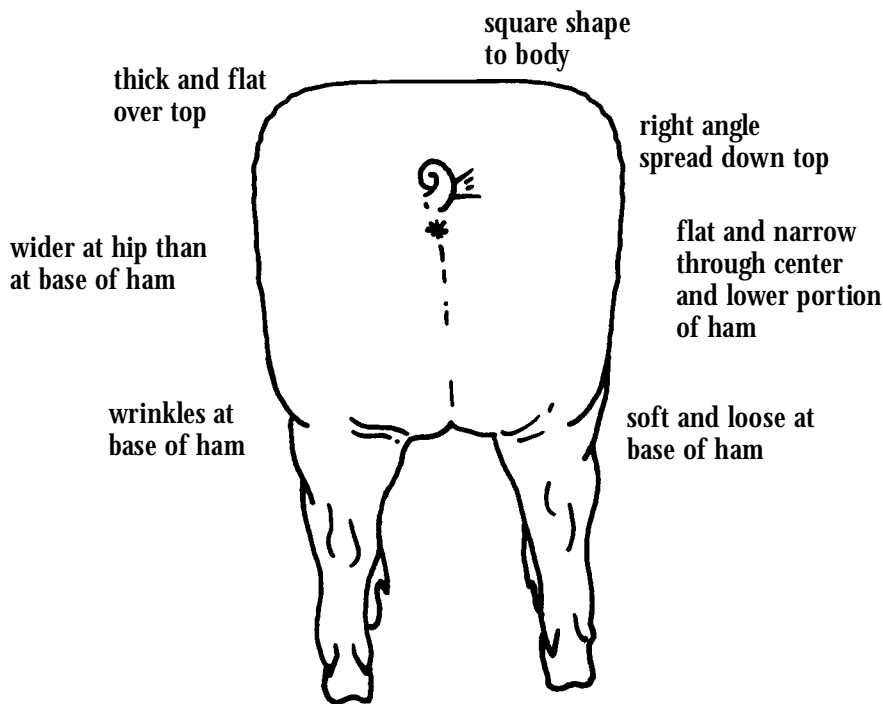
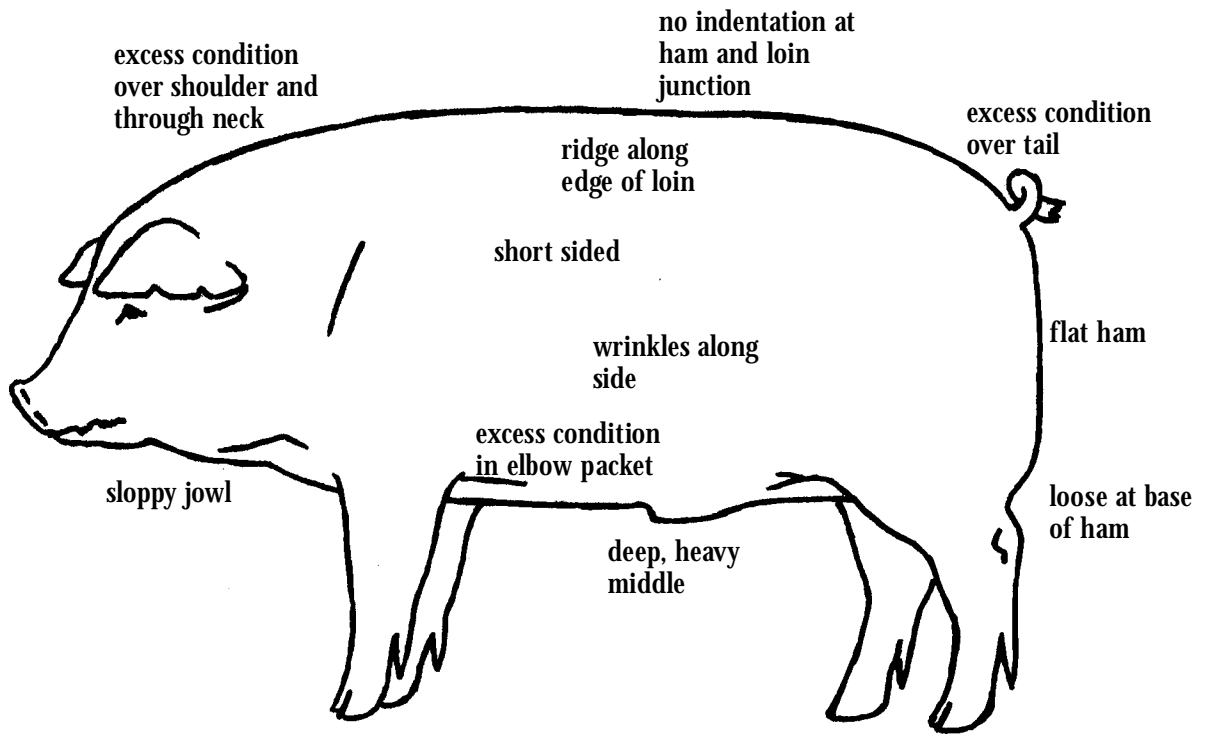


# Ideal Market Barrow

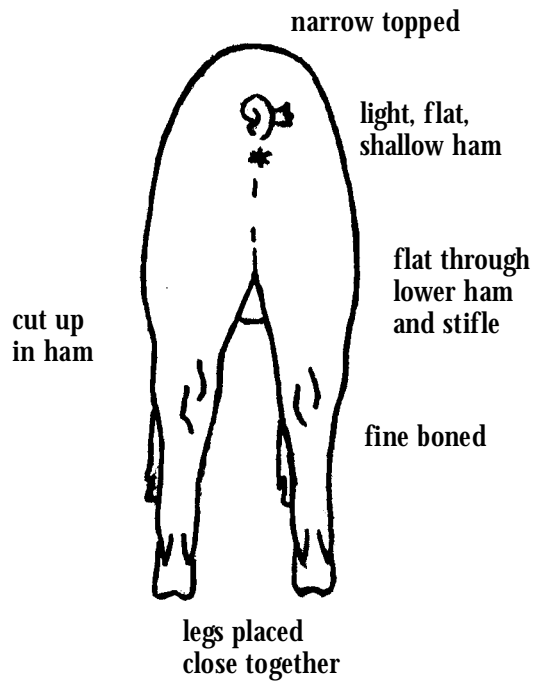
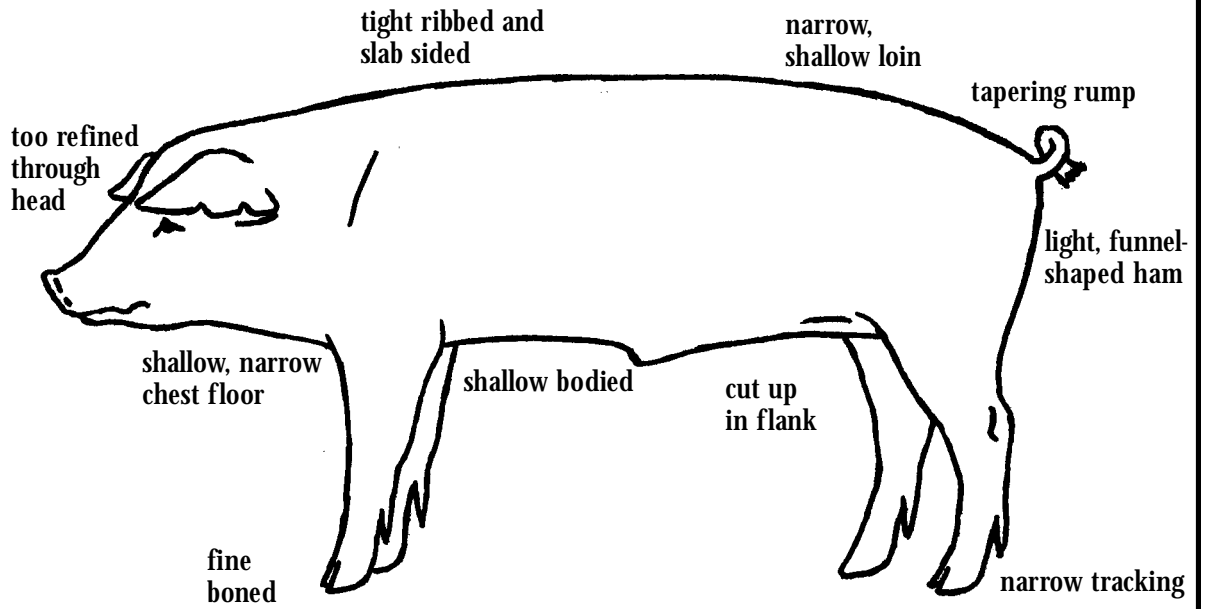




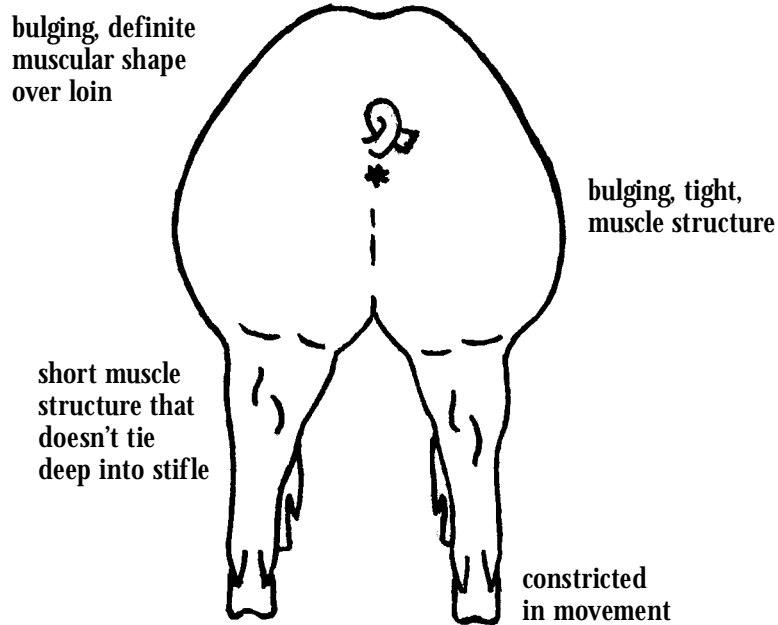
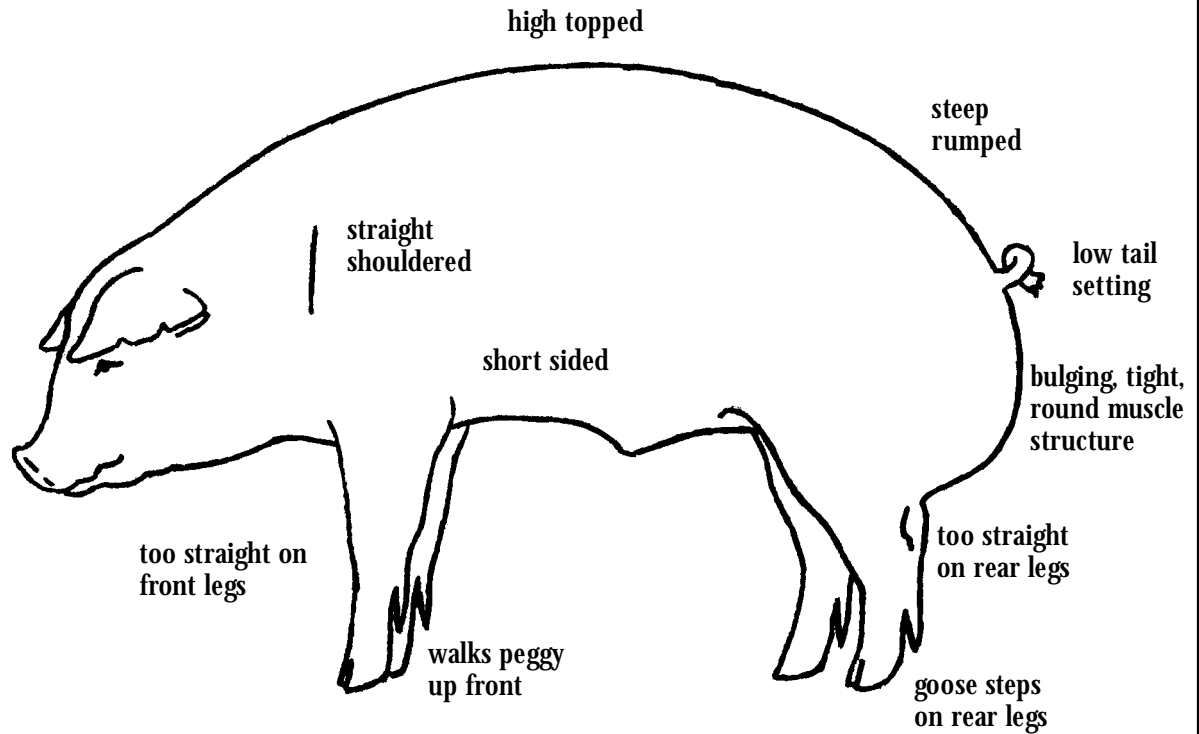
# Over-conditioned, Light-muscled Market Barrow



# Narrow, Shallow, Light-muscled Market Barrow



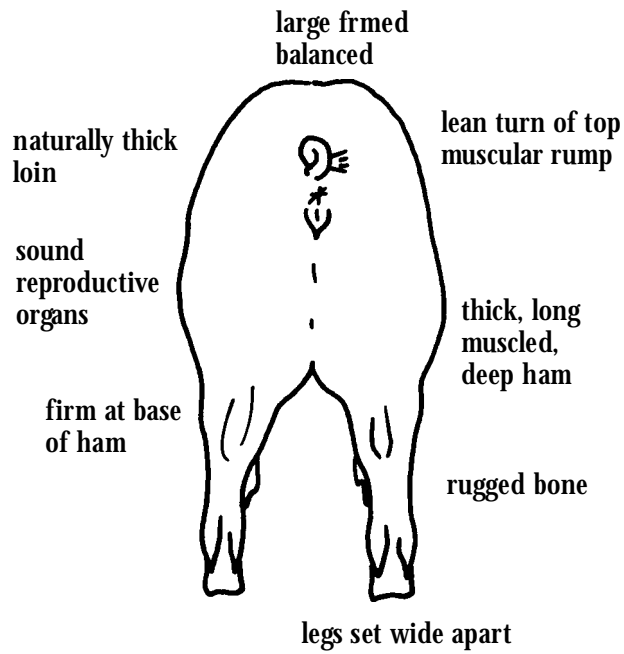
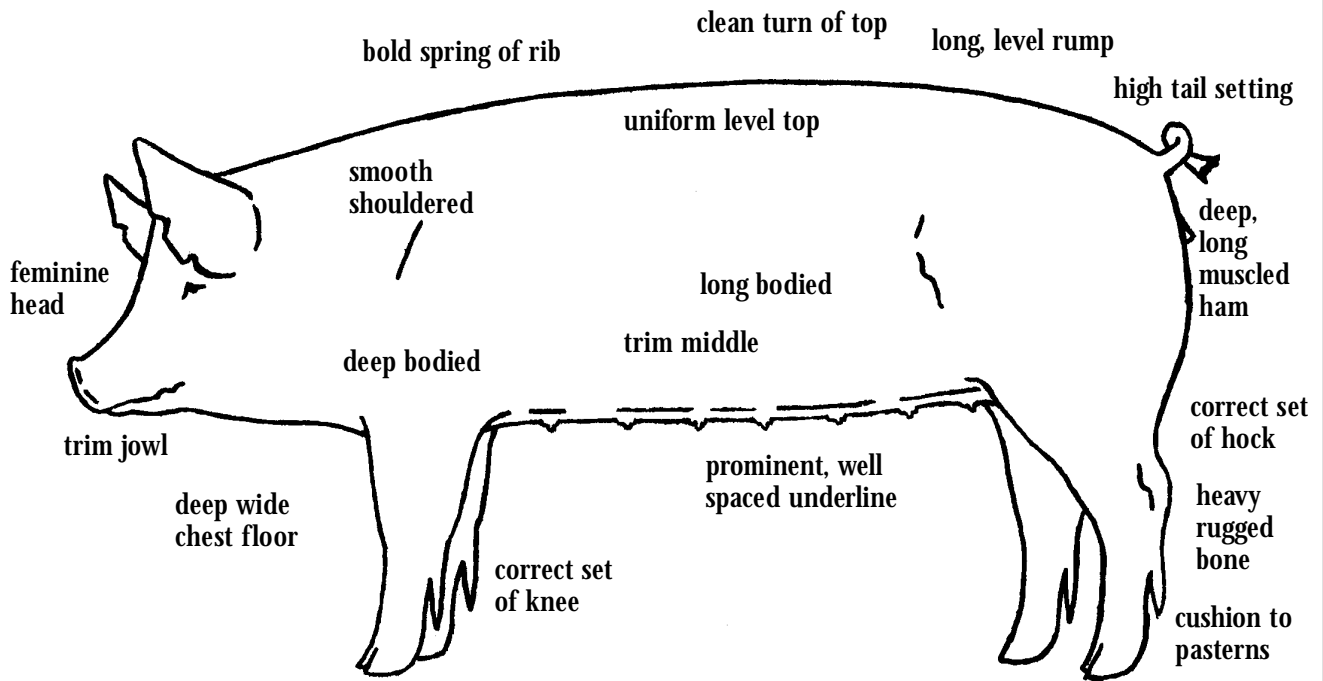
# High-topped, Round-muscle Market Barrow



## Terms to use when judging market barrows

Desirable	Undesirable	Desirable	Undesirable
<b>General Appearance</b>		<b>Rump, Ham and Muscle</b>	
meatier	light-muscled	more nearly level rump	short-rumped
heavier muscled	short	longer rumped	steep-rumped
stretchier, longer	fat	higher tail setting	narrow-rumped
nicer balanced	wasty	deeper ham	light-muscled
more capacious (higher volume)	poorly balanced	more width to his ham	narrow-tracking
more rugged	narrow-made	more dimension to his ham	round-muscled
more functional	poor-moving	a more correct muscle design	bunchy muscled
stouter designed	frail	more turn of muscle in his ham	short, steep ham
more durably designed	small framed	more expression of ham	flat ham
bigger skeletoned	tight made	bigger stifle	
looser structured	fine boned	wider based	
heavier structured			
<b>Head, Neck and Jowl (or Shoulder)</b>		<b>Finish</b>	
neater jowl	wasty jowl	trimmest, cleanest made	overfat
firmer jowl	narrow-headed	cleaner made	overdone
longer neck	short fronted	more correctly finished	overfinished
taller fronted	short cannon	leanest, trimmest barrow	too much right angle spread
		more shoulder blade action	over the top
<b>Shoulder and Chest</b>		rawer designed	deep probing
bolder sprung	narrow-chested	freer of fat down the top	shelly over the loin edge
wider sprung	heavy-shouldered	cleaner in the lower one-third	wasty middle
deeper chested	coarse-shouldered		
deeper ribbed		<b>Carcass</b>	
<b>Body</b>		higher percent muscle	
more nearly level topped	low behind the shoulders	should hang up a carcass with less fat trim	
deeper flanked	high-topped	heavier muscled carcass	
more spring of rib	too high in his/her arch	higher lean-to-fat ratio	
more muscular top	flat-ribbed	leaner carcass	
cleaner top	tapers from front to rear	longer sided carcass	
more natural thickness	short-sided	more total pounds of pork	
more expression of muscling down the top	shallow-flanked	higher percent high-priced cuts	
more turn of muscle down the loin	high-topped	more total pounds of ham and loin	
	narrow top	a more muscular, shaplier carcass	
		hang a carcass with more value	
		if sold on lean value, should generate more premiums	
		<b>Movement and Structure</b>	
		moves out with more cushion to his pasterns	
		more slope to his pasterns	
		longer and looser in his stride	
		has more freedom of movement	
		more cushion up front	
		wider tracking	

# Ideal Gilt



## Terms to use when judging breeding gilts

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>General Appearance</b>	
longer sided	short-sided
stretchier	small, plain
nicer balanced	poorly balanced
cleaner conditioned	refined
broodier	small-framed
more size and scale	
growthier	
more functional	
more rugged	
<b>Shoulder</b>	
cleaner blades	pinched behind the ears
wider set between her blades	
<b>Body</b>	
wider chest floor	narrow chest
bolder fronted	shallow-bodied
deeper forerib	shallow forerib
cleaner turn of top	weak top
bolder sprung	low behind the shoulders
deeper ribbed	short-sided
cleaner top	shallow-flanked
more desirable turn of top	high-topped
roomier gilt	

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>Rump, Ham and Muscling</b>	
longer rumped	short rumped
more nearly level rumped	steep rumped
more correct in her muscle design	low tail setting
heavier muscled	tight wound
longer muscled	bunchy muscled
longer hammed	round muscled
squarer rumped	
higher tail setting	
<b>Movement and Underpinning</b>	
sounder feet and legs	sets under on hind legs
more substance of bone	fine boned
heavier boned	stands close front or behind
stands out wider behind	posty legged
more cushion to her pasterns	too straight in her shoulder
more correct set to her pasterns	straight in her pasterns
more cushion up front	narrow walking
has more freedom of movement	short-strided
longer and looser in her stride	
<b>Underline</b>	
greater number of functional nipples	blind teats
more prominent underline	fewer functional nipples
more uniformly spaced teats	lacks mammary development
more uniform in teat size and shape	pin nipples
more refined underline	blunt nipples
higher quality underline	
more feminine underline	

## Sample reasons for Yorkshire gilts

I placed the Yorkshire breeding gilts 2-4-1-3. In the top pair of litter mates, 2 excels the class because of her advantages in structural correctness, frame size and muscle volume. Ideally, I would like to see 2 leaner about her top. But nonetheless, it's 2 over 4 in the top pair, because she is undoubtedly a longer, wider skeleton gilt that is especially more mobile. Two was a looser designed gilt that exhibited more slope to her shoulder and flex to her pasterns. Finally, 2 has a more muscular top and was wider based than 4. I'll concede that 4 was the leanest gilt of the drive. But, the gilt with a pin nipple on her right side was straight in her shoulder and narrow through her chest, so I placed her second.

In the middle pair of gilts that are contrasting in type, I preferred the frame size and leanness of 4 over 1. Without question 4 was a bigger outlining gilt that was especially longer and more feminine about her front. Moreover, 4 was cleaner through the lower third of her body cavity, revealed more blade action on the move and was particularly cleaner along her loin edge. Four was also

heavier boned and bigger footed than 1. I realize that 1 was a wider fronted gilt that had more center dimension to her rib cage. Furthermore, she worked more volume of muscle from blade to hip. However, this does not compensate for the fact that she was the shortest sided, earliest maturing gilt of the four.

However, it was her advantages in width of skeleton, muscle mass and freedom of movement that compelled me to place 1 over 3 in the bottom pair. One was a wider based gilt that demonstrated more spring of rib and width of chest. Additionally, the short tailed gilt exhibited a more muscular turn to her loin and has more center dimension of ham than 3. But most importantly, 1 was a more mobile gilt that demonstrated a more desirable slope to her shoulder and pasterns. Granted, 3 was a longer bodied gilt that had the most prominent and evenly spaced underline in the class. However, I criticize 3 and placed her fourth because she was the narrowest made, straightest fronted, tighter spined, most restricted moving gilt in the class.

## Sample reasons for market hogs

I placed the crossbred market barrows 2-1-4-3. With emphasis placed on cutability, 2 wins the class because he was the heaviest muscled, leanest barrow of the four. Two revealed the leanest, most muscular turn to his top and had the most muscular shaped ham in the class. Moreover, 2 was a longer bodied barrow that was particularly trimmer about his jowl and elbow pocket. Consequently, 2 will hang a carcass with the highest percent muscle of the four. I fully realize that 1 was a stouter built, higher volume barrow that stood on a greater diameter of bone. However, he was wasteful about his middle, so I left him second.

In the middle pair of belted barrows 1 beats 4, because there was simply more of him. One was a growthier, heavier weight barrow that exhibited a meatier top and more outer turn to his ham. Additionally, 1 was a heavier constructed barrow that has more width of skeleton and traveled wider at his base. One would simply kill with more total pounds of product. Granted, 4 had a leaner

shape about his top and was trimmer through the lower one-third of his body. However, this does not compensate for the fact that he was narrow chested and flat through his ham.

In conclusion, it was his mobility and potential advantages in carcass cutability that compelled me to place 4 over 3 in the bottom pair. Four was unquestionably a leaner designed barrow that revealed more blade action on the move, was cleaner topped and trimmer middled. Moreover, the red barrow was a freer moving pig that was more flexible in his spine and exhibits more cushion through his front end. He should hang a carcass that could potentially generate more dollars if sold on lean value. I'll admit that 3 was a heavier boned, bigger fronted pig that was of a heavier weight. However, I placed the blue-rumped barrow fourth, because he was structurally incorrect and the most excessively finished pig of the four. When sent to the rail, he will have the lowest percent muscle of any barrow in the class.



## Judging Sheep

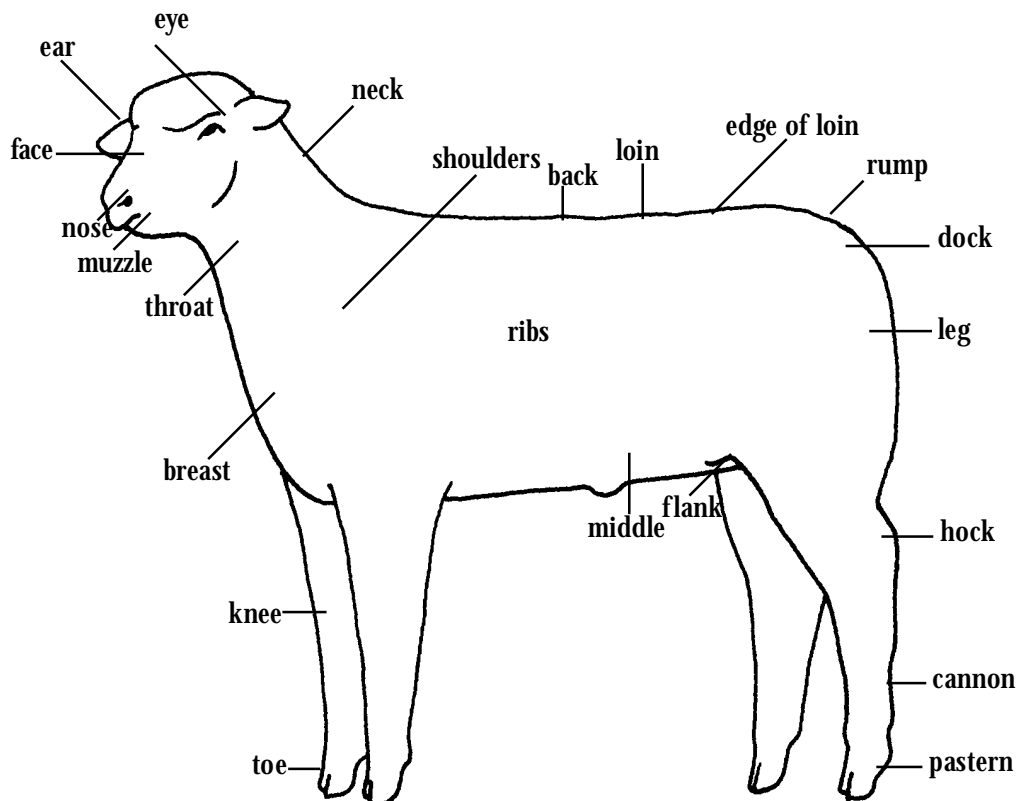
The ideal market lamb weighs approximately 110 to 120 pounds. Fat covering, finish or condition is extremely important in a market lamb class. The amount of fat can be determined by feeling down the top, using the ends of your fingers. Ideally, you should be able to detect the lamb's backbone by using light pressure with your fingers. If the backbone is extremely definite and sharp, the lamb may not be carrying enough finish.

However, if you cannot feel the backbone, the lamb should be considered too fat. Ideally, a lamb should ex-

hibit from .15 to .25 inches of backfat when correctly finished. This will ensure both acceptable carcass cutability, as well as carcass quality with a minimum of cooler shrink.

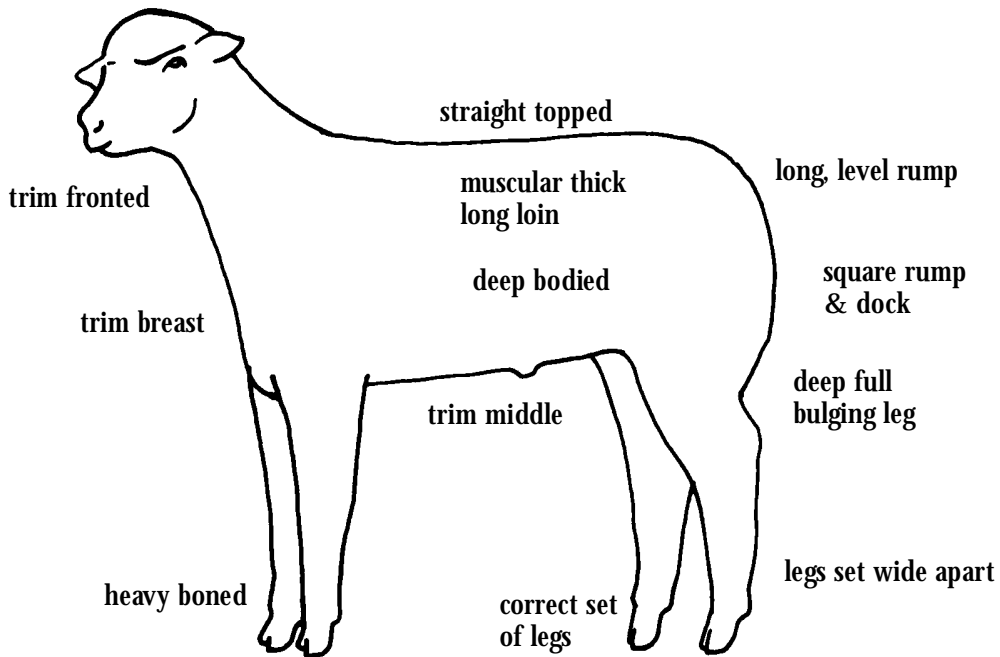
A firm, hard finish is desirable. Lambs with an abundance of muscling in the hind saddle are ideal. Heavy muscled leg and loin increase the carcass merit of the lamb. The ideal ewe or ram should possess an abundance of scale. The bigger, longer, heavy-boned sheep are in demand by most breeds.

### Parts of a Lamb

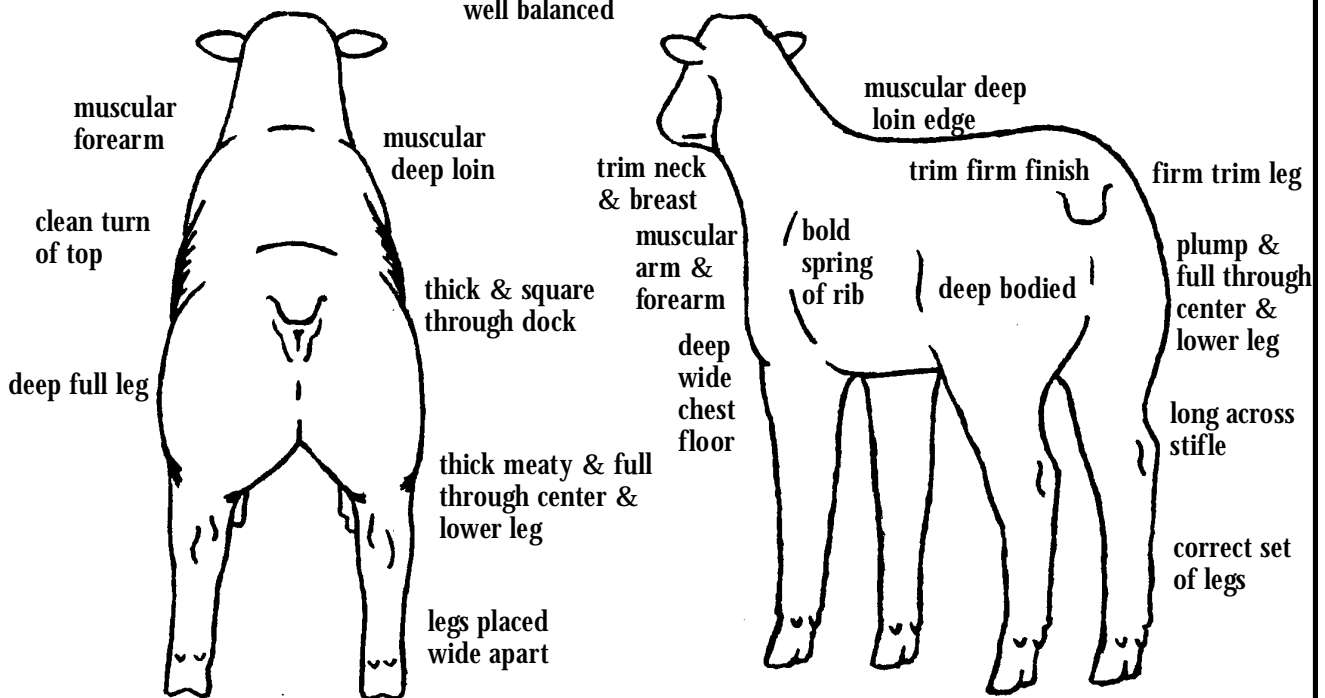




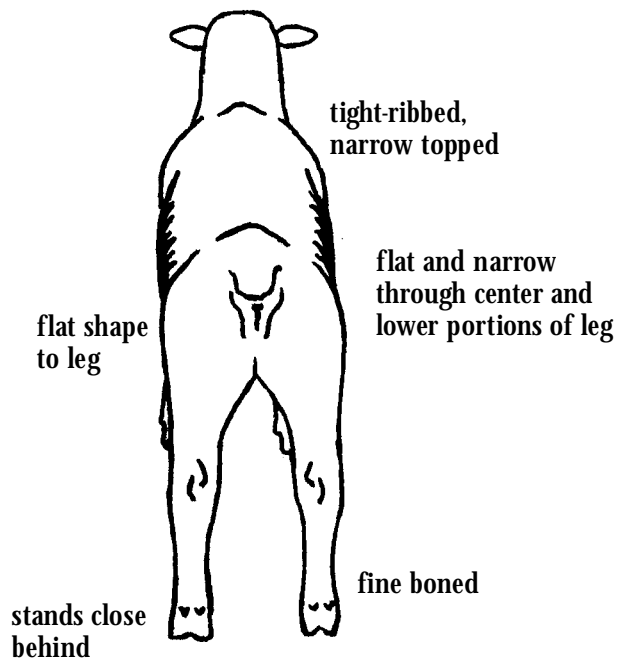
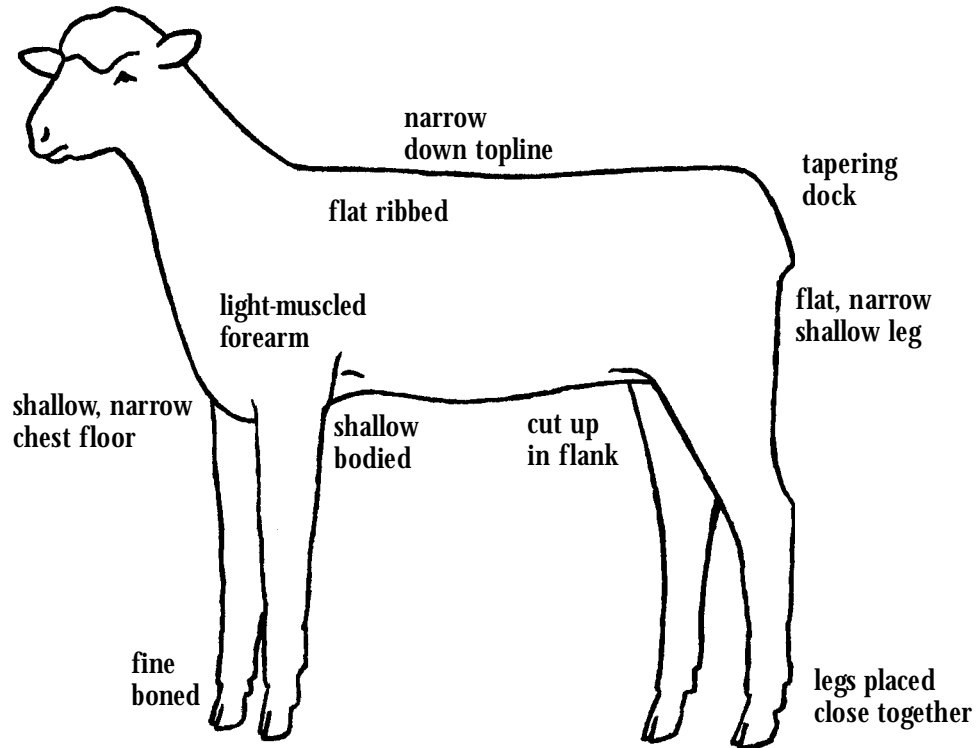
# Ideal Market Lamb



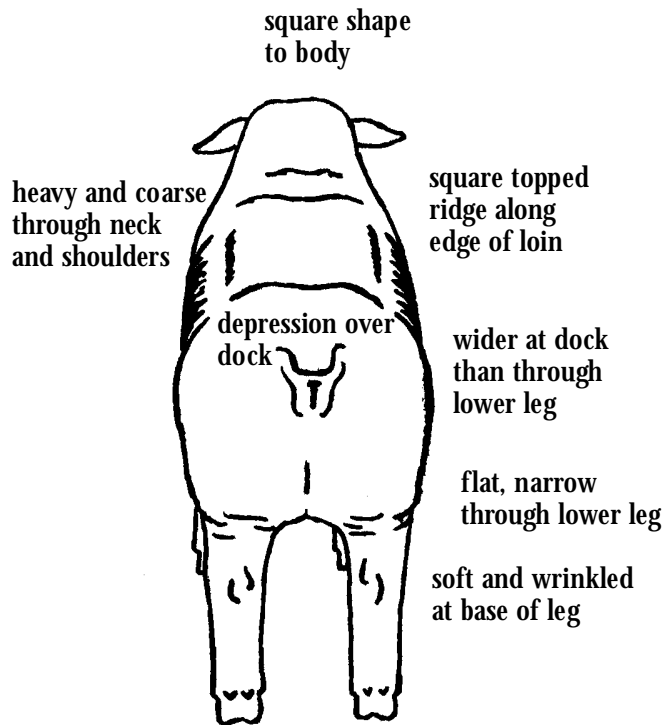
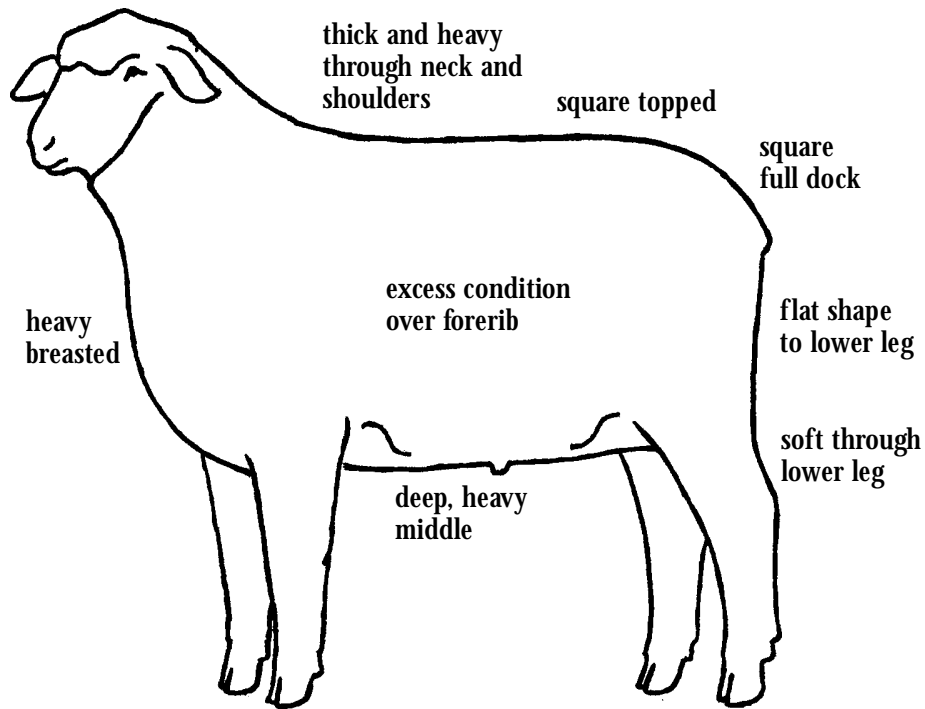
large framed well balanced



# Narrow, Shallow, Light-musced Market Lamb



# Over-conditioned, Light-muscled Market Lamb



# Terms to use when judging market lambs

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>General Appearance</b>	
nicer balanced	poorly balanced
meatier, more muscular, heavier muscled	light-muscled
straighter lined	loose-framed
firmer handling	soft-handling
more correctly finished	overfinished
trimmer	wasty
firmer	rangy
thicker	narrow
more stylish	pelty
smoother made	plain, coarse
more powerfully made	slack-framed
longer bodied	frail
bigger framed	small-framed
nicer profiling	plain made
<b>Head, Neck, Breast, Chest</b>	
neater	coarse
trimmer front end	wrinkled about the neck
wider chest	ewe-necked
longer neck	heavy-fronted
taller fronted	narrow-chested
	short fronted
	low fronted
<b>Shoulders</b>	
heavier muscled forearm	coarse-shouldered
smoother shoulder	open-shouldered
neater, tighter shoulder	weak behind the shoulders
<b>Back, Loin, Ribs</b>	
thicker back or loin	narrow made
stronger back or loin	narrow down the top
more muscular loin	shallow loin
meatier down the top	easy in the back
stronger top	weak top
more natural thickness	shallow-ribbed
deeper loin edge	flat-ribbed
more spring of rib	shallow-loined
deeper ribbed	short-loined
longer loin	shelly loin
deeper loined	stale top
more muscular turn over the loin	short hindsaddle
fresher, more muscular top	
meatier rack	
longer hindsaddle	
longer from the last rib back	
firmer handling down his top	

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>Middle</b>	
trimmer or neater middle	wasty middle
cleaner through middle	heavy middle
tighter middled	
<b>Rump and Dock</b>	
wider at the rump or dock	pinched at the dock
squarer at the rump or dock	droopy rumped
more nearly level rump	short rump/dock
longer rump	tapers at rump
	narrow rump/dock
<b>Leg</b>	
meatier, more muscular leg	light-muscled
heavier leg	flat leg
thicker leg	soft leg
plumper, more bulging leg	short leg
firmer leg	narrow, shallow
meatier through the stifle	short, narrow stifle
deeper leg	
fuller leg	
<b>Finish</b>	
more desirable degree of finish	thin, bare
firmer handling	soft finish
harder down his top	soft handling lamb
more correctly finished	overfinished
more uniform finish	
trimmer	
<b>Carcass Merit</b>	
meatier or heavier muscled carcass	
more correctly finished carcass	
higher percent of hindsaddle	
longer, trimmer carcass	
higher percentage of salable lean	
higher percent of preferred cuts	
more desirable yield grade	
hang a carcass with more product from the last rib back	
will have more rack, loin and leg	

## Sample reasons for market lambs

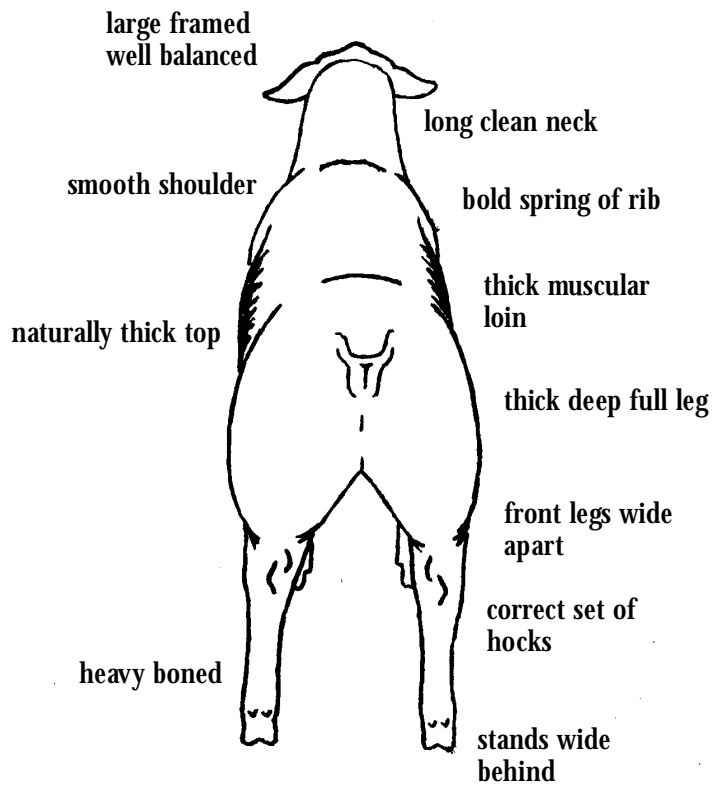
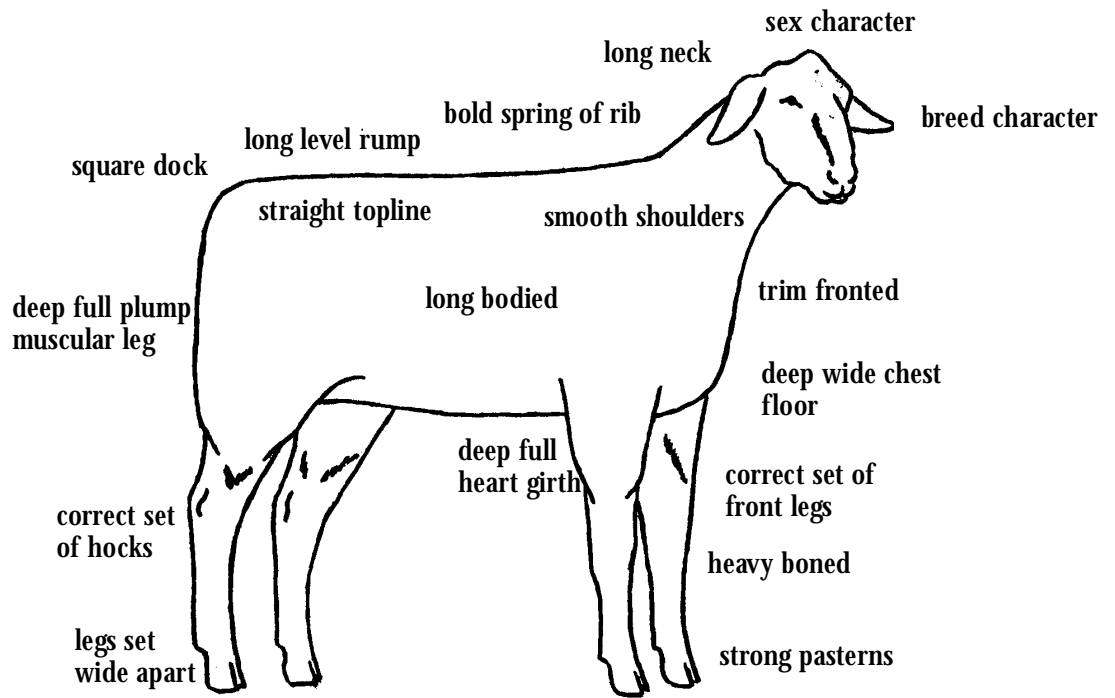
2-1-4-3 is my placing for the mixed market lambs. Two is the heaviest muscled, most powerfully constructed lamb in the class. Ideally, he could be trimmer over his forerib. However, he is without question the most muscular topped lamb in the class. Two has a longer, deeper loin and a thicker, fuller rump. Furthermore, he has the plumpest, most bulging leg of the four. Consequently, he will hang up the most total pounds of product from his last rib back. In addition, 2 is heavier boned, has more body capacity and is longer sided than 1. I'll admit that 1 was the leanest handling lamb in the class. He was firmer down his top and especially trimmer over his forerib. Nonetheless, the speckled faced lamb was short in his loin and steep rumped, so I placed him second.

Length and cutability placed 1 over 4 in the middle pair. One was longer and cleaner about his neck and particularly longer sided. Moreover, 1 was leaner handling down his top, over his loin edge and lower rib. As a re-

sult, I would expect 1 to have a carcass with a more desirable yield grade. I realize that 4 was more nearly level out his rump and wider in his loin. However, the white faced lamb was the shortest bodied, softest handling lamb of the four.

In the bottom pair I like 4 over 3 because he offered a better combination of muscle and balance. Four was thicker and stronger about his top, squarer in his rump and handled with more inner and outer flare to his leg. Furthermore, 4 was deeper bodied and heavier boned than 3. He will simply go to the rail with more pounds of muscle and hang a shapelier carcass. I fully recognize that 3 is bigger framed, lighter conditioned and longer in the loin. However, I placed him fourth because he was the lightest muscled lamb in the class. He was especially the narrowest and shelliest in his top and the flattest about his leg. He will hang the fewest pounds of red meat of any lamb in the class.

# Ideal Breeding Sheep



## Terms to use when judging breeding sheep

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>General Appearance</b>	
longer, stretchier	short-coupled
growthier, bigger	narrow-made
larger framed	shallow-bodied
more size and scale	small-framed
nicer balanced	low-set
more structurally correct	conventional patterned
more rugged, heavier boned	poorly balanced
thicker made	plain
heavier muscled	light muscled
straighter lined	
more capacious (larger volumed)	
<b>Head and Neck</b>	
more (breed) character	lacks breed character
more open faced	lacks femininity
more femininity	plain-headed
freer from wool on his/her ears	wool blind, wooly headed
trimmer fronted	off in the mouth
longer necked	coarse, plain
	ewe-necked
<b>Shoulder, Ribs, Middle</b>	
more muscular shoulder	open-shouldered
neater, tighter shoulder	coarse-shouldered
wider chested	constricted in the heart
more capacious	narrow chest
roomier middle	tight forerib
bolder sprung	flat-ribbed
bolder spring of rib	shallow-ribbed
deeper ribbed	
deeper bodied	
<b>Leg and Twist</b>	
meatier, more muscular leg	light-muscled leg
heavier leg	flat leg
thicker leg	short leg
longer	narrow, shallow leg
deeper and thicker through his/her	round and tight in his/her
lower leg	muscle structure

Desirable	Undesirable
<b>Back, Loin, Rump</b>	
thicker back or loin	shallow-loined
longer loined	narrow down the top
stronger back or loin	short-loined
straighter topped	easy in the back
more muscular loin	weak top
stronger top	pinched at the dock
more natural thickness	droopy-rumped
wider at the rump and/or dock	short rump
meatier at the dock	tapers over the rump
more nearly level rump	
longer rump	
<b>Underpinning</b>	
squarer placed legs	stands bowlegged behind
more correct in the set of legs	cow-hocked
stands out wider in front or behind	weak pasterns
stands more correctly on all four legs	stands close
more substance of bone	too much set to the hock
more rugged bone, heavier bone	posty-legged
stronger pasterns	knock-kneed
	fine-boned
	sickle-hocked
	buck-kneed
<b>Fleece</b>	
denser, tighter	open fleece
more uniform grading fleece	cottony fleece
heavier shearing fleece	lacks character
longer staple	contains black fiber
more character about the fleece	short staple
freer from black fiber	lacks uniformity

## Sample reasons for Suffolk breeding ewes

I placed the Suffolk ewe lambs 2-3-1-4. Two wins the class because she is the growthiest, nicest balance, highest performing ewe of the four. Ideally, she could be blacker about her point. But nonetheless, it's 2 over 3 in the top pair of bigger framed ewes because 2 is longer and cleaner about her neck, stands taller at the shoulder and exhibits more outcome for future growth. In addition, 2 is heavier muscled, higher volumed and stands on a greater substance of bone. Finally, 2 is more nearly level out her rump and simply has a greater apparent weight per day of age. I fully realize that 3 is darker about her head and legs. Additionally, 3 is smoother about her shoulder and straighter down her top. However, she is fine boned and tapers out her dock; consequently, I placed her second.

Femininity, frame and breed character compelled me to place 3 over 1 in the middle pair. Three is a bigger outlined ewe that is particularly longer sided and more extended about her front. Moreover, she is darker about her points, freer from wool about her head and demon-

strates fewer black fibers about her neck. Furthermore, 3 is lighter conditioned and smoother shouldered than 1. I'll admit that the ewe with the most black fiber is deeper bodied, stands on more substance of bone and is heavier muscled than 3. However, this does not compensate for the fact that she is coarse in her shoulder, and short and thick about her neck, and thus I placed her third.

In the bottom pair, it's 1 over 4 due to her advantages in structural correctness. Unquestionably, 1 was stronger about her pasterns and demonstrated a more correct set to her knee. In addition, 1 was stronger about her top, more nearly level through her rump and handled herself more correctly on her rear feet and legs. Granted, 4 was a bigger framed, later maturing ewe. But that was just it, as she was the most structurally incorrect ewe in the class. Four was coon-footed, buck-kneed and easy about her top. Furthermore, she was the steepest in her dock and the shortest striding ewe in the class.

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