

# HEREFORDSHIRE FEDERATION OF YOUNG FARMERS' CLUB

## STOCK JUDGING HINTS AND TIPS



**NOTES:**

## GENERAL

- Shirt, tie, clean white coat and suitable footwear – this may seem obvious but they help gain some of the 10 style and ability points available.
- Remember a pen, and maybe a spare too.
- Judging Card – please ensure this is filled out correctly to help the judge and steward. Here is an example -



**Fun, Learning  
and Achievement**

### STOCKJUDGING PLACING CARD FOR RINGS OF FOUR ANIMALS

Competitor's No. or Name: .. **Ellie Layton 2A** ..

Team: **Craswall** .....

Breed or Ring No: **Inter Lambs** .....

#### COMPETITORS PLACING

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	MAX. MARKS	MARKS GAINED
				50	
ACCURACY OF OBSERVATION				25	
A COMPARATIVE RATHER THAN A DESCRIPTIVE STATEMENT				15	
STYLE AND ABILITY				10	
SUB TOTAL				100	
LESS TIME FAULTS					
TOTAL					



**Fun, Learning  
and Achievement**

### STOCKJUDGING PLACING CARD FOR RINGS OF FOUR ANIMALS

Competitor's No. or Name: **Ellie** .....

Team: **CYFC** .....

Breed or Ring No: **Lambs** .....

#### COMPETITORS PLACING

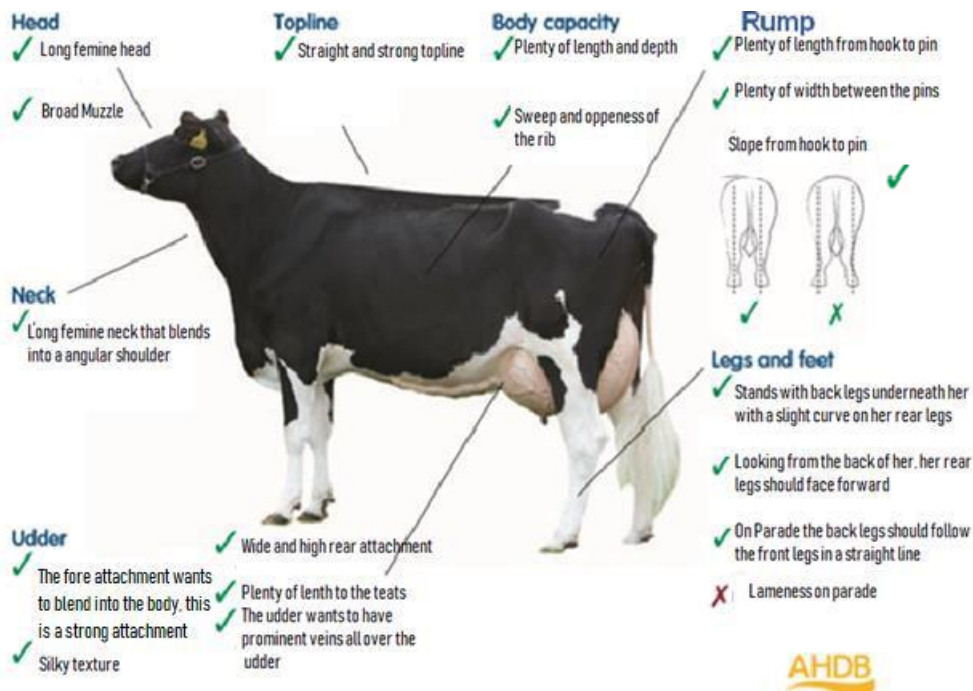
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LESS TIME FAULTS					
TOTAL					

Double check you have put the same order on your placing card on your reasons half!

- Observe the ring of stock before you enter the pen, you can get a rough idea of your order before you touch the stock.
- Always ensure you know what you are judging the ring of stock for – Breeding, Butchers, Stores etc. The stewards are always happy to help if you are unsure.

**This booklet has been created to offer handy hints and tips – please remember that we have volunteers who will happily help your club with further guidance**

# Dairy Cows



## Key words / terminology - additional to above:

Angular  
Wider  
Deeper  
Longer  
Capacious  
Stronger  
Superior  
Dairy Style  
Flatter Boned

Judging dairy cows can be daunting as there are a lot of points to cover.

Stand back and watch them parade (walk) first of all. A big fault can be legs and feet so pay attention to them initially as they parade around.

You may want to look for faults first and work your order out from which cow has the most faults to begin with etc.

Remember dairy reasons are positive reasons so always use comparative terms over negative where possible.

# Finished beef

## Before you start

**Stand back** and have a good look from a distance at the group. Get a general impression of the animals to judge, appearance, type, distinguishing features, etc.

**Be methodical:** start at one end and work your way to the other end inspecting and handling as you go. Remember, you should always handle the loin on the left hand side, as the kidney hangs loose on this side.

## What to look for

Always look for length, width and depth of fleshing throughout.

**Above and below the dotted line:**

**As much as possible above the line** – good quality, expensive cuts

**As little as possible below the line** – lower quality, cheaper cuts

### The shoulder

- ✓ Broad and deep
- ✓ Well-developed
- ✓ Well-fleshed
- ✗ Lacking flesh
- ✗ Narrow

### Brisket

- ✓ Light
- ✗ Broad, full or wasteful

### Chine

- ✓ Full fleshed
- ✗ Weak, lacking flesh

### The back

#### (Topline)

- ✓ Long
- ✓ Wide
- ✗ Short
- ✗ Narrow

### Loin

- ✓ Long and deep
- ✓ Full
- ✗ Lacking flesh
- ✗ Narrow



Hindquarters

### The round

#### Hindquarters

- ✓ Well fleshed in first and second thighs
- ✓ Muscle development carried well down to the hocks
- ✗ Flat and shallow
- ✗ Narrow, lacking width
- ✗ Lacking muscle development

#### Rump

- ✓ Well-rounded
- ✓ Broad
- ✗ Shallow and concave
- ✗ Pin bones prominent



### Belly (Undertine)

- ✓ Clean
- ✓ No waste
- ✓ Parallel with top line

### Ribs

- ✓ Well sprung and trim
- ✗ Soft and fat

### Finish

Should carry an even degree of finish. **ie the fatter the animal the softer to the touch it becomes.**



## Key words / terminology - additional to above:

- Full
- Firm
- Soft
- Sex
- Breed

Sometimes you may not be able to touch the beef animal depending on temperament but you can judge a beef animal on looks alone if this is the case

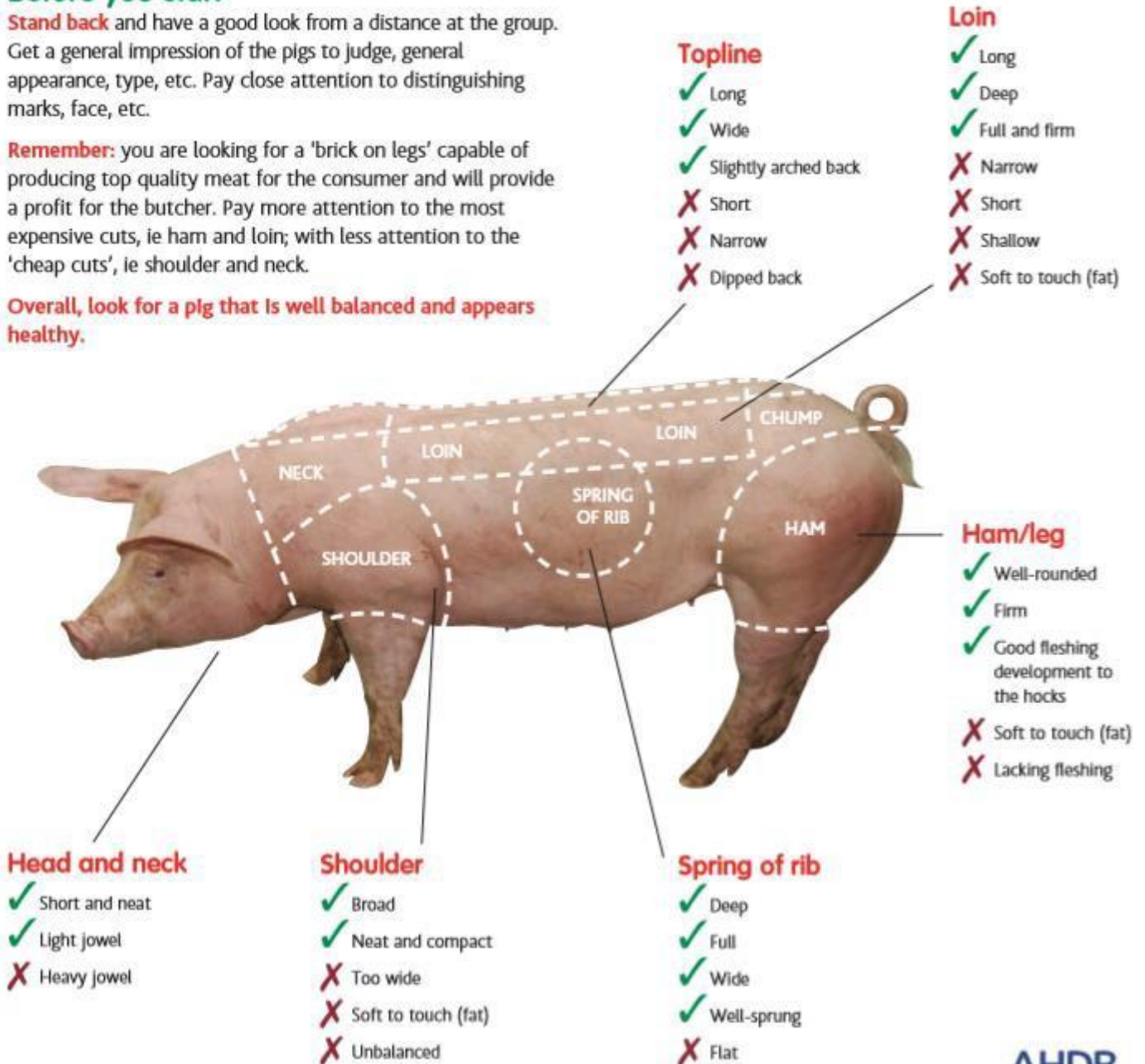
# Finished pigs

## Before you start

**Stand back** and have a good look from a distance at the group. Get a general impression of the pigs to judge, general appearance, type, etc. Pay close attention to distinguishing marks, face, etc.

**Remember:** you are looking for a 'brick on legs' capable of producing top quality meat for the consumer and will provide a profit for the butcher. Pay more attention to the most expensive cuts, ie ham and loin; with less attention to the 'cheap cuts', ie shoulder and neck.

**Overall, look for a pig that is well balanced and appears healthy.**



## Key words / terminology - additional to above:

Width

Depth

Flesh covering

Sex

Breed

**Leg/ham** - for pork pigs, refer to the 'leg' as in a leg of pork. For bacon pigs, refer to the 'ham'.

**ALWAYS TOUCH THE PIGS** – as it can appear full in the leg but could be soft to the touch

# Finished lamb

## Before you start

**Stand back** and have a good look from a distance at the group. Get a general impression of the lambs to judge, appearance, type, etc.

Pay close attention to distinguishing marks, colour of wool, face, etc.

**Remember:** wool can mask a great deal about the animal, so handle animals at the key points.



### The shoulder

- ✓ Neat and compact
- ✓ Eye muscle development extended well forward
- ✗ Narrow and lacking flesh

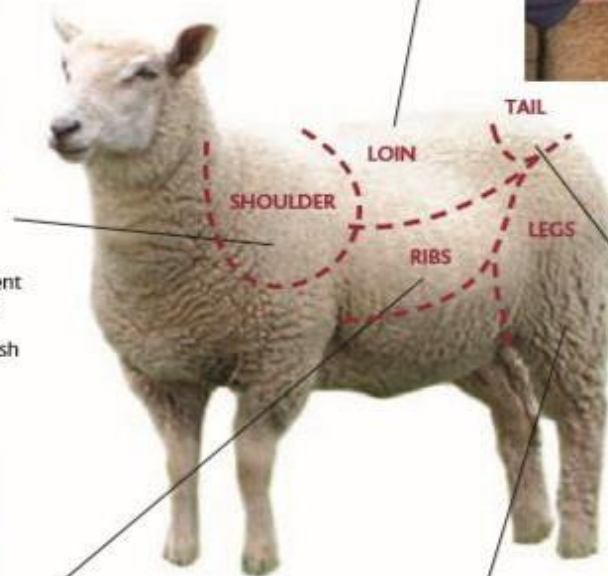


### The ribs

- ✓ Light covering, individual ribs easily detected
- ✗ Not too lean (bare)
- ✗ Not too fat (individual ribs undetectable)

### The loin

- ✓ Spinous and transverse processes felt as corrugations with light pressure
- ✓ Good width and fullness of eye muscle



### The legs

- ✓ Broad and well-filled to the shank

### The tail (dock)

- ✓ Individual bones easy to detect with light pressure
- ✗ Not too lean (narrow and bones bare)
- ✗ Not too fat (broad, soft and individual bones undetectable)



## Key words / terminology - additional to above:

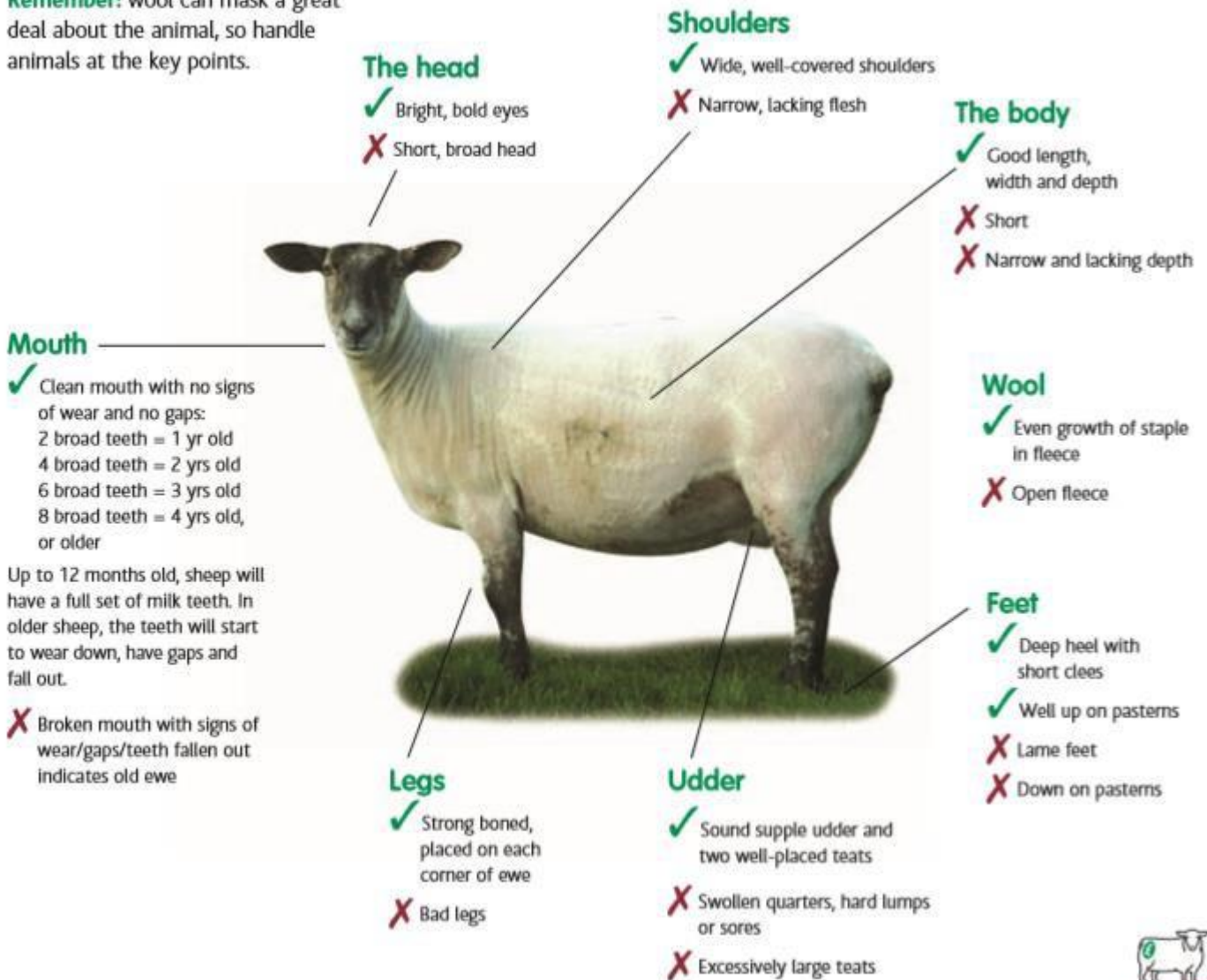
- Width
- Depth
- Flesh covering
- Full
- Firm
- Soft
- Sex
- Breed

**ALWAYS TOUCH THE LAMBS** –It is hard to judge a lamb without touching it because of the wool – a large lamb can sometimes have more wool than flesh

The image above taken from Eblex mentions the “eye muscle development“(within shoulder) - this cannot be seen on a LIVE lamb and we would recommend you do not mention it.

## Breeding Sheep

**Remember:** wool can mask a great deal about the animal, so handle animals at the key points.



Try and find out what breed of sheep you are judging. The above points are applicable to ALL breeds BUT each breed has its own characteristics so if you can find out the breed and research the facial/leg colours, shape of face, wool this can help gain observation points.

### Key words / terminology - additional to above:

Strength  
Wide/Well bodied  
Good Length  
Confirmation  
Tight or loose fleece  
Markings (Spot ect)



## **Reasons:**

### **Reasons are just as important as your placings**

If you have lost points in your placing, but your reasons are full and give more good accuracy and terminology, you could still be in the running!

This includes being smart and wearing a tie – if the judge has difficulty splitting you and a fellow judge – presentation like ties and top buttons can be taken into account.

Points system on the placing card

### **Placings – 50 points**

Always write your order down on the reasons side of the card (the section you keep) so when you hand your card in you can be sure what order you placed the ring of stock.

### **Accuracy of observation – 25 points**

This links into your order placing, however even if you have not got the order right, if you state the breed of the ring of stock and the sex of each animal, you will gain extra points

Tell the judge if you felt there were two pairs in the class today, or if you felt there was a definite first to fourth place or if you struggled to split any of the animals.

These are all observations and confirms to the judge that you handled the stock.

### **Please note**

If you are unsure of the breed when judging other stock do not say it and if you are unsure of the sex do not say it – there is nothing worse than saying it's a heifer when it is a bull!

**Stating the breed and sex of each animal is an easy point to pick up!**

### **Comparative and not descriptive – 15 points**

This is exactly what it says on the tin - do not just describe each animal, you must compare with the previous and give reasons WHY you have put second below first below compare each animal.

For example - the second placed animal was *lacking width, length and finish compared to my first placed "lamb/heifer/pig/ewe/cow" I felt today it could not be placed any higher in the class.*

Remember that if there was only a SLIGHT difference between your first and second for example, tell the judge that the loin was slightly narrower than my first and that is the main reason this animal was placed second.

Avoid saying last, try saying it was fourth in today's class.

Always remember the fourth placed animal is not the worst, it simply was not as good as the others in the pen– there will always be a good point(s) on your fourth placed animal.

### **Style & Ability – 10 points**

EASIEST place to get points – white coat, shirt, tie, boots, smart and SMILE

It is very daunting when speaking to a judge whether you have done it before or not – but remember when you give your reasons - you are telling the judge YOU are right.

Speak clearly and confidently. If you trip up, do not panic. Take a breath and start your sentence again.

Ensure the judge can hear you – you do not need stand 10 foot away, they are not as scary as they look.

### **General Points**

No extra paper, this will be taken from you.

Remember you have two minutes to fill – Aim to fill the time but allow for any trips. Timing your reasons before hand can help.

When you state the ring of stock you are judging, you are not judging fat lambs or fat beef or fat pigs – you are judging butchers lambs, breeding or butchers beef

**Open your reasons with something like**

“Good Morning/Afternoon/ Madam/Master Judge

After handling and inspecting this class of four butchers lambs I placed them in the order ABXY

**Close your reasons with**

Those madam/master judge are my reasons for placing the in the order ABXY  
THANK YOU

HAVE FUN 😊

The contents of this booklet are a simple guide to help you understand what you are looking for when stock judging and understand how the scoring of your reasons work

**If you have any questions, please contact the office on:**

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