



Irish Aubrac

*Young Members
Association
Handbook*

Irish Aubrac Cattle Breed Society YMA Mission Statement:

To help, inform, guide and educate the next generation of Aubrac Breeders through an enjoyable experience for them – the future of Aubrac cattle is in the hands of the YMA.

Objectives of the YMA:

- To encourage all young people who have an interest in Aubrac Cattle
- To cultivate, nourish and develop their interest in the Aubrac breed through fun events and opportunities for real world experience
- Facilitate experienced stock people to share their wealth of knowledge and help to guide the YMA
- To support the exchange of information regarding Aubrac cattle among interested young people
- To help develop skills and make vital contacts with their peers
- Connect with as wide an audience and attendance as possible
- All participants irrespective of age or skill level are treated with respect

YMA Competitions are for young people aged 12 years to 25 years old

Under 12 years	CAN judge and listen to workshop presentations but CANNOT show or give reasons
12 years – 16 years	Junior
Turning 12 years during the year of the competition	Junior
17 years – 25 years	Senior
Turning 17 years during the year of the competition	Senior
Turning 26 years during the year of the competition	Overage and cannot compete

Participants must represent their home club area **only**, club areas are defined by the YMA member family herd prefix address.

A member MUST be registered with the Irish Aubrac Society's office.

Competition Format

Competitors are required to Judge, Present Reasons and Show Pedigree or Commercial Aubrac Cattle as follows:

NOTE: No conferring with team members or any other persons during stock judging

Members are asked to Judge two rings of 4 Aubrac cattle by placing them in order of merit. A verbal assessment on one ring of cattle will be given to the judges.

Each competitor will be asked to show one animal which will be randomly selected by pulling a number out of a hat in front of judge(s)/organisers.

Competitors attend regional competitions at appointed venues. The top four participants will eligible to compete in the Anglo Irish Finals at a selected venue.

Stock Judging

Members are asked to Judge two rings of 4 Aubrac cattle by placing them in order of merit. You will be informed prior to the start of the competition if you are required to give Oral Reasons on either the Bulls or the Heifers – only one. You must fill out Stock Judging card and submit to organiser BEFORE you leave the judging area. You CANNOT confer with team mates/other competitors or supporters.

Members are permitted 10 minutes to judge each ring of stock

The scoring from the judges shall be awarded as follows:

4 cattle ring 1	-	50 points for placing
4 cattle ring 2	-	50 points for placing
TOTAL	-	100 points

Oral Reasons/Verbal Assessment

Time will be given to each team member/individual to prepare for the oral presentation. At the allotted time the competitor must present their verbal assessment or reasons to the Judges. They will be permitted a maximum of three minutes to present their reasons. Points may be deducted if the competitor's assessment is longer than three minutes or shorter than two minutes. It is the competitor's responsibility to be present for interview at the correct time, failure to do so may lead to disqualification or the loss of marks.

The reasons shall be split down by the judges into:

Appearance and manner of presentation	20
Content	20
Accuracy of observation	20
Comparative rather than descriptive statement	20
Style ability, confidence	20
TOTAL	100

Showing/Handling section

The organisers will select a number of animals for competitors to use. Livestock will be numbered, and each competitor will select a number drawn randomly, that will correspond with the animal they will show. Members will be marked for both presentation of themselves and handling. The Animal shall not be judged. The breakdown of points awarded shall be:

Knowledge of Animal	10
Control of Animal	20
Eye Contact With Judge	20
Response / Alertness to Judge's Requests	20
Positioning of Animal	20
Presentation of Handler	10
TOTAL	100

Final Score

Individual = Stock Judging + Oral Reasons + Showing

Team = Combined Individual Scores (top three team members)

***"Judging instills confidence
in those people who may be
timid, and humbles those who
tend to be conceited."***

-Harlan Ritchie

Stockjudging

PREPARING TO JUDGE

Ensure you have a white coat. Wear it at all times and keep it buttoned up. A tie is also important and a showing bib. Be smart, look the part and ensure you have proper footwear (approved health and safety). Ensure you have 2 pens and paper/note cards to make your notes. Remember you must hand up your judging card so make sure to write your order of placement on your own notes.

BEFORE YOU START

- Establish what has to be judged? Are you judging animals for breeding or for the butcher?
- Establish how long you have to judge the class.
- Read the judging card to establish the criteria against which you will be judged
- Make sure you know if you are giving reasons on the Bulls or the Heifers.

STAND BACK

- Have a good look from a distance at the group.
- Understand what you have to judge, its general appearance, type, etc.
- First impressions are often the best.
- Make a judgement by eye and confirm by careful handling.
- Don't rush in.

EXAMPLES OF LIVE BEEF STOCK JUDGING:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=PO2S75fZbfY

www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIWHtzSlxb4



Structural Differences in Beef Cattle

Splayfooted and Knock Kneed - When viewed from the front, the front knees are close together and the feet toe out away from each other. This problem is often seen in extremely light-muscled, narrow-chested cattle where the legs are naturally set too close together.



correct



knock kneed
or splayfooted



bowlegged or
pigeon toed

Pigeon Toed and Bowlegged - When viewed from the front or rear, the knees set too far out, causing the toes to turn in toward each other in a pigeon-toed manner.

Cow Hocked - When viewing the rear legs from the rear, the hocks are turned in or placed too close together.



correct



cow hocked or
splayfooted



bowlegged or
pigeon toed

Buck Kneed - When the calf is "over at the knees," or buck kneed, full extension of the knee cannot occur when observed from the side. This is usually seen in cattle that are also too straight in their shoulder.

Calf Kneed - This is the other extreme where the calf stands "back at the knees" when viewed from the side.



correct



buck kneed



calf kneed

Sickle Hocked - When viewing the rear legs from the side, the hock has too much angle or set, causing the steer to stand too far underneath himself. Often these calves also will droop excessively from hooks to pins.

Side View Rear Legs



Correct



Sickle-hocked



Post-legged

Postlegged - The hock has too little angle or set. The calf is too straight through the joint resulting in very stiff, constricted movement because of the lack of flexibility. More cattle become unsound because of being postlegged than sickle hocked.

Feet and Legs

The legs should be set squarely underneath the animal. They should be widely placed and straight when viewed from in front and behind. They should not be bow legged or cow hocked. The hooves should be solid and healthy with no cracks or lesions, and should not be long in the toe. The dew claws should also be short and without any curl. The pastern should be strong yet flexible and should be at a reasonable angle. When viewed from the side, the hock should have the correct set (degree of angulation). Rear legs should be constructed of clean flat bones and the hocks should be free from swelling.



Correct Rear Side

Sickle Hocked

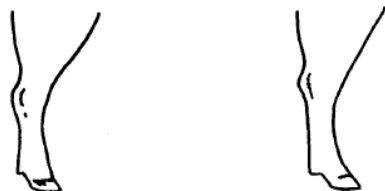
Post Legged



Correct Rear

Bow Legged

Cow Hocked



Rear Leg Correct Pastern

Rear Leg Weak Pastern

Developing A Beef Evaluation System Make Every Look Count

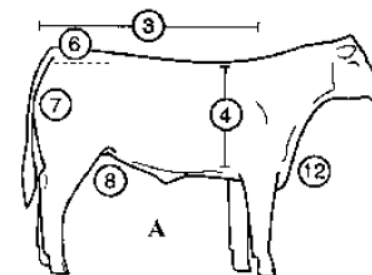
Side View

When you view the class of cattle from the side, compare them for:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Balance | 7. Depth and fullness of quarter |
| 2. Height | 8. Trimness of flank |
| 3. Length of body | 9. Trimness of middle |
| 4. Depth of rib | 10. Correctness of feet and legs |
| 5. Levelness of rump | 11. Length of head and neck |
| 6. Length of rump | 12. Trimness of brisket |

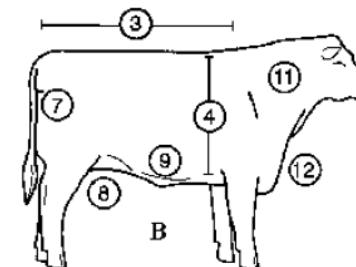
Steer "A": Ideal

Extra length of body - 3
Adequate depth of rib - 4
Adequate length of rump - 6
Deep, muscular quarter - 7
Trim flank - 8
Trim brisket - 12



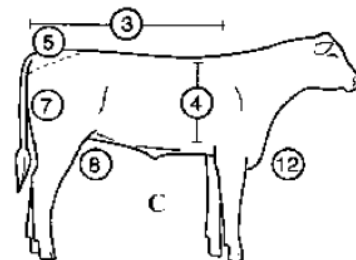
Steer "B": Inferior

Short bodied - 3
Excessively deep ribbed - 4
Flat soft quarter - 7
Full flanks - 8
Wasty, middled - 9
Shorter, thicker neck - 11
Deep, full brisket - 12

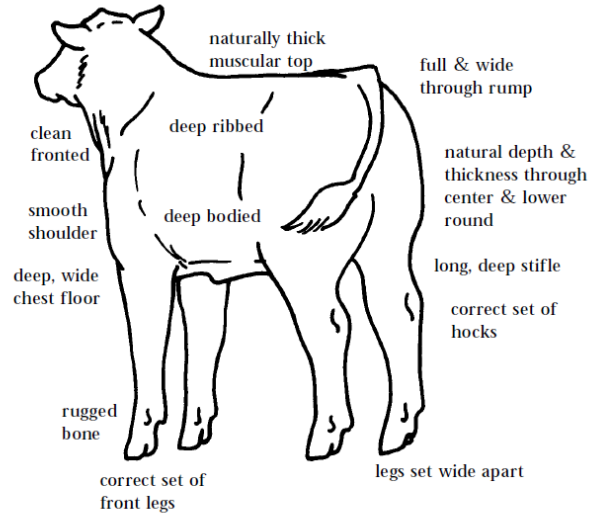
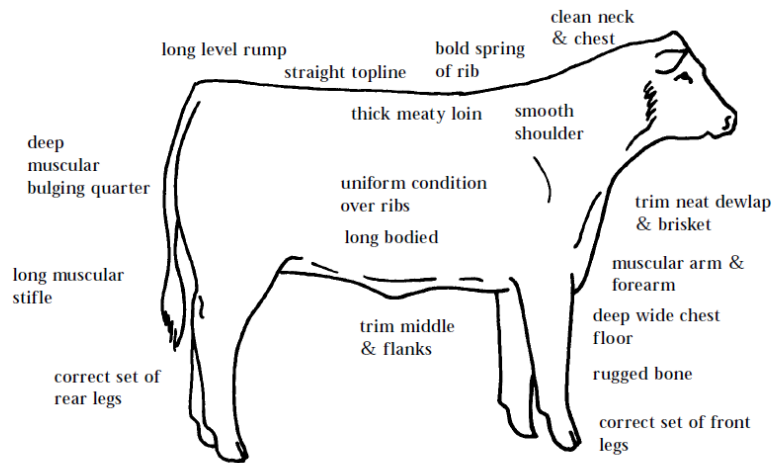


Steer "C": Inferior

Average length of body - 3
Shallow ribbed - 4
Steep rumped - 5
Flat shallow quarter - 7
Cut up in flank - 8
Extremely trim brisket - 12



Ideal Market Steer

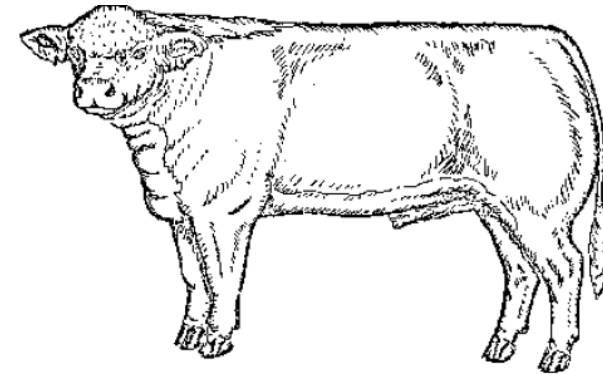


Viewing Beef Conformations

Characteristics that should be watched for from each view are listed below:

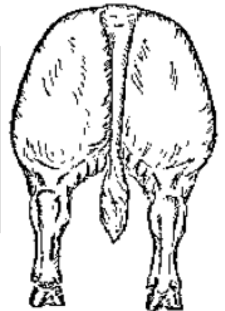
Side View

- Neck should be moderately long and trim.
- Topline should be long and level from top of the shoulders extending through the rump.
- Round should be deep, wide, and thick through the stifle.
- Rear flank and underline should be trim.
- Forequarter should be well-muscled with a large forearm.
- Brisket should be clean and trim.
- Legs should be ample and correctly placed under the body.



Rear View

- Back and loin should be oval over the top.
- Fullness should be present in foreribs, across the loin & back, and over the rump.
- Animal should stand squarely on its rear legs and walk with ease.
- Hindquarters should be well-muscled, with maximum width in the thighs



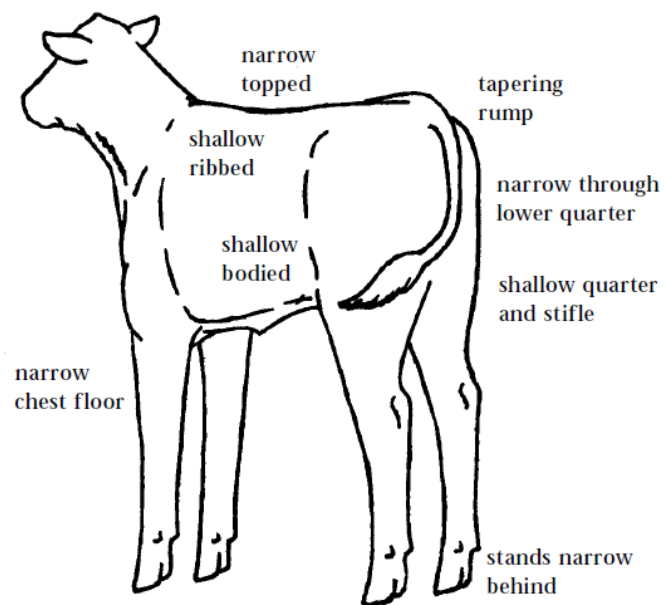
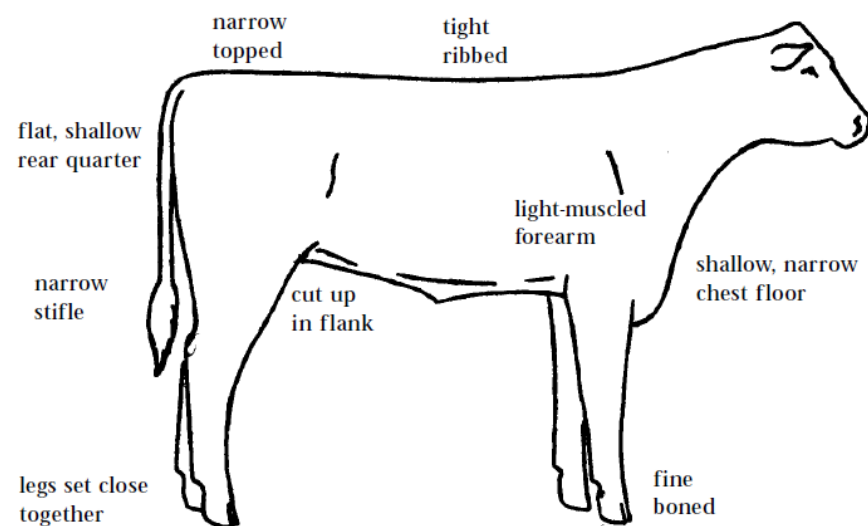
Front View

- Arm and forearm should be well-muscled.
- Shoulders should taper slightly toward the top.
- Shoulders should exhibit balance, fullness, and good muscling.
- Brisket should be clean and trim legs should be correctly set.

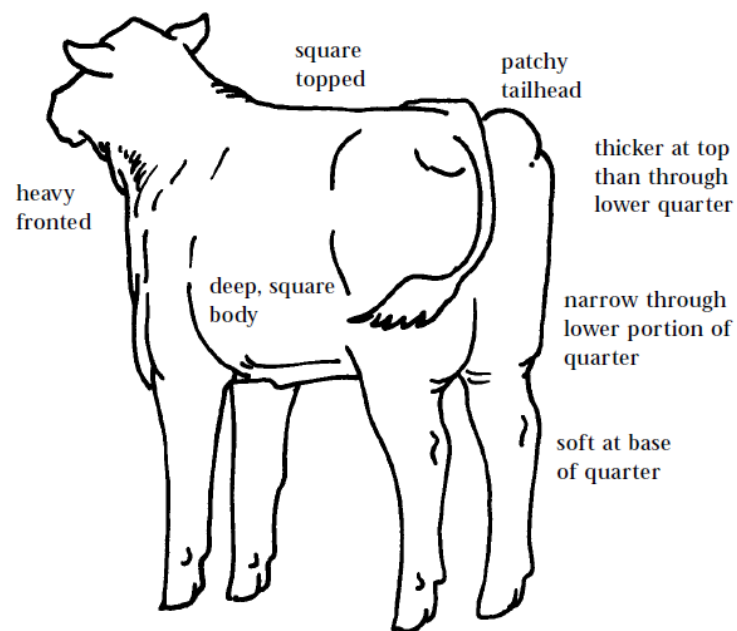
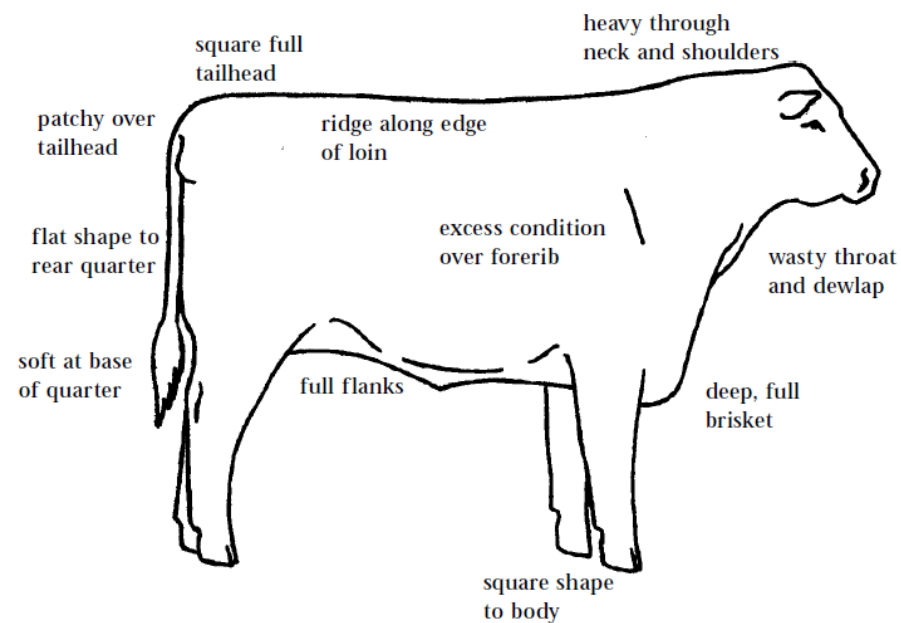


Combining **all** of the characteristics listed in one animal would create an animal with ideal beef conformation.

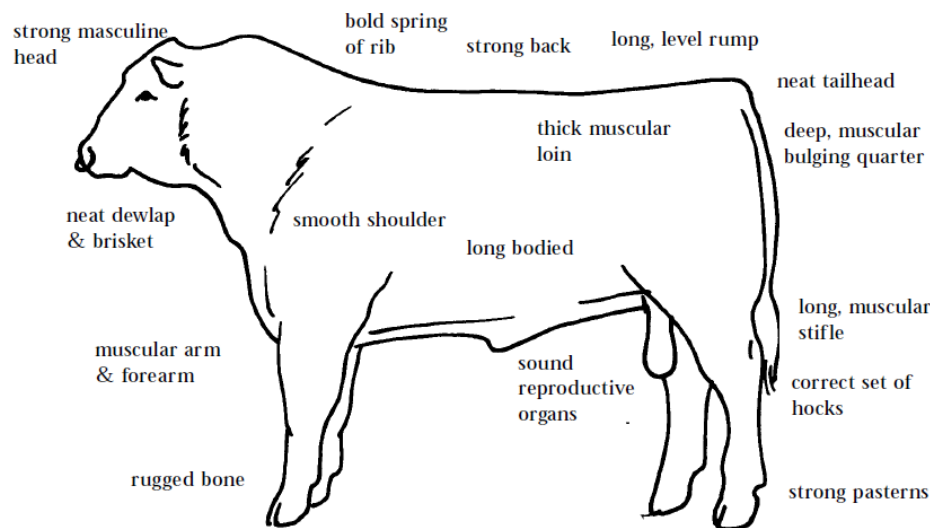
Narrow, Shallow, Light-muscled Steer



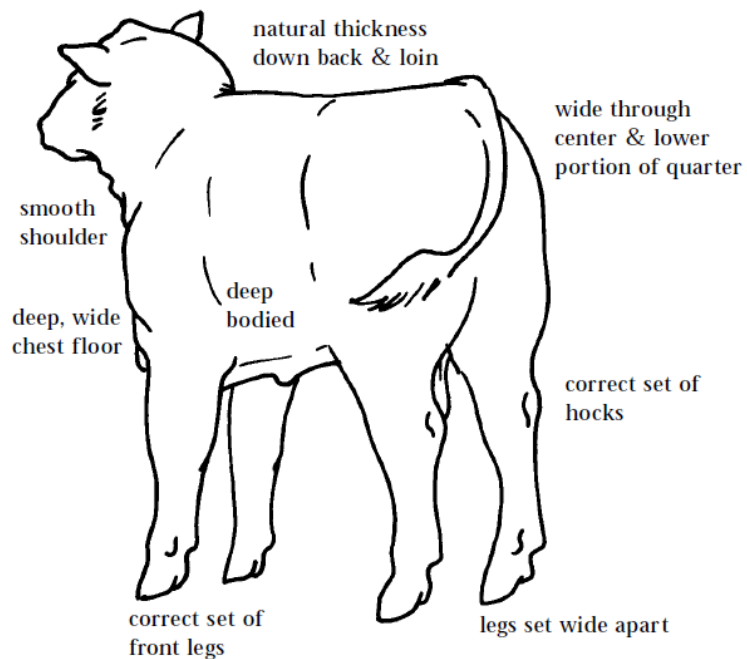
Over-conditioned, Light-muscled Steer



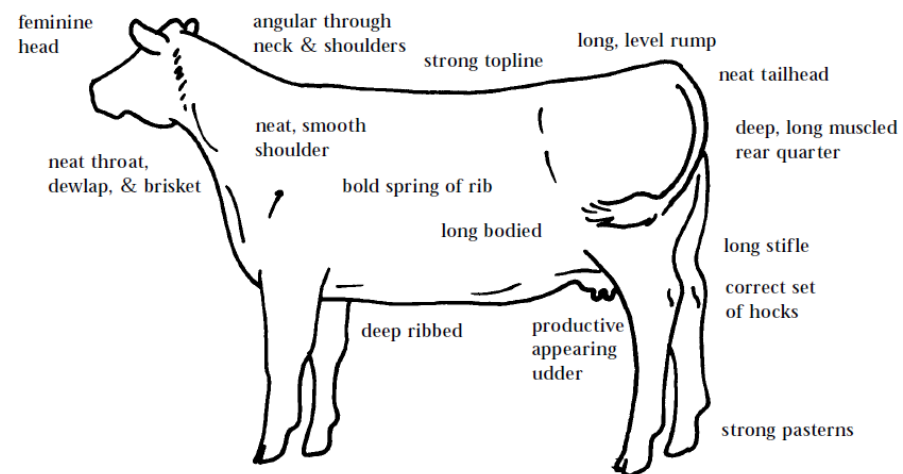
Ideal Bull



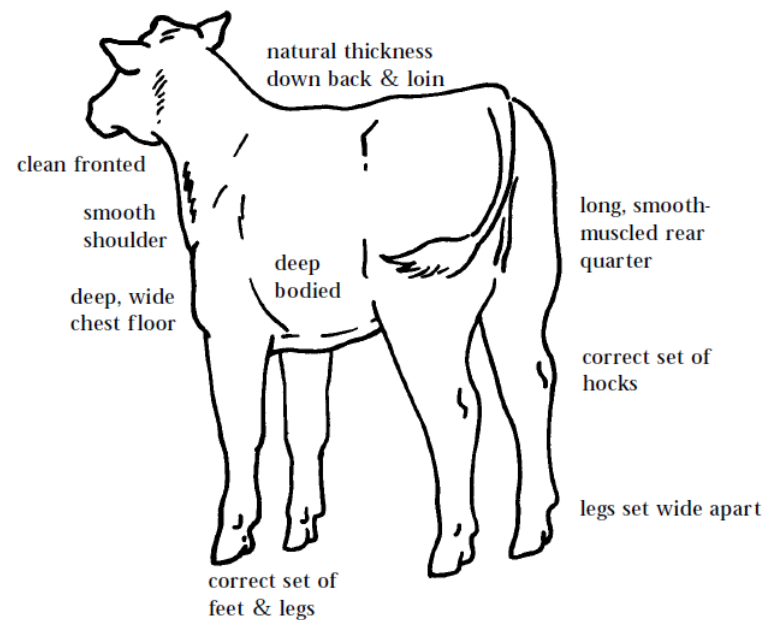
long bodied
well balanced



Ideal Heifer



long bodied
well balanced



★ Note Taking ★

Presenting oral reasons is the most valuable experience you will encounter in livestock judging. No matter what career you choose, to communicate effectively is a must to be successful. Success starts with note taking.

Notes should be readable and brief; this will prevent you from memorizing your notes. You should be able to remember the animals, not your notes.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE NOTE TAKING AND REASONS

- Don't start taking notes until you have placed the class and marked your judging card
- Try to be general in the terms that you use to describe each animal, but write as much as possible to describe the animal. You will have time to use "terms" when you prepare to deliver your oral reasons
- Don't forget to write down an ID point and sex, if needed, for each animal
- Be sure to provide reasons on correct group i.e. group of males or females

GIVING REASONS

- Establish how long you have, usually three minutes are allowed.
- Memorise your reasons, as much as possible.
- Picturing the animals will help.
- Stand up straight and address all judges.
- Speak clearly and slowly enough for the judge to follow.
- Describe the stock fully, refer to any distinguishing features.
- As you deliver your reasons compare as much as possible, going from front to back or back to front using the same style for all animals in the class with emphasis on the important areas.
- This means that you are less likely to get confused and allows the judge to follow your reasons more easily.
- Use the full time allocated, the clearer your reasons, the better your chances.
- Thank the judge when you have finished – whether you enjoyed the experience or not.
- Judges rarely remember if you thank them, they always remember if you don't!

Example of a Presentation

STARTING

"Master Judge, Judges (if necessary).

These are my reasons for placing this class of in the following order (example XAYB)" (always check your order matches your card).

- List your reasons.....

AND FINISHING

"Those Master Judge (Judges) are the reasons why I have placed this class in the order X, A, B and Y. Thank you for your time."

BREEDING CATTLE PRIORITIES	MARKET CATTLE PRIORITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Functionality• Growth Performance• Balance and Eye Appeal• Muscle• Femininity/Masculinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Muscle• Correctness of Finish• Structure and Movement• Rib and Feeding Ability• Balance and Eye Appeal

Basic Livestock Terms

Balance or Symmetry - a proper proportion and blending of parts of the animal. Balance or symmetry is evaluated from a side view.

Breed Character - characteristics that separate breeding stock of one breed from other breeds, primarily by differences of the head: shape, length, dish of face, width of muzzle, shape of poll and ears, colour markings.

Broodiness - female breeding stock term that means she has a favourable combination of characteristics to be a good mother. Depth, capacity, prominence of teats and/or mammary system, stoutness and correctness of vulva.

Condition, Finish or Covering - all are used to denote fat. The terms finish and covering are used to describe fat on market animals, while condition is used when describing breeding stock.

Femininity - characteristics that distinguish the female from the male. Indicated by refinement of the head, neck and shoulders.

Growthiness - the characteristics of having size and weight at a certain age.

Masculinity - characteristics that distinguish the male from the female. Indicated by boldness or massiveness of head and crest, thickness of the neck and development of the forequarters.

Meatiness/Muscling - having a high proportion of muscle in the areas of the high priced cuts. This is shown primarily by the relative width, length and fullness of the quarter, leg or ham, and by the thickness and fullness through the rib, rack or loin.

Quality - a general term that combines smoothness and refinement. Freedom of roughness, patchiness in cattle indicates quality.

Scale - the size of the animal as determined by skeletal structure, independent of weight. The height, length and width of the animal.

Structural Soundness - the desirability or correctness of the skeletal structure, with major emphasis on straightness of top and proper feet and leg structure.

Style - the general eye-appeal or attractiveness of the animal. Includes balance, structural correctness and quality.

Tight Framed - the ability of the animal to hold itself together. Indicated by a strong top (back), tightness of shoulder and squareness of feet and leg placements.

Trimness - freedom from fat or finish.

Type - a combination of characteristics that make an animal useful for a specific purpose. Determined by the general shape and form of an animal. Desirable types are constantly changing.

Richard O'Beirne kindly provided some useful phrases to widen your vocabulary when giving your presentation to the master judge.

Please see below a list of some phrases you can use when describing an animal's **good/bad points**.

HEAD:

- Good character and harmony
- Good pigmentation around eyes and muzzle
- Poorer pigmentation around eyes and muzzle
- Wide between the eyes and a broad muzzle.
- A plain headed bull/heifer
- A narrow faced bull/heifer
- A long plain headed bull/heifer that lacks breed type and character
- A sweet headed heifer
- A strong headed masculine bull

FOREQUARTERS:

- Neat and smooth about the shoulders
- An extremely good fronted bull/heifer
- Not as neat in the brisket or as smooth in the shoulders
- The neck blends well into the shoulders
- A broad chested bull with good muscle development
- Too wide in the shoulders and sloppy in the brisket
- Narrow chested bull/heifer
- Full in the heart with excellent spring of rib
- Sharp on the shoulder and weak behind the shoulder
- Open and course behind the shoulder
- A neck and shoulder that blend smoothly
- Sharp over the top of the shoulder
- A short thick neck
- A long slender neck
- A full chested bull and full over the heart

TOP LINE, LOIN, PLATES/PINS:

- A good straight wide top line with good loin development
- A weak top, dipped in the back and weak on the loin
- Nice fleshed top line
- A poorly fleshed top line
- Good square plates and wide pins
- Sloped plates with narrow pins
- Good tail set
- High tail head
- Wide hips
- Smooth hips
- Too prominent of its hips
- Tight and narrow of the hips

BACK END:

- Good round its end
- Long deep quarter coming down well to the hock
- Well developed end
- Great width and round to its outer quarters
- Well developed on its inner thigh
- Weak on its inner thigh

LEGS:

- Stands square and correct on his feet and legs
- Too close at the hocks
- Too wide at the hocks
- Sickie hocked
- Cow hocked
- Post legged
- Toed-out in front
- No movement or flex of the hocks when walking
- Stands squarely on his legs
- Sickled on the hind legs
- Out on the front knees
- Bowed on his right/left leg
- Weak on his back pasterns

LOCOMOTION:

- Great stride and loose movement
- Very free when walks
- Good balance and very square when walking
- Swivels on back legs when walking
- Toes out on the front when walking

Basil Bothwell was asked by the Irish Aubrac Cattle Society to give my views on what I consider to be important factors in selecting and preparing animals for both show and sale.

In summary, there are 5 points which I consider to be important. These include selection, feeding, training, washing, and grooming.

1. Selection of animals you want to bring to the show or sale:

The show and sale is your opportunity to present your animals and to promote your herd and your breed. Therefore, you should select animals of reasonable quality with no major defects. If you have an animal which you consider not to be of a reasonable quality or an animal which has a bad temperament, then this animal should not be sold to another breeder. This would only create bad publicity for your herd and for your breed.

2. Feeding of animals for the show or sale:

After selecting the animals that you want to show or bring to a sale, you should start them on some meal immediately. For this reason, it is important to make your selections early, so that you have enough time to feed them and have the animals in prime condition before the date of the event. I would suggest that 3 months is needed to get your animals looking well. Some people may think that their cattle will thrive on grass alone. However, when you start to train them to lead, have the animals travelling on a trailer and have the animals standing at the show or sale for a few hours, they will empty out quickly and look poor. Therefore, I would recommend feeding bulls 4-5 kg of meal and heifers 3-4 kg of meal daily. This will also help to socialise your animals and leave them easier to handle.

Approximately 10 days before the event, I would recommend putting your animals into a shed or onto a bare paddock and feeding them some hay along with the meal. This helps to dry out their manure up and will help to keep them much cleaner for when you bring them to the show or sale. Soft grass is not recommended because it passes through their bodies quickly and leaves their ends very dirty, especially after travelling.

3. Training animals for the show or sale:

Training an animal is not too difficult. Firstly, you should put the animal into a cattle crush and fasten a halter to it. Next, you should tie the animal to the front of the crush. It is not advisable to tie the animal to the back or to the middle of the crush because if the animal tries to move forward and attempts to break away from the rope, this may cause its neck to double back. Then if the animal falls, it may get seriously injured. Therefore, you should only tie the animal to the front of the crush. After tying the animal to the crush, you should leave it for an hour or two. However, you should frequently check on the animal while tied. You should repeat this process once a day for 2-3 days. Then when the animal is used to being tied up, you should take it out of the crush and tie it to the side of the cattle crush. Once again, you should leave the animal tied to the side of the crush for 1-2 hours and do this for 2 days. On the second day, you can take the animal out into a small, enclosed yard and begin to lead it. Make sure to hold the rope tightly and if the animal tries to get away, pull hard on the rope against it. Then when the animal stops trying to escape, scratch it on the back or comb it and let it know that you mean it no harm. Try to walk holding the lead with someone to drive the animal after you. After approximately 2 days, you should have the animal walking. Training should be started at least 4 weeks before the date of the event.

4. Washing animals before the show or sale

The day before the event, you should wash the animal with a small power washer and some shampoo. Rub the shampoo well into the hair and coat adding water and scrubbing well with your fingers. Then wash out the shampoo and rub the water out of the animal's coat with the back of a cattle comb. Afterwards, comb the animal's hair up. If you have a blow dryer for cattle, this is a great way to dry the hair afterwards. Then, the day before the show or sale, do not give the animal any water. By doing this, you help to dry out the animal's dung and therefore the animal travels much cleaner the next day.

5. Grooming and presenting your animals on the day

On the day of the event, you should arrive early and get your animals off the trailer and into the pens in good time. Then, wash off any bits of dirt the animal may have picked up while travelling and dry it. Comb the animal's hair up and rub some cattle soap into the hair. The soap will help to keep the hair standing and makes a massive difference to the look and style of your animals. Also, if you are good at clipping, clip the animal's top line and underneath the belly. This is another thing which will improve the look of your animal. Remember, this is your opportunity to showcase and promote your herd and your breed.

**MATERIAL FOR THIS DOCUMENT WAS GATHERED
FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:**

- www.aubrac.ie
- Aubrac Show and Sale
- University of Idaho Judging Beef Cattle 101
- Pedigree and show cattle resource booklet
- Basil Bothwell

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES



Young Members Association

- Are you a young person aged 12 – 25?
- Are you interested in learning more about judging and showing pedigree Aubrac cattle?

**THEN THE IRISH
AUBRAC CATTLE
BREED SOCIETY
IS FOR YOU!!**

To contact your local YMA coordinator visit the YMA section of our website – www.aubrac.ie

Irish Aubrac Cattle Breed Society Ltd.

Deerpark Farm Services, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 051 641106 Email: info@aubrac.ie

www.aubrac.ie