

# Livestock Judging Guide



By

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# Module 3: Beef Cattle



## Judging Market Steers

# Judging Market Steers



- ❧ Ideal Market Steer:
  - ❧ Weighs 1,100 to 1,250 lbs.
  - ❧ Adequate size & scale:
    - ❧ To carry this weight
    - ❧ Minimum finish
  - ❧ Enough finish to:
    - ❧ Produce high quality carcass
    - ❧ Choice grade
    - ❧ Increase carcass cutability





# Judging Market Steers



## ☞ Ideal Market Steer:

☞ Heavy muscling is desired in:

☞ High-priced cuts

☞ Rib

☞ Loin

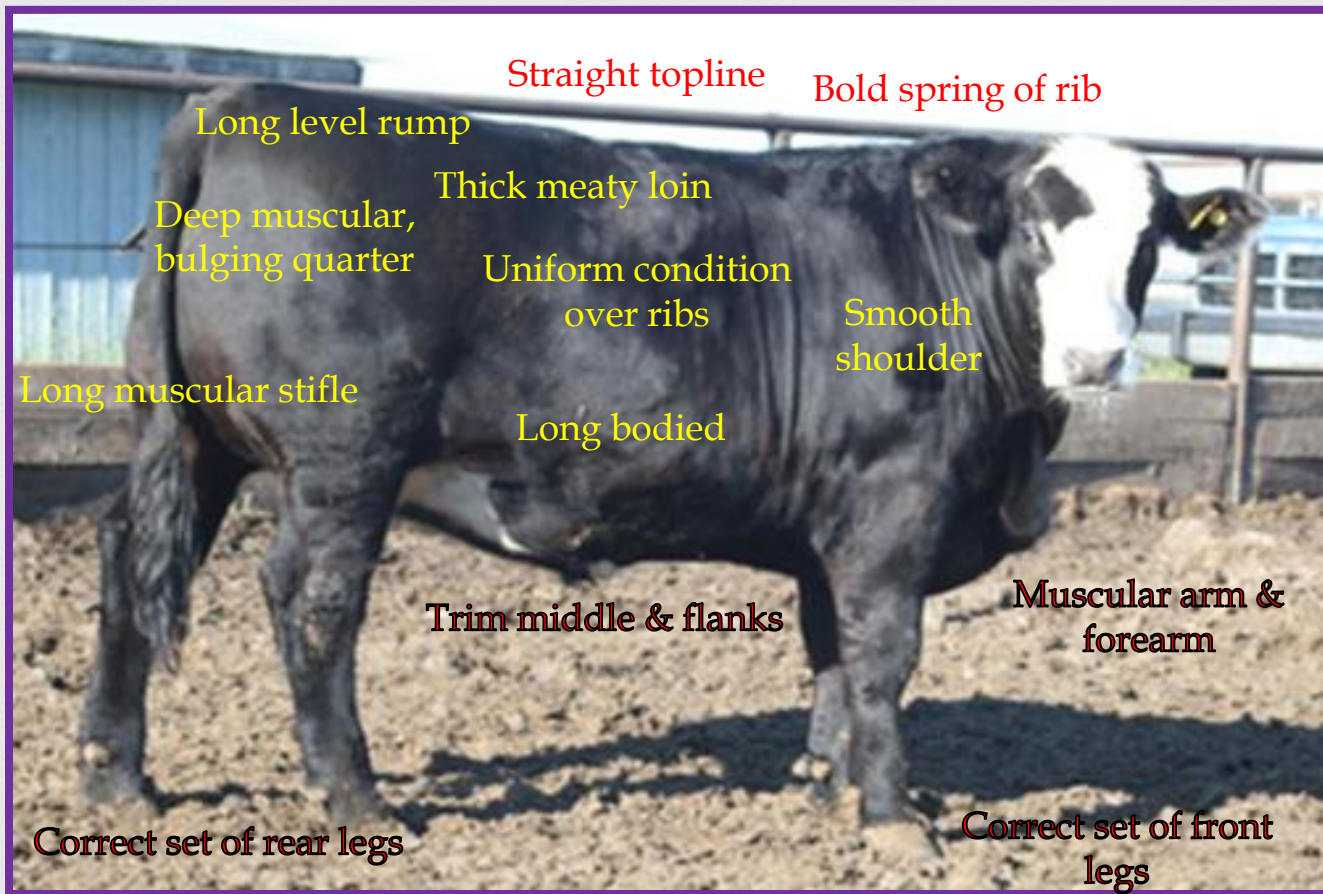
☞ Round

☞ Relatively trim middle

☞ Clean fronted



# Ideal Market Steer



# Judging Market Steers



- ❧ Steps to Judging Market Steers
  - ❧ Always start at the ground & work up
  - ❧ Then from rear & work forward
  - ❧ Rank animals based on traits of importance
  - ❧ Evaluate most important traits first
  - ❧ Eliminate any easy placings first
  - ❧ Place remaining class based on the volume of important traits



# Judging Market Steers



## ☞ Ranking of Traits for Market Steers:

- ☞ Degree of muscling
- ☞ Degree of Finish (fat cover)
- ☞ Growth capacity
- ☞ Soundness and structural correctness
- ☞ Balance
- ☞ Frame size

## ☞ Steers should be:

- ☞ Extra thick, Medium framed & Adequately finished

# Judging Market Steers



- ❧ Evaluating Degree of Muscling
  - ❧ Thickness through center of rear quarter
  - ❧ Base Width (Standing & Walking)
  - ❧ Muscle expression over the top
    - ❧ “Butterfly” shape down the topline
    - ❧ Crease down the backbone



# Judging Market Steers



Thin Muscle



Narrow Base

Average Muscle



Average Base

Thick Muscle



Wide Base

Super Thick



Super Wide

# Judging Market Steers



## ❧ Evaluating Degree of Finish

❧ Goal of Choice grade

❧ Requires enough external fat to achieve adequate intramuscular fat or marbling

❧ Excessive fat:

❧ Yield grade of 4 or 5

❧ Discounted prices

❧ Ideal level of exterior fat is 0.4 to 0.6 inches

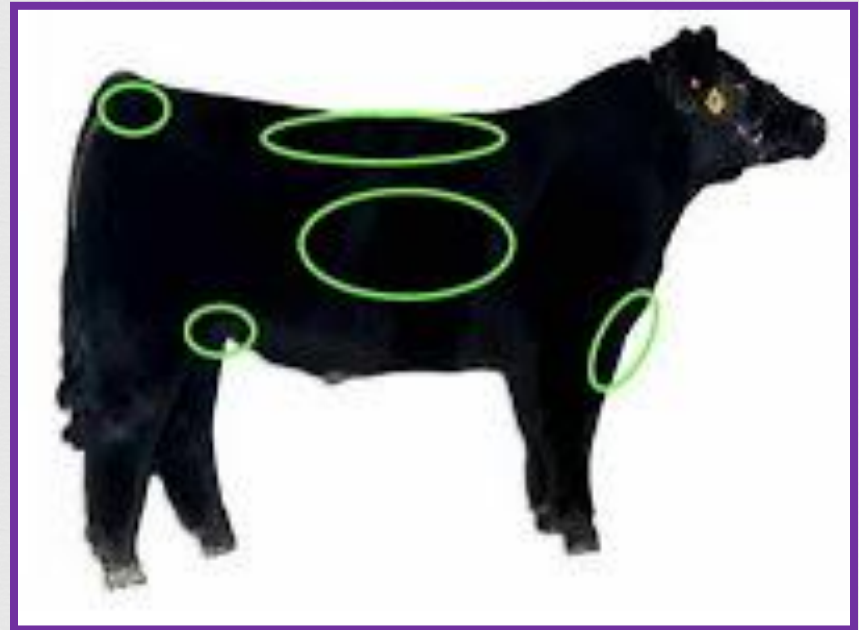
# Judging Market Steers



## ☞ Evaluating Degree of Finish

☞ Areas to evaluate degree of finish:

- ☞ Top line
- ☞ Underline
- ☞ Body depth
- ☞ Brisket
- ☞ Tailhead
- ☞ Cod or udder area
- ☞ Shoulder
- ☞ Over the ribs

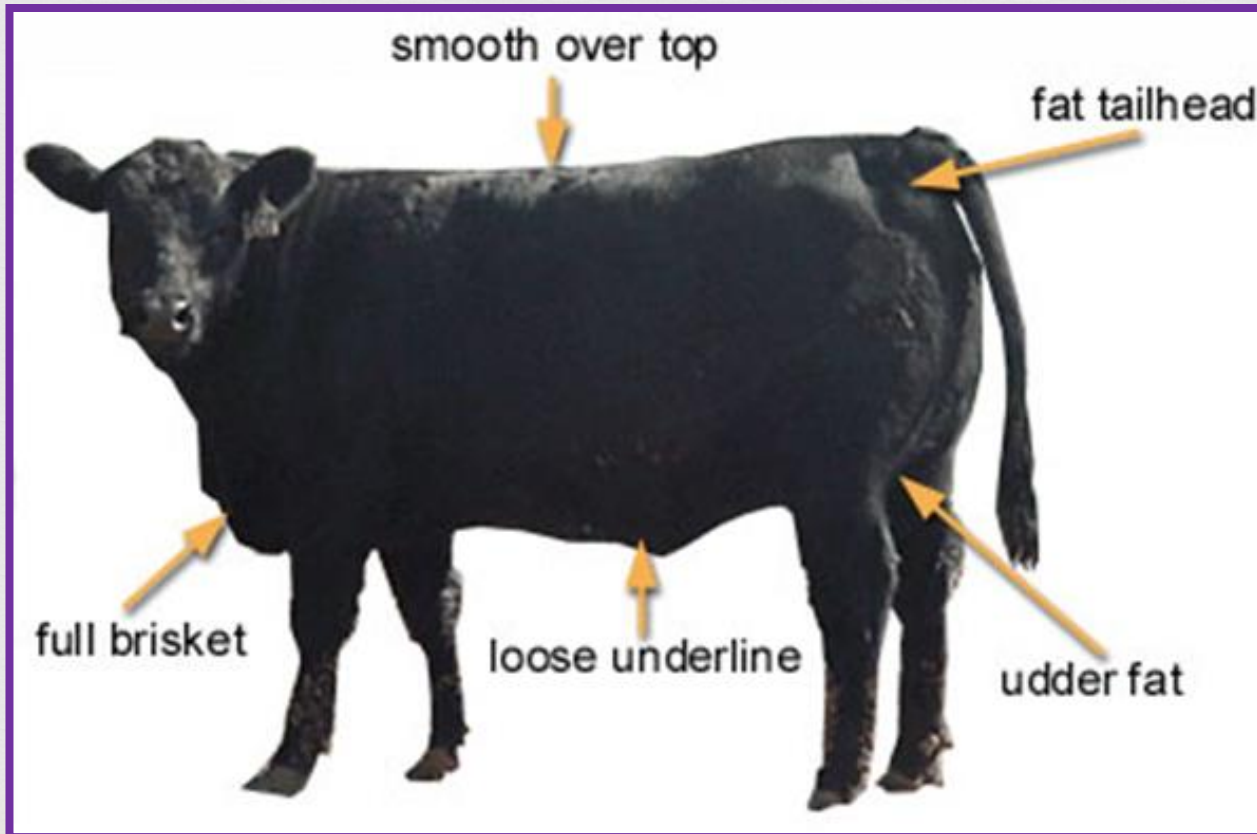




# Judging Market Steers



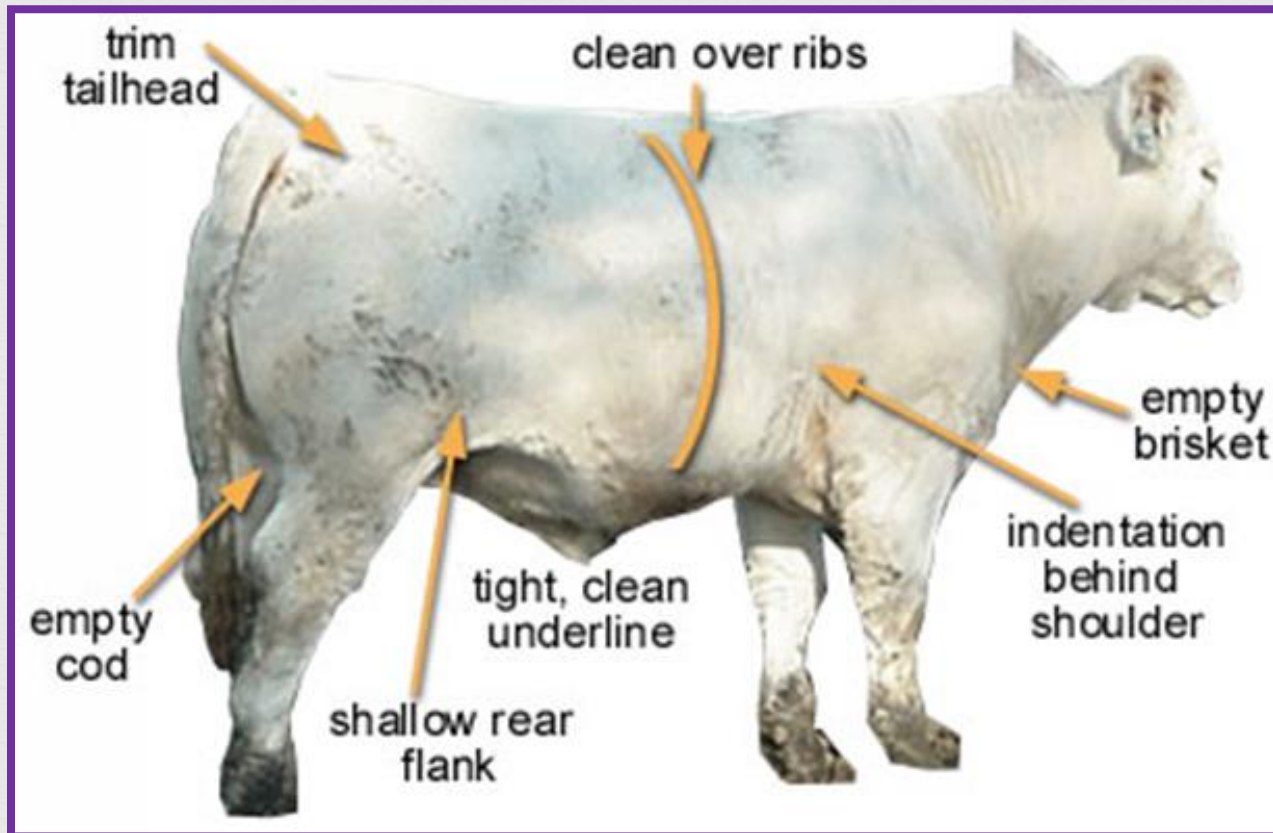
## Too Fat



# Judging Market Steers



## Not Enough Fat



# Judging Market Steers



**Correct Finish**



Full brisket indicates  
correct amount of finish

**Not Enough Finish**



Empty brisket indicates  
lack of finish



# Judging Market Steers



**Correct Finish**



Cod fill indicates correct amount of finish

**Excess Finish**



Fat around tailhead indicates too much finish

# Judging Market Steers



## ☞ Evaluating Growth Capacity

☞ Steers are sold by the pound

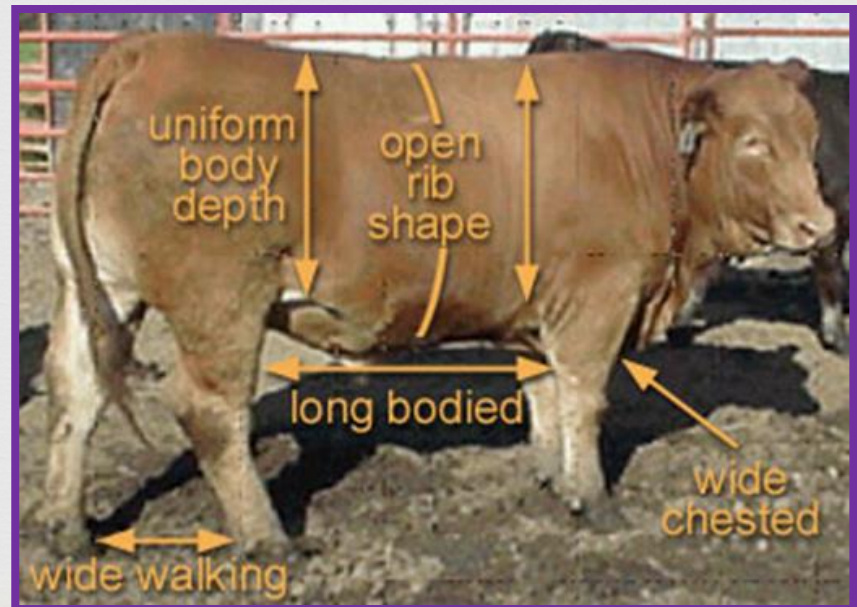
☞ Important to maximize feeding capacity

☞ Look for good:

☞ Body Width

☞ Body Depth

☞ Body length



# Judging Market Steers



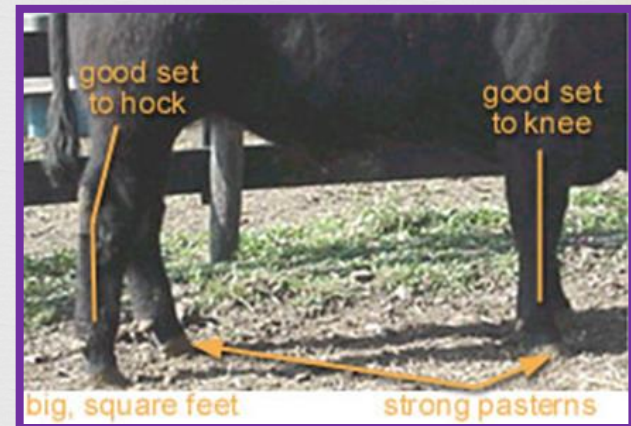
## ❧ Evaluating Soundness & Structural Correctness

### ❧ Lack of soundness:

- ❧ Limits trips to feed & water
- ❧ Decreases growth

### ❧ Sound & structurally correct steers will have:

- ❧ Flexible, clean & flat joints
- ❧ Long powerful strides
- ❧ Strong pasterns
- ❧ Good set to hocks & knees
- ❧ Big feet that sit flatly on the ground

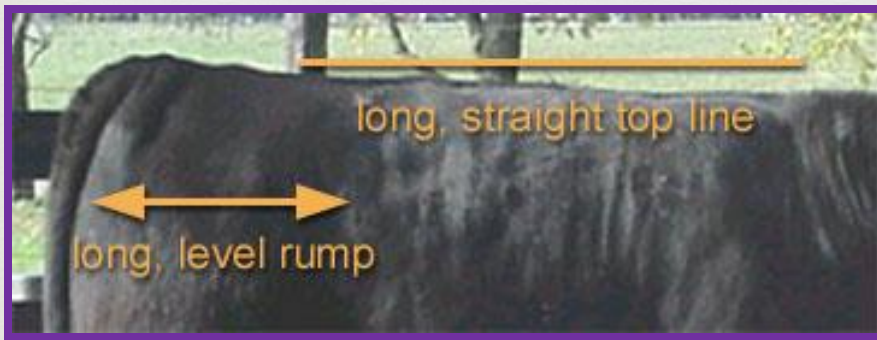




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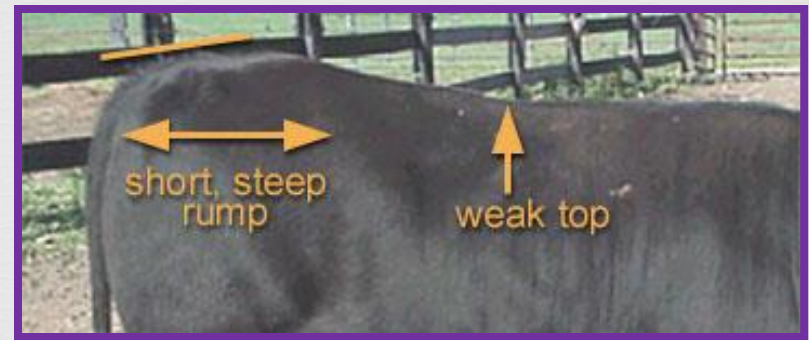


**Correct Structure**



Long and straight top line, with a long and level rump

**Poor Structure**



Weak topped, with a short and steep rump

# Judging Market Steers



## œ Evaluating Balance

œ Balance is having correct portions of:

œ Width

œ Depth

œ Length

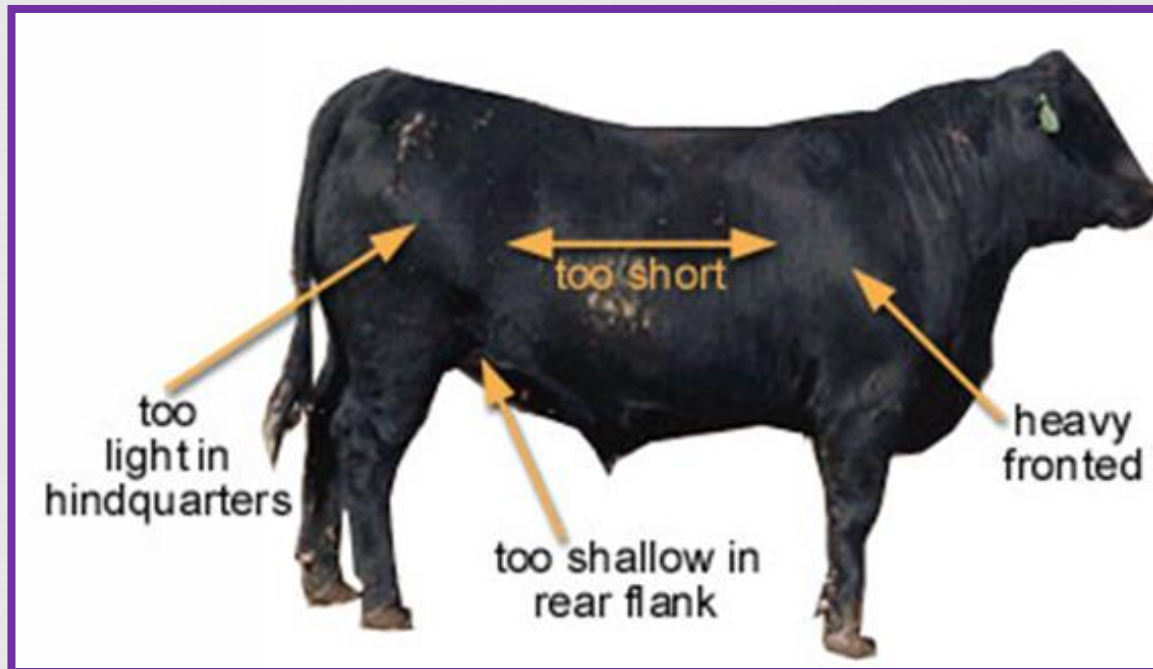
œ Equal proportions that blend together



# Judging Market Steers



## Poorly Balanced





# Test Your Skills



Place this Class of Market Steers



# Official Placing



Official Placing: 2 - 4 - 3 - 1

Cuts: 3 - 5 - 6

1<sup>st</sup>



2<sup>nd</sup>



3<sup>rd</sup>



4<sup>th</sup>

