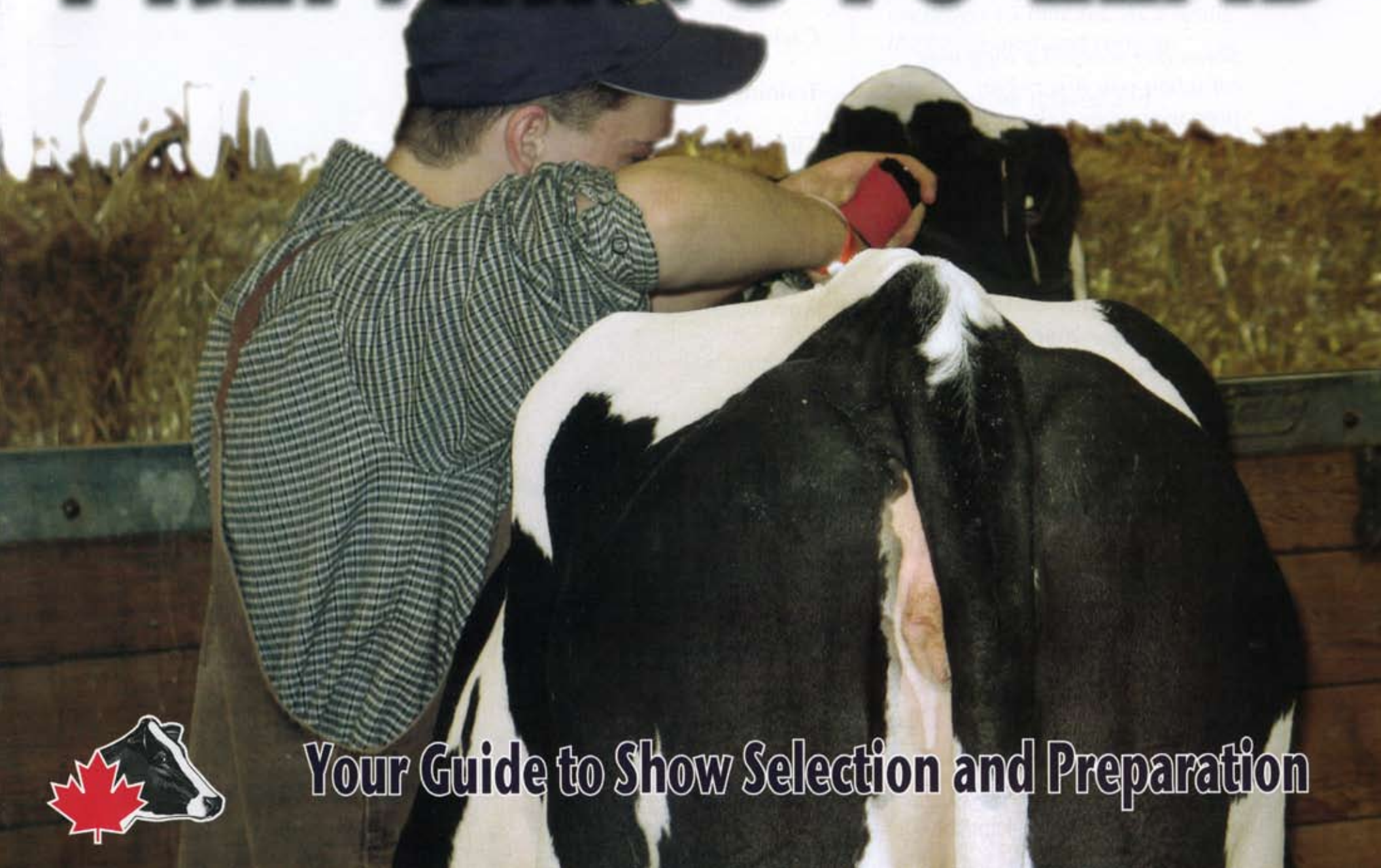


PREPARING TO LEAD



Your Guide to Show Selection and Preparation

PREPARING TO LEAD

*Show day seemed a long way off when you first began preparing your calf for the big event. Time and effort, these past months, has produced a contented, but alert animal ready to take on the competition. Feel relaxed and confident as you lead your calf into the ring—after all, you **are** prepared.*

This booklet was completed well prior to national legislation requiring all animals be tagged for national health and movement off-farm. All Canadian animals must now be officially tagged to qualify for Holstein Canada registration, shows, and HACCP programs.

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Other show-related manuals are available in English, French, and Spanish. A DVD to complement these manuals may be ordered. International formats: NTSC and PAL.

Selecting Your Calf

The first thing to do is choose a calf that best suits you. Consider both the age of the animal and your size before making the final selection—remember, the show is six or seven months away.

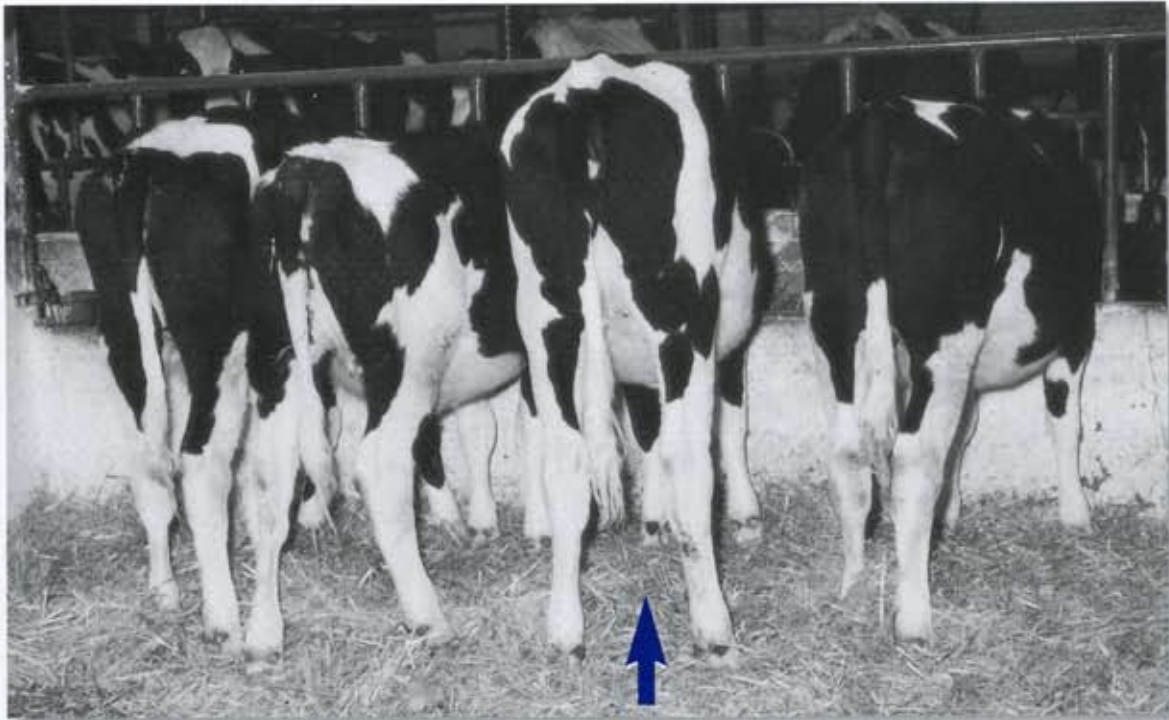
From this pen of calves, eligible for the same age class, select a calf that

- ✓ is **stylish** with good head carriage and balance of parts
- ✓ exhibits **dairy character**, a **long neck**, and flat bone
- ✓ walks freely on **good legs** with

correct set, good depth of heel, and strength of pastern

- ✓ has a strong, well-blended shoulder
- ✓ is **well grown** for its age
- ✓ has deep, open rib
- ✓ has a long, wide rump with correct slope from hooks to pins
- ✓ shows a strong, level topline
- ✓ is slightly taller at the front end, and walks uphill

Avoid over-conditioned or short heifers that lack style.

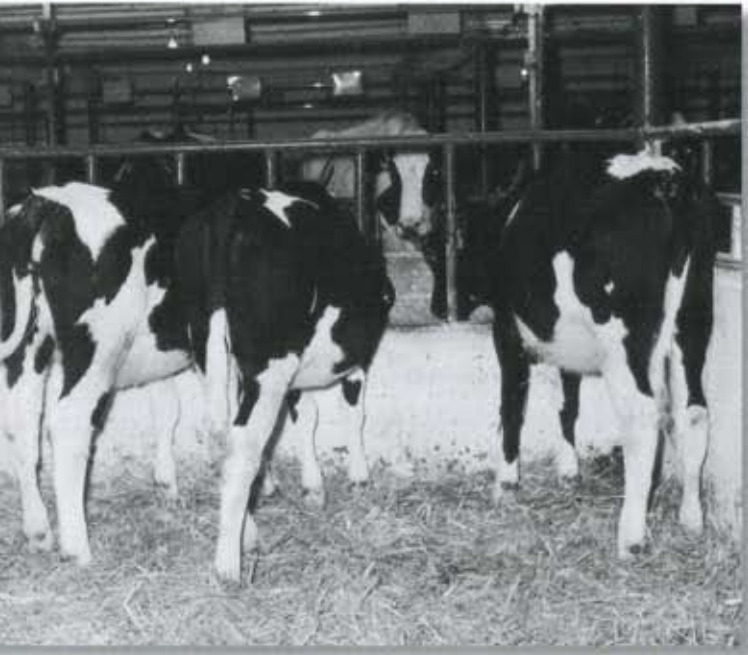


The best show-type individual is selected from this group of calves eligible for the same age class.



This calf displays a well-blended shoulder, wide rump and good head carriage.

Caring for Your Calf



Calves are grouped according to size in a clean, dry bedding pen.

Group your heifers according to size and condition. You may have to change your heifer's grouping as it grows. Keeping it competitive and hungry for food helps it to keep growing.

Your calf should have fresh air and freedom to move. Regular exercise is very important.

Keep the calf's pen clean and avoid wet, soft bedding packs.

2

Practise good husbandry. Always provide

fresh water and feed from a clean manger or eating area.

Feed to maintain growth, but constantly monitor the calf's weight so it doesn't become over-conditioned, too fat, or too thin.

The conditioning of a calf can be controlled by monitoring its grain/energy intake (e.g. corn, barley, protein supplement). However, avoid sudden changes to the diet and feeding times.

For a *shallow bodied* heifer, provide lots of good quality grass hay.

Early-cut grass hay is superior to alfalfa. Avoid excessive amounts of lush pasture, green feed, and silage as these pass through the system too quickly.

Feed limited amounts of beet pulp at home to accustom your calf to the taste.

For an extremely *deep-bellied* heifer, *regulate* the water intake to twice a day. While a calf requires enough water to maintain itself, it shouldn't have free access to a water bowl.



This calf is fed grass hay from a clean manger.

Training Your Calf

Every calf should be trained to lead at a very early age.

After selecting your calf, dedicate some time each week to training. Practice makes perfect.

Use a soft rope halter, when starting, until the animal follows freely without tugging.

Always treat the animal kindly and



This calf is tied with a soft rope halter at a comfortable level. The slip knot can be easily undone, and is at a different place than the pressure point where it's tied. The calf cannot jump over the partition.

gently, and reward good behaviour by petting or stroking.

Begin training by tying the calf's head at normal head carriage for approximately 20 minutes daily. Use a soft rope halter with about 6-8 inches of rope that won't tighten under the jaw. Use a slip knot that can be easily undone, and tie the knot at a different place than the pressure point where it's tied.

Secure the calf to something solid that it can't jump over, and stand it on a soft pack to avoid injury. Stay close to the calf for the first few times it's tied to prevent accidents.

Once the animal can be controlled on the walk, introduce a leather halter and chain lead strap.

Aim to train the calf daily as show day approaches.

Teach it to walk at a show ring pace with desirable head carriage.

Accustom your animal to sudden noises and distractions.

Have someone approach and touch the calf in the same manner as a judge. By feeling the hide and walking around the

calf, it shouldn't shy as easily.

Train the animal to respond quickly to halter commands, fitting any show ring situation. You don't want to be fussing with it on show day.



Displaying good head carriage, this calf has been trained to lead at a show ring pace. It is accustomed to noises and doesn't shy when approached.

Clipping at Home

Clipping is an art and begins well before show day.

Tie your calf at a natural, comfortable level—basically the same height it will show at.



The calf is tied at a comfortable level for clipping.

Six weeks before show day, begin preparing your calf to be *show-ready*.

By brushing hair forward on the topline, it will become trained to stand up.

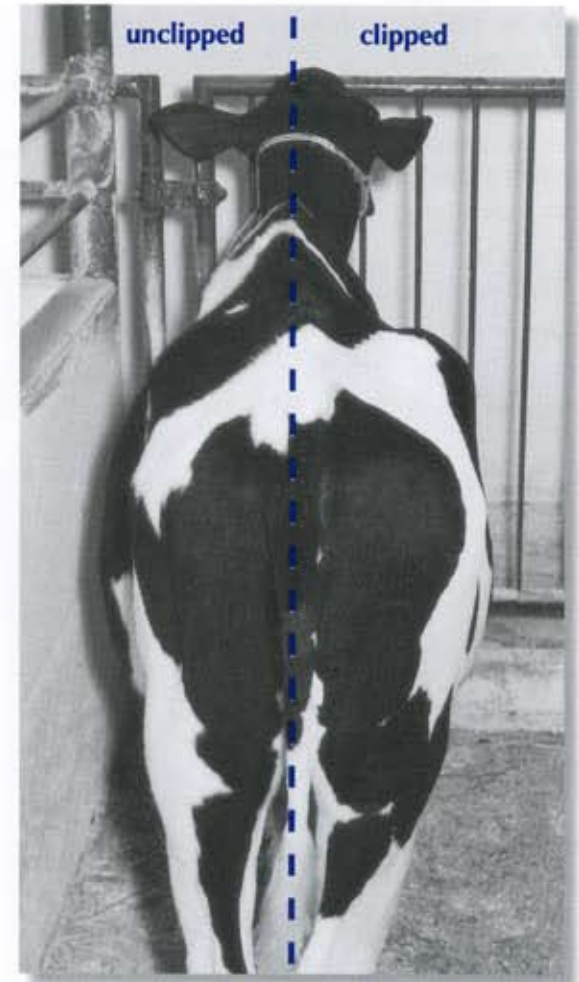


This fitter clips the same way with the hair.

On your clean calf, clip the head, neck, brisket, front and rear legs. You could also use special plucking blades to clip the body.



Note the special plucking blades on the right, compared to the regular clipping blades on the left.



Compare the clipped right side to the unclipped left side.

Caring for Feet

Hoof and foot care are often overlooked. Proper maintenance and trimming has a lasting influence on the animal's mobility and longevity.

Trimming should be done six weeks before the show.

A professional hoof trimmer provides a good service in preventative medicine.

His tools include:

- 2-inch chisel with T-bar
- hoof knife
- 1-inch chisel
- a rubber mallet or hammer



Tools used for trimming feet include (bottom to top) a 2-inch chisel with T-bar; hoof knife; 1-inch chisel and hammer.

Taking small chunks at a time, the front hoof is rounded off with a chisel. A little is also taken off the inside of the toes.

The trimmer levels the underside of the hoof.



The front hoof is rounded off by carefully removing small chunks at a time.

Trimming makes a big difference. On the untrimmed right foot, the calf toes out. On the trimmed left foot, the weight is more evenly distributed, allowing the calf to stand more correctly.



Transporting Your Calf

Arrange for transportation well in advance.

A gooseneck trailer is an ideal way to transport an animal.

Spread some sand on the floor for traction and shavings to keep the floor and animal clean.

It's always a good idea to have another person around to help with the loading and unloading.



Sand was spread on the floor before two people assist in loading this calf onto a gooseneck trailer.

If tied, provide about 12 inches of slack for each animal, and have the head at a comfortable level. If loose, divide according to size in pens.

Check the animal periodically while in transit. Long hauls require stops to feed and water.

Always check and double-check that the door is locked securely.

If crossing borders, ensure that registration and health papers accompany the animal.

Give the animal a bit of slack when it's coming off the trailer—it likes to see where it's headed.



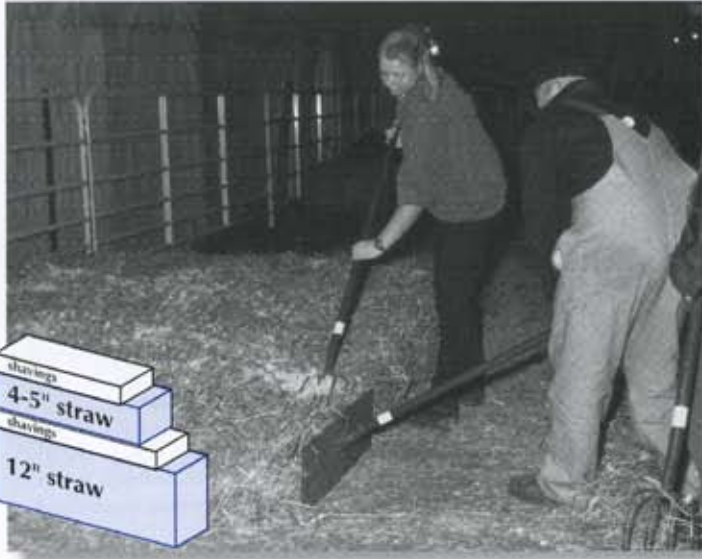
This calf is tied at a comfortable level in the trailer.



Coming off the trailer, the animal is given a little slack as it likes to see where it's going.

Arriving at the Show

If convenient, have the bedding ready before your cattle arrive at the show.



This well-prepared bed is packed down with a fork and edged with a strawboard.

To make a bedding pack about seven to eight feet in length:

1. Level the ground with a shovel.
2. Shake and pack about 12 inches of straw, leaving no chunks.
3. Distribute and pack shavings so they'll filter through and allow some absorbency; this also binds the straw together.
4. Put down a second layer of straw, and pack it down.
5. Work in another layer of shavings.
6. Edge with a fork and push in any loose straw.

7. Level the edges with a strawboard, and use a fork to pack down the edges.

Make your animal comfortable, and accustom it to show surroundings as quickly as possible.

Tie calves approximately three feet apart.

A rope halter or neck chain with a two-way tie works best for tying your calf at the show. Give the rope about 18-24 inches of play.



This Jersey calf is fed hay at the show.



The Holstein is tied by a neck chain with a two-way tie. The Jersey has a rope halter.

When you arrive at the show ...

- Give the calf hay.
- Follow with water every 8 to 12 hours. It may need time to adjust to the taste difference. Use a pail or bucket and hose for watering to prevent the spread of disease.
- Feed and water at normal, regular intervals.
- Allow time for rest.

Washing Your Calf

Always wash your animal on a surface with good footing. If needed, spread some sand on the ground or floor to prevent slipping.

Wash your calf several times at home, and treat it for lice, mange, scale, and scab. Regular washings condition the calf to be relaxed when sprayed with water at the show.

Tie the calf fairly tightly at a comfortable level so it doesn't *dance around*.

Use a nylon wash halter, but not the same one as used to tie the animal in the row.

Your washing supplies include:

- a pail
- soft animal soap, like *Orvus*
- liquid laundry detergent, e.g. *Wisk*, or dish detergent like *Sunlight*
- stiff bristled brush
- medium bristled brush
- soft bristled brush
- wire brush for hooves
- flexible hose with a nozzle

Washing supplies include (l to r) a flexible hose with nozzle; wire brush for hooves; soft bristled brush; medium bristled brush; stiff bristled brush; liquid laundry detergent; soft animal soap and a pail.



On good footing, this calf is soaked all over. The ears are protected to prevent water from entering which could cause them to hang limp.

Washing your animal is hard work, but very important.

1. Soak the calf all over. It's important to cover each ear with your hand. This prevents water from entering the ears which could cause them to hang limp.
2. When getting underneath and wetting the belly, keep one hand on the calf. Not only does this steady it, but it knows where you are.
3. Apply soap or shampoo directly onto the calf. Brush it in, or work from a pail of soapy water.
4. Use a stiff wash brush to scrub the animal thoroughly including the brisket, front legs, and all the way under the belly.
5. Use a wire brush to clean the feet, staying below the hoof hairline.



Orvus is applied to the calf before it's soaked all over. One person works from a pail of soapy water.



Tied at a comfortable level, all soap is rinsed from the calf's body. Note that one hand steadies the calf.

6. Because soap left in the hair causes flaking and dullness, rinse the entire animal thoroughly.
7. Remove excess water from the hair with a soft brush.
8. Use a soft cloth to clean all dirt and wax from the inside of ears.
9. Blanket the animal long enough to warm it up if the area is cold, damp or drafty.
10. Spot wash if the animal gets dirty.



A soft cloth is used to clean all dirt and wax from the inside of the ear. A nylon wash halter, different from the one used in the row, is used when washing the calf.

Clipping at the Show

Just a day or two before the show, begin the final clip job on your clean, dry calf.

Tie your calf at a natural, comfortable level—basically the same height it will show at.



The calf's head is tied at a comfortable level for clipping.

Before beginning, stand back and take a good look, analyzing any faults that can be corrected through clipping.

Equipment used by an advanced clipper include:

- soft, long-bristled brush
- small topline brush
- small rechargeable clippers
- powerful hair dryer
- three-in-one clipper oil
- large animal clippers

Clippers with sharp, normal *Stewart* blades, are used for the head and neck, tail, feet and legs, and for blending.

Clippers with special *Aesculap* plucking blades, leave the hair longer, and are used on the remainder of the body.

Start at the back of the calf. Clip the tail from approximately two hand lengths above the tailbone. Clip all around to the base of the tailhead.



Equipment used by an advanced clipper includes (l to r) soft, long-bristled brush; small topline brush; rechargeable clippers; powerful hair blower; large animal clippers with Aesculap plucking blades; three-in-one clipper oil; large animal clippers with normal Stewart blades.



The tail is clipped from approximately two hand lengths above the tailbone.

Leave the hairs on the end of the tailhead as this adds to the calf's length and angularity.



The tail is clipped all around to the base of the tailhead.

When clipping rear legs, for safety's sake, keep one hand on the calf to steady it.



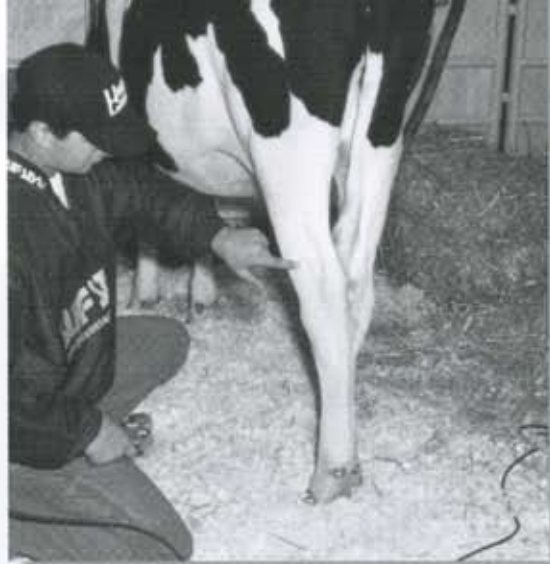
This fitter gently clips the hind leg, and keeps one hand on the calf to steady it.

Clipping against the hair, take all the hair off up to the vein in the leg. Make sure all hair from the hocks down, is taken off—including around the dew claws.

All hair on the inside of the legs is also trimmed.

If a calf has extra set to its rear legs, and you want them to appear straighter, leave and blend hair on the front of the legs.

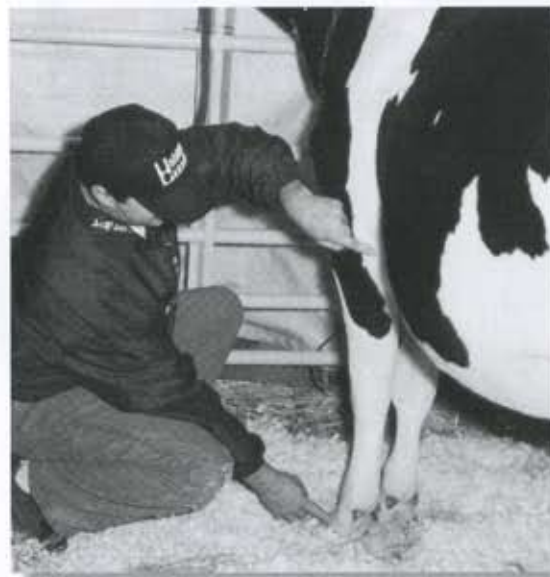
Blend the hair on the lower thigh where



On the rear leg, all hair is clipped off up to the vein, and removed on the inside of each leg.

it goes from long to short hair.

On front legs, clip all the hair inside and outside from the hoof to the elbow. This exposes any veins, and adds to the animal's dairyness and refinement.



All hair is clipped, on the outside and inside, from the hoof to elbow.

All hair between the front legs to the brisket is clipped.

Clip from the point of front leg up to the point of shoulder.

It's a good idea to have someone assist by holding the head. To project dairy quality and refinement, all hair on the neck and head is clipped, including the ears and muzzle.

EZE-IR tags must not be removed.

Clip from the point of shoulder to the top of the shoulder blade.

To avoid making a definite line, a good clipping tip is to place one finger under the right corner of the blades to maintain the correct angle.

Continue clipping up to the shoulder, but don't round it off.



An imaginary line from the point of shoulder to the top of the shoulder blade provides a reference point for the clipper.

Transporting Yearlings

By leaving a little bit of hair on the top of the neck, the neck blends naturally into the shoulder.



A little hair is left on the top of the neck to naturally blend the shoulder into the neck.

Blend the hair on the shoulder into the front legs by running the clippers downwards with the hair.

In the rib section, also blend the hair by running the clippers downwards with the hair. If available, use plucking blades to clip against the hair with an upwards motion. Cut straight lines without leaving streaks.

Most calves need a little bit of hair left in the heart and chest areas. If a calf is a



The clippers are run downwards on the rib section.

little weak in the heart region, the hair is brushed back and only the ends are taken off.



The hairs are brushed back and only the ends are taken off on this calf displaying a little weakness in the heart region.

Clip the body all over. Working backwards, clip over the thurls and pins to give a wider, cleaner look.

Now that the rest of the calf has been clipped, move to the topline.

Use a brush and blower, to pull the hair up from the body.



A brush and blower are used to stand the hair on the topline. Notice the proper blower angle.

Now is the time to slowly pare down the hair on the topline to make the calf look angular.



To make this calf look angular, the fitter pares down the hair on the topline. He uses his free hand as a guide.

Using the clippers, start in the middle of the loin and clip backwards to form a wedge.

With one finger under the clipper blades to level them, and to keep them on the proper angle (parallel to the bone), clip the standing hair.

To clip the top of the shoulder, hold the clippers at an angle and trim the standing hair. This gives the shoulder a wedgy, sharp appearance.



To give the calf an angular appearance, hair is blended from the top of the shoulder into the neck.

With the sides trimmed, level the topline.

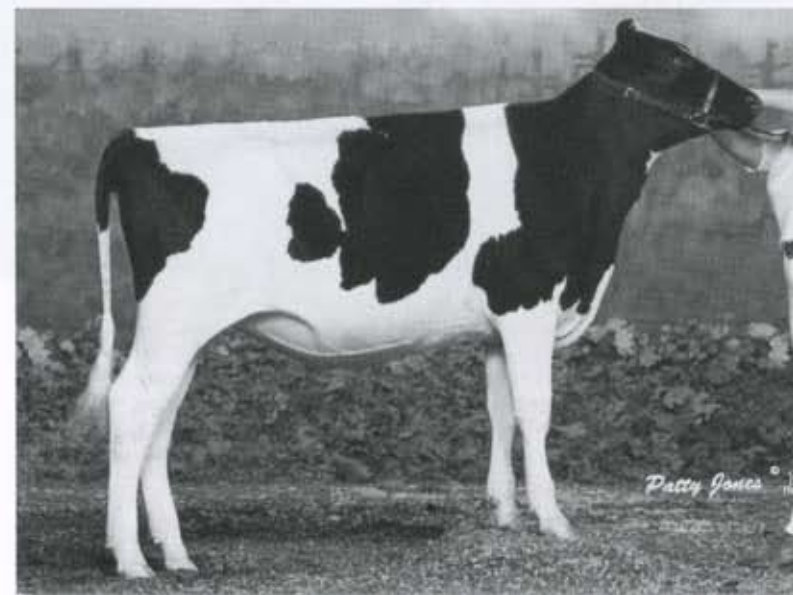
Take any extra hair off by holding the clippers *lightly* in your fingers. Use your free hand as a guide, and to balance the clippers.

Every calf is different, but by taking the hair close to the bone in high spots, and leaving hair in low spots, the topline can be made to look completely level.

Using both hands on the clippers, with one finger beneath the blades, blend the topline into the body. If you're using plucking blades, an upwards motion can be used.



Using the clippers, the body is blended into the topline.

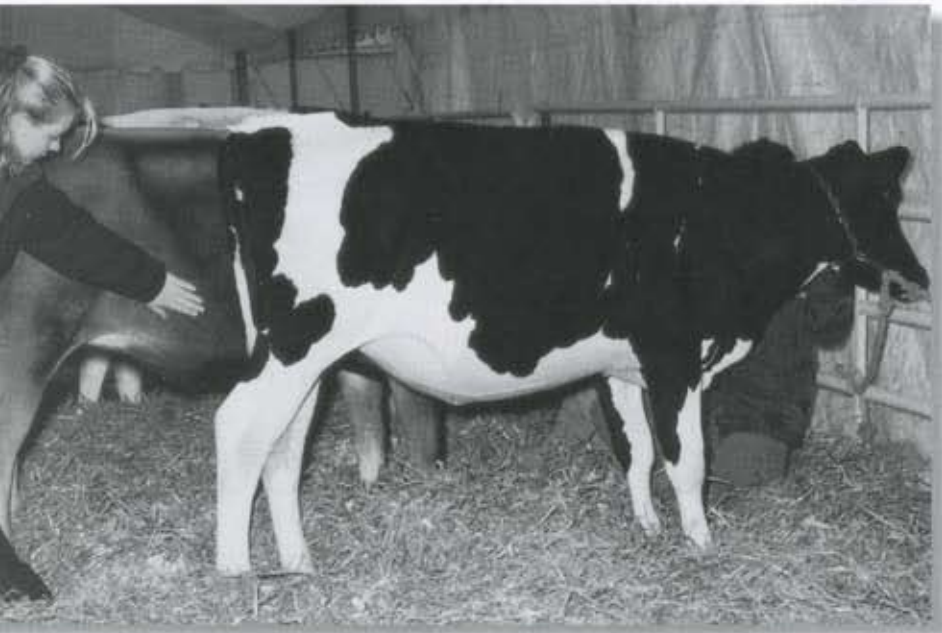


Good clipping takes hours and hours of practise. To achieve this picture-perfect product, all parts must blend into each other. No noticeable marks are left on the calf after clipping.

Filling Your Calf

The filling process is often overlooked and comes from practising at shows.

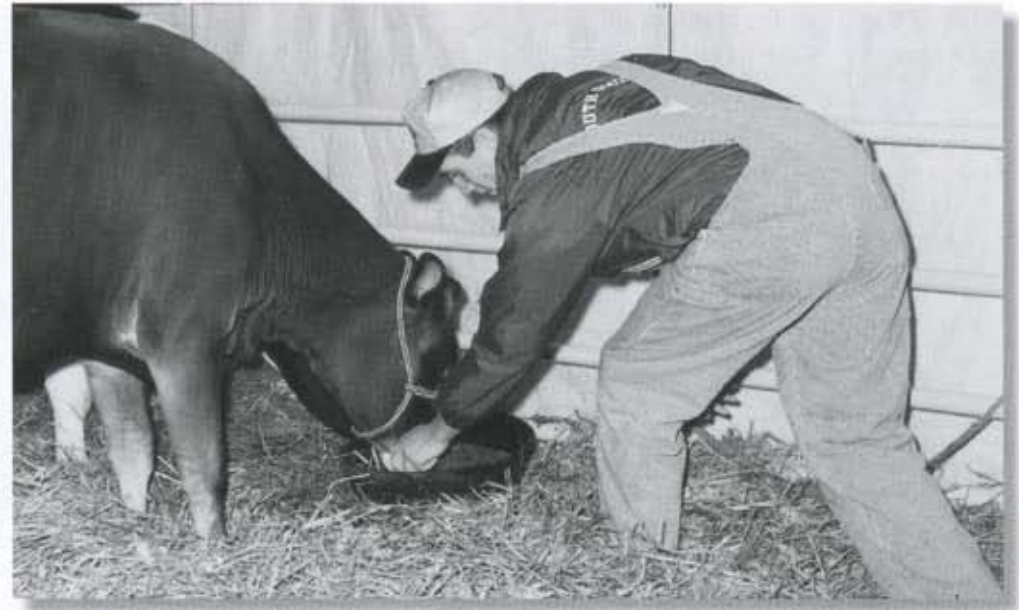
Study your animal and decide how much fill it needs on show day.



This Holstein is extremely deep ribbed and requires a late fill. The Jersey is more shallow and needs an early fill.

Three different kinds of hay are used to fill your calf. These include:

1. 1st-cut coarse hay
2. 1st-cut finer, grassy hay
3. 2nd-cut legume type hay



This Jersey gets an early fill of beet pulp.

Give the Jersey, needing an early fill, some 1st-cut hay and a pail of water early in the morning. Two hours before the show, give it more 1st-cut hay. Follow with 2nd-cut hay, in small amounts, and beet pulp. An hour before the show, finish with at least one pail of water.

Early in the morning, give the Holstein

needing a late fill, coarse 1st-cut hay in small amounts, and about half a pail of water. Approximately one hour ahead of showing, give it a little beet pulp. About 15 minutes prior to entering the ring, offer the calf a pail of water.

Add small amounts of grain when the calf tires of beet pulp. A word of caution—too much grain could make the calf sick.

Organizing Your Show Equipment

If well cared for, show equipment will carry you through many show seasons.

A show box, appropriate in size to the number of animals shown, is convenient to store equipment at the show. It also helps to keep your area of the barn neat and tidy.

Adopt a colour, and paint all equipment with a lead-free paint.

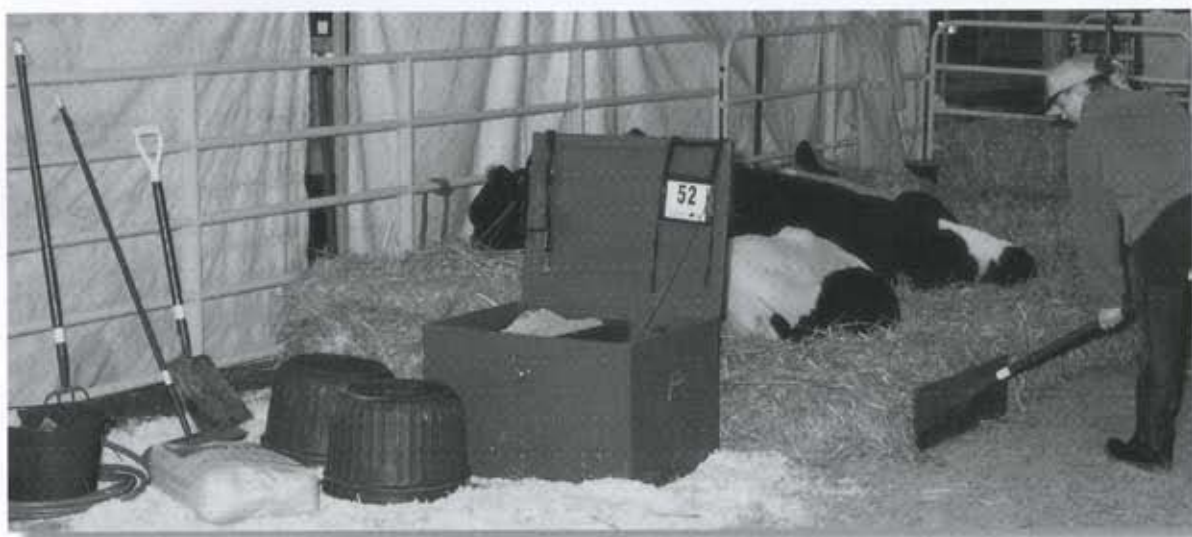
Clean, repair and take inventory of your equipment after each use. Replace needed supplies such as soap, spray, etc. to be ready for the next show.

At the end of the year, all equipment should be cleaned, painted, and stored.

Clean your show halters after every show. By using saddle soap or leather preservative, you'll keep your halters in top condition for many, many years.

Take good care of your clippers.

- Clean hair and dust from blades, air screens, and oil fixtures with a brush or air hose after each use.
- Keep blades sharp.
- Lubricate blades when necessary to reduce stress on the clipper motor, blades, and to prevent overheating.
- Store clippers in a separate container to avoid breaking blades or damaging cords.



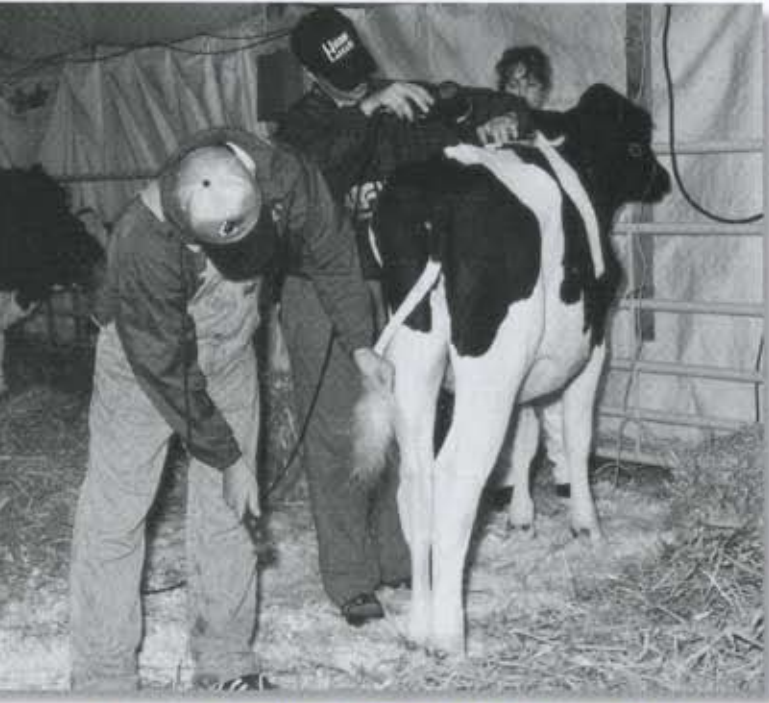
This showperson's exhibit is neat and well organized.

Show Equipment Checklist

- strawboard
- broom
- shovel
- 5-tine fork
- 3-tine fork
- rake
- hose for washing, 4-6 metres, with nozzle
- nylon halter or chain for washing
- soft animal soap or liquid detergent
- basic tool set (hammer, wrench, vice-grips, screwdriver, nails)
- signs and cable to hang signs
- fan
- thermometer
- fly spray
- clippers, blades, oil
- scissors
- hairspray, *Clear and Black Magic*
- dressing oil
- powder
- powerful hair blower with narrow nozzle
- water pails
- feed buckets
- wash pails
- wash brushes
- grooming brushes and hair brush
- neck chains and two-way ties
- show halters
- extra rope halters
- extension cords
- registration and health papers

Last-Minute Preparation

Teamwork is especially important when readying your calf for the ring.



Teamwork is important during the last few minutes before entering the ring. The switch is fluffed and the hair is stood on the topline.

Blow the hair up on the topline. If a blower isn't available, brush in spray deodorant to stand the hair, and to add body.

A hairspray-type product, like *Clear* or *Black Magic*, can be used to set the hair. But, it must be blown in so the set looks natural. (Note that this product should be used with caution, as recommended.)



Stray hairs are trimmed to level the topline.

Trim stray hairs with small rechargeable *Oster* trimmers, or offset scissors.

A soft, long-bristled brush is used to rid the body of loose hair.

Put powder on the hocks to whiten and cover stains. Also, do the front knees.

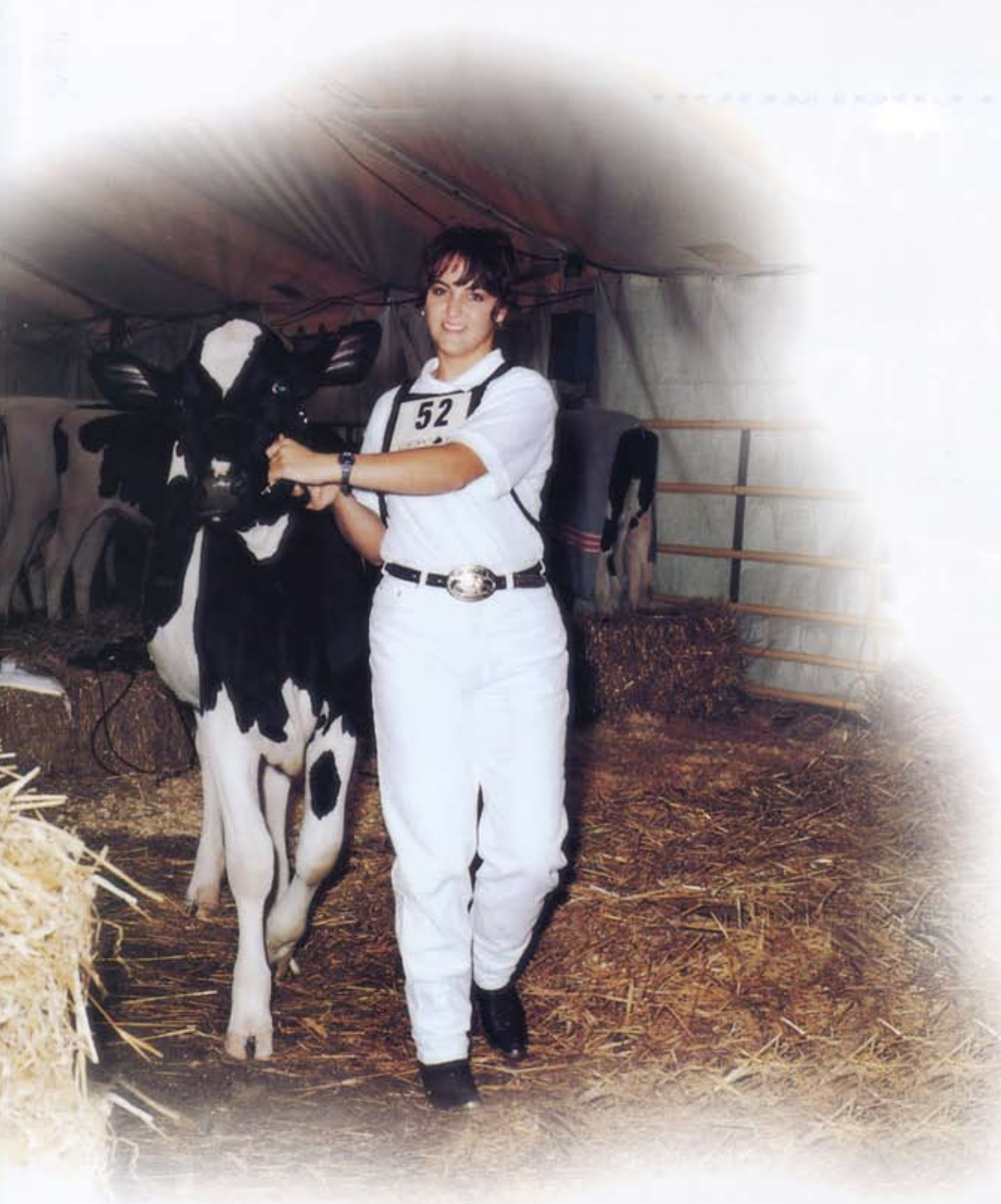
Put a small amount of baby oil on a cloth, and rub very lightly over the black spots.

Wipe the nose, check that the leather halter fits properly, and fluff out the switch.

Spray lightly with fly spray, if needed.



Last-minute preparation supplies include (l to r) a leather show halter; soft, long-bristled brush; baby powder; Black and Clear Magic; fly spray; baby oil and cloth; (front) offset scissors; Oster trimmers; small topline brush and hair blower.



Last-minute grooming hasn't exceeded 15 minutes. As a result, the calf is alert and content.

*And, you are relaxed and confident to lead your calf into the ring—after all, you **are** prepared.*

Thanks to the crew...

Rob Eby
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Charlotte Medwell
Mike West
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George Van Kampen
Brian Carscadden

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