



ON WITH THE SHOW

A judging handbook



Holstein Canada continues to support Showing and Judging across Canada. Our objective is to train judges who are ambassadors and positive additions to the show ring, regardless of which show, breed or showmanship class they are judging. It is our pleasure to publish this reference manual based on the Holstein National Judging Program to help you perfect your judging skills.

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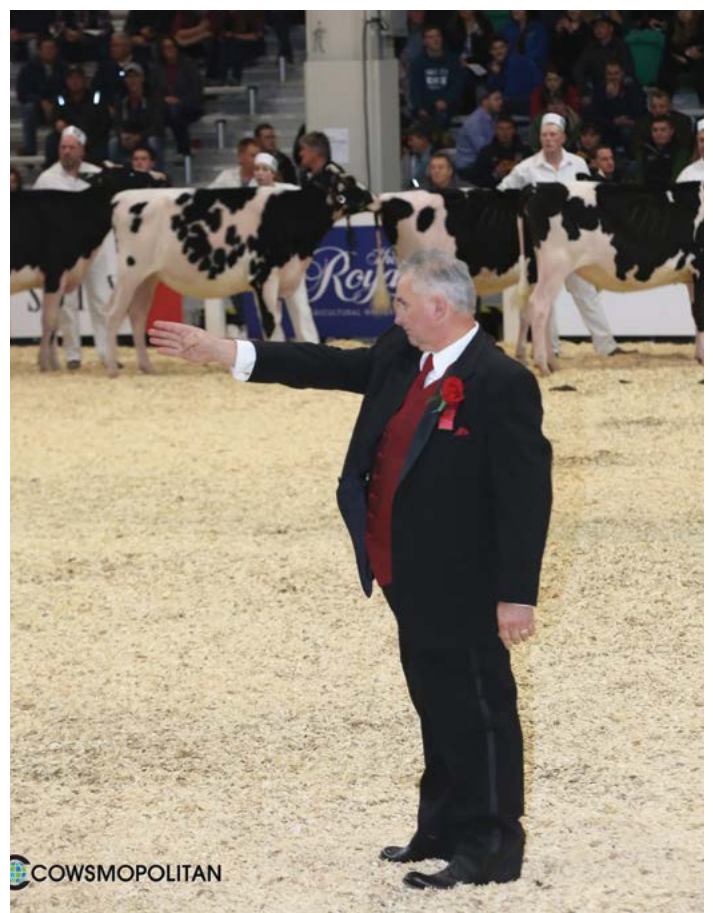
CHAPTER ONE

You Be the Judge

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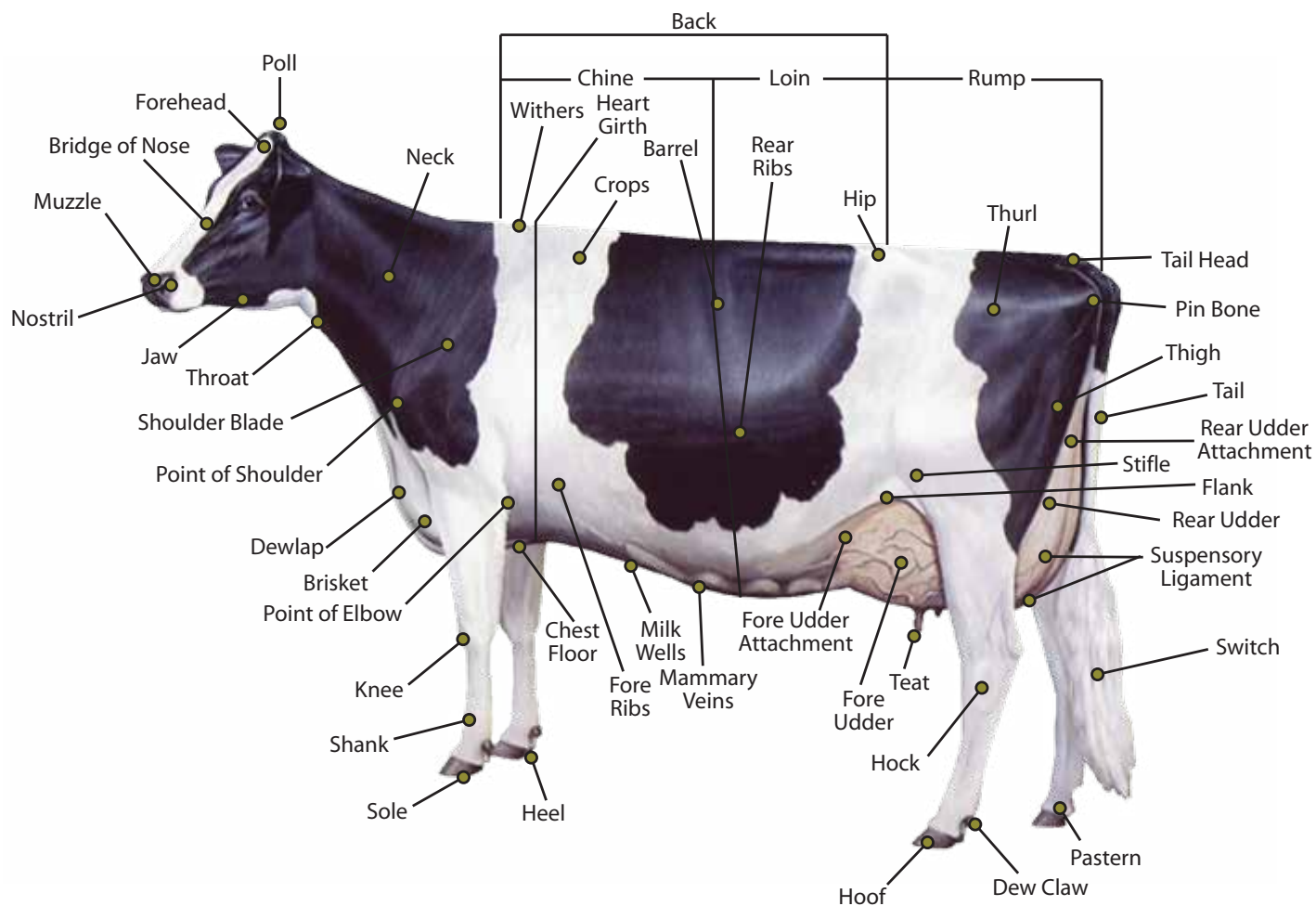
Whether you are a 4-H member, a progressive milk producer or an official judge, at some point you will be assessing and comparing one animal to another, either in your barn or at a show. And regardless of the number – 4, 10 or 20 – you will need to sort the desirable animals from the less desirable animals.

At that time... you will be the judge!



>> Parts of the True Type Dairy Cow

Before you begin assessing and comparing animals, you must know the parts of the true type cow.



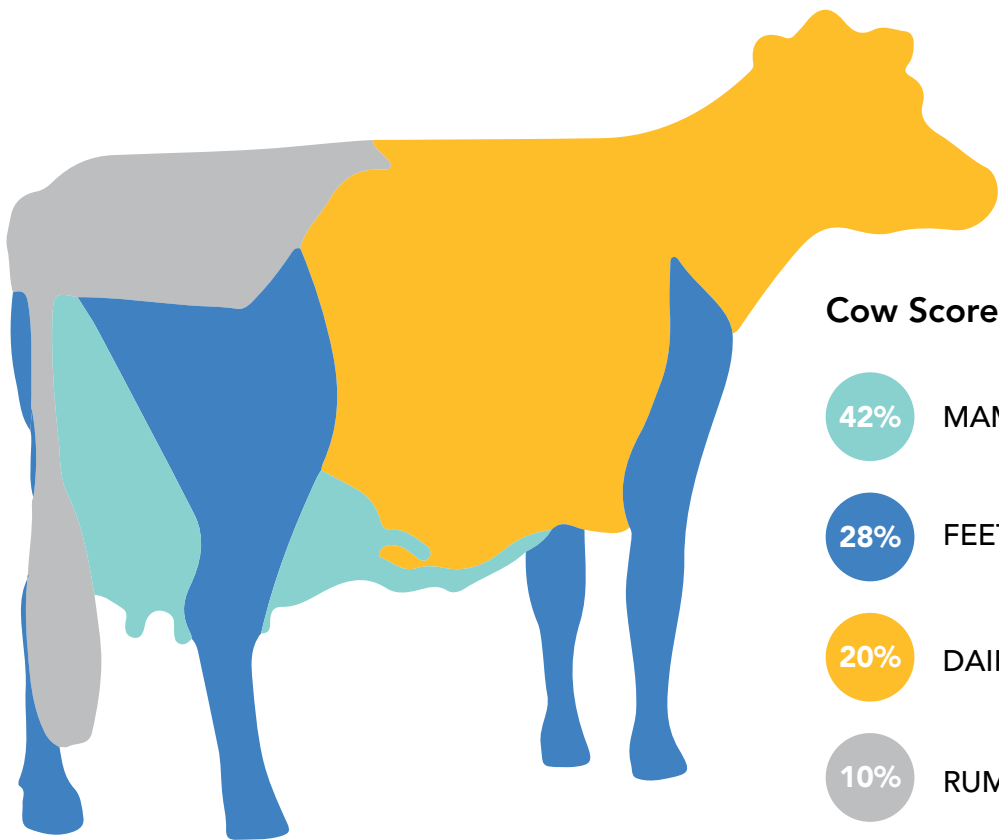
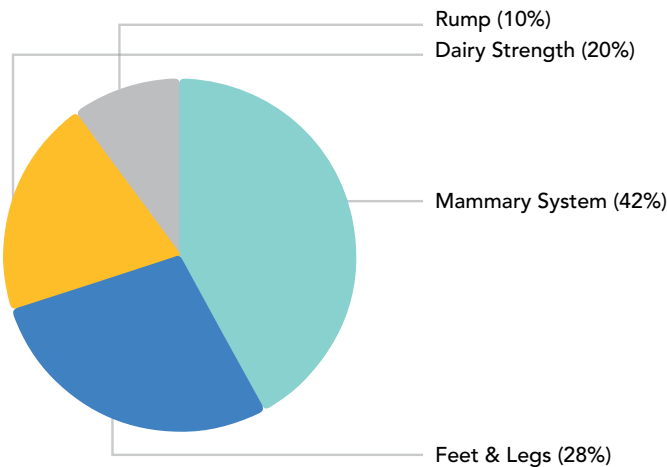
>> **Relative Emphasis for Cows**

In Canada, both the judging and classification programs use the Holstein Cow Score Card as a guide. While classification is the evaluation of each animal individually compared to the true type, judging is the comparing of each animal to others.

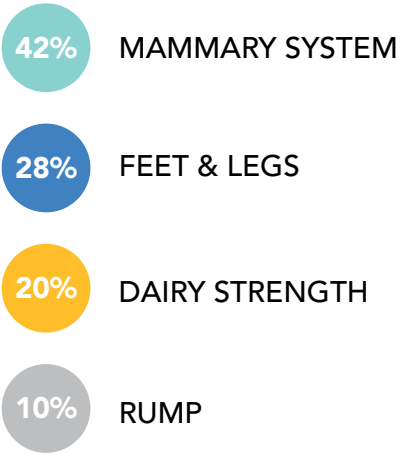
The relative emphasis placed on individual parts is indicated in the chart. While used as a guide, numerical points are not assigned in judging.

Structural Defects and Discriminations

Structural Defect	Show Ring Discrimination
Abnormal Claw	Serious
Advanced Anus	Serious
Crampy	Serious
High Tailhead	Slight
Recessed or Advanced Tailhead	Slight
Undesirable Head	Moderate
Webbed Teat	Serious



Cow Scorecard



>> Comparing the Individual Parts of the Cow

The individual parts of some sample cows are presented on the following four pages. Also, a comparison of desirable and undesirable characteristics of other females is included.

Cow A has a wide muzzle, displays an ideal width of chest and exhibits correct structure through her front legs suggesting excellent freedom of movement. She also shows an abundance of dairy character through the front end and an exceptional spring of rib.

Cow B displays ideal depth and openness of both fore and rear rib. Dairyiness through the head and neck, as well as an adequate length of body are apparent. Observe the overall length and balance of the cow. She combines this with a near perfect mammary system and functional feet and legs. She could survive in any type of management system around the world.



This demonstration cow is close to the ideal "true type" Holstein cow.



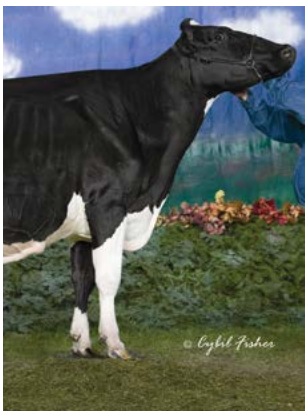
Notice the admirable head on this clean-cut cow. She has a strong jaw and wide muzzle while exhibiting plenty of breed character with a long, lean, dairy neck, clean jowl and throat.



The cow above exhibits more width of chest compared to the cow below.



Note the strong topline on the cow above, particularly the strength of the loin attached wide on the hips. Also view the overall length of rump and the correct positioning of the thurls.



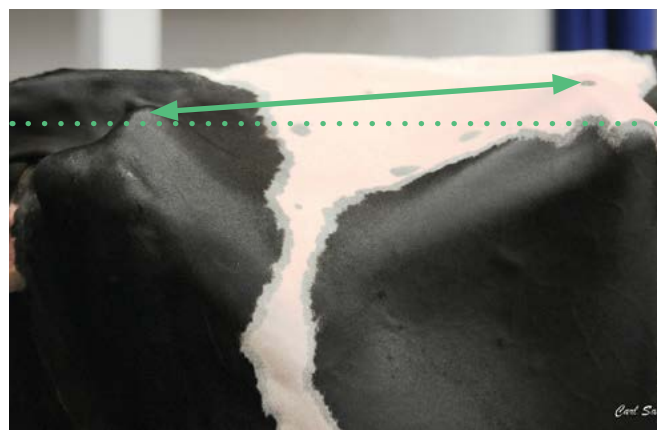
The cow on the left reveals more depth of heart than the cow on the right. Notice how the cow on the left blends more smoothly from her neck into her shoulder, her shoulder into her body, and is fuller in her crops. She also displays more dairy character through the front end with a longer, more slender head and neck, and more depth of fore rib.



This cow displays desired angularity. She possesses clean bone, slender thighs, sharpness at the withers, depth and openness of frame and a pleasing combination of dairyness and strength.



This cow's rump angle clearly shows that she is too high in the pins. She also has an advanced tail head.



This cow shows a desirable rump. She has the ideal slope from hips to pins with a clean, well-defined tailhead setting. Note that she is more refined about the tailhead and is more correct in her rump angle than the cow on the left.



Compare the ideal set of legs on the middle cow (B). She exhibits flat, clean bone in the hock, desirable set or curvature to the legs, strong pasterns and a deep heel. The set of legs on the left cow (A) is too straight, while the cow on the right (C) shows more coarseness in the hocks, too much curvature in her hind legs and weaker pasterns.



This cow shows the ideal rear leg, rear view and demonstrates near ideal locomotion.

Her mammary system displays desirable length, width, capacity and balance with correct teat placement. In addition, the floor of the udder is well above the hocks suggesting added longevity.



This fore udder attachment is more smoothly and firmly attached to the body wall, than the fore udder on the cow to the right.



Poor fore udder attachment

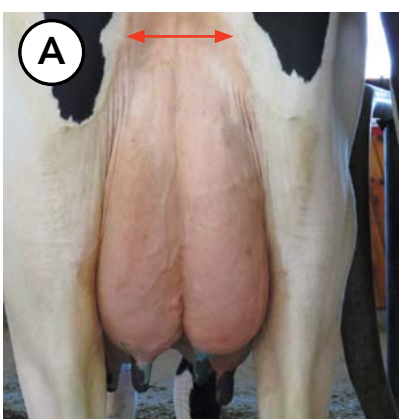


Note the height and width of the rear attachment in this photo. View the strength and definition of the median suspensory ligament with the quarters clearly defined and symmetrical.

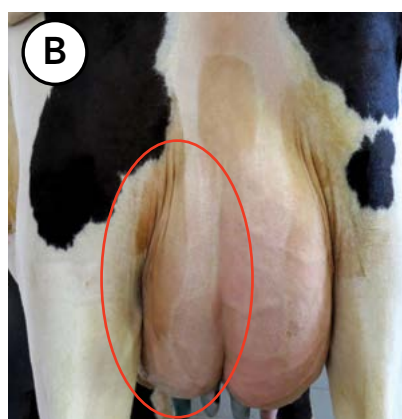


Ideal rear udder. Note the teats, showing desirable size and shape, are positioned under the quarters.

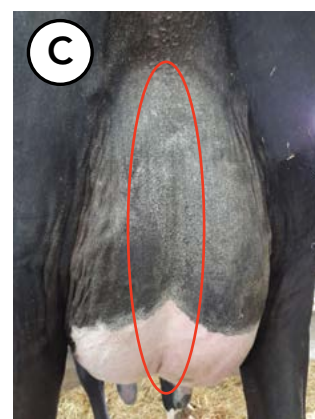
These photos indicate some undesirable rear udder traits. Cow A displays a low, narrow rear udder attachment. Cow B displays an unbalanced rear udder. Cow C lacks definition of the median suspensory ligament.



Narrow rear udder



Unbalanced rear udder

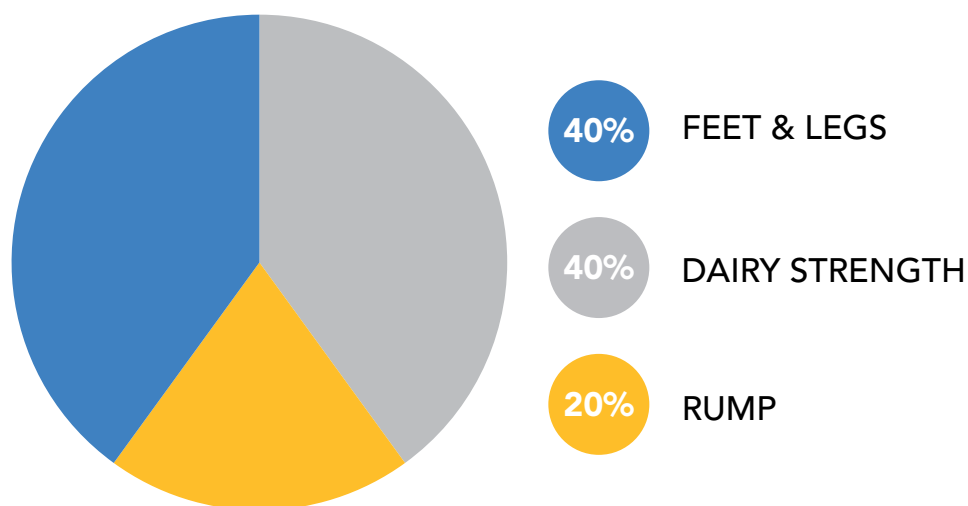


Lacking median suspensory ligament

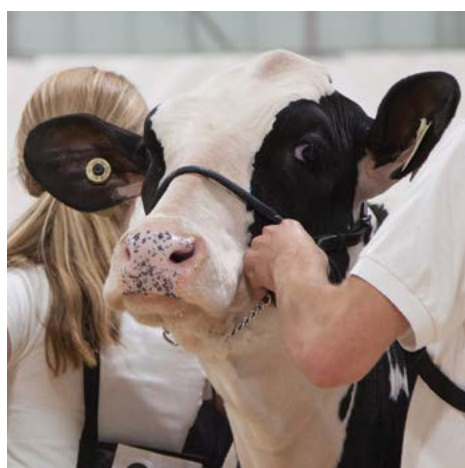
>> Description of Heifer Parts and Relative Emphasis

The relative emphasis for heifers differs from cows. The major emphasis is placed on feet and legs, and dairy strength.

Relative emphasis for calves and heifers:



From the front, notice this heifer's width of muzzle, width of chest, and straightness of front legs.



Observing the head, you will see breed character, strength of jaw and dairyness through the head and throat area.



From the side, you will want to analyze overall length, strength of topline, depth of fore and rear rib, and openness and dairyness of frame.

While judges expect yearlings to be dairy and angular with strength, some body conditioning in preparation for calving should be accepted.



From the rear, notice this animal's flat, clean thighs that will allow room for future udder development. Notice the quality of bone in both the front and rear legs, flat and clean hocks, good width between the hocks, strong pasterns and good depth of heel. Also notice the width of the hips, width and placement of the thurls, sharpness of withers, and overall balanced blending of parts.



From this side view of the rump, recognize the desired slope from hips to pins.



From this view, observe the breed character about the head and neck; a long lean neck; cleanness of throat and brisket; flat, clean bone in leg; overall length and angularity.

>> Preferred Show Ring Procedures



To those looking on, a cattle show looks like an intricate choreographed number—this is not far off! There is a system to judging and the following are the preferred show ring procedures.

View animals from the center of the ring as they enter—ideally from a distance of about five to six metres. It is important to view them from the side. You may also compare three or four animals as they circle the ring. From this vantage, animals can be analyzed for freedom of movement, strength of pastern, balance of parts, loin strength, depth of rib, udder shape and depth, and their overall general appearance.

When viewing individual animals up close, start at the front and move efficiently around the cow assessing the following traits: breed character of the head, width of chest, length of neck, cleanness of front end, depth of body (both fore and rear rib), and strength of topline and loin. Once at the back of the cow, you can begin to analyze the curvature of the

legs, strength of pasterns, bone quality, levelness of udder, strength of fore attachment, length and width of rump, and height and width of rear attachment.

Move to the left side of the animal and observe the fore udder, balance of udder and overall length of the cow.

Viewing from the top, check the sharpness of withers, spring of rib and overall blending of these parts. Cows that are in late lactation and carrying some extra body condition should not be discriminated against.

Closely inspecting the rear udder allows you to examine the strength of both the lateral and median suspensory ligament. Also, pay attention to the shape, size, length and placement of teats.

After you've gone through this procedure with each animal in the class, return to the center of the ring and watch the cows move again. Pull the cows you

Animals should fit the class they are in. While a cow may be a great individual, a two-year-old should not look like an aged cow.

want to observe closer into a lineup, starting with the best ones.

When the cows are in a line, observe the entire group from the rear, up close and from a distance. Then walk around to the front of the animals to view their front ends.

Once you are satisfied with your initial lineup, you may create an altered second line or you may send

your initial group around the ring, head to tail for further analysis before the final lineup.

When all cows are in their final lineup, walk down the rear of the lineup for one final inspection and begin to mentally organize your reasons.

This is also the time to select the best udder of the class and motion, with the sweep of the arm, the completion of the class.



If you feel you've missed a good animal down the line, don't be afraid to move her up during the class. You'll be respected for placing the class correctly even though you missed her initially.

>> Tips For Your Judging Assignment



- ☒ Dress professionally; set an example as a Canadian judge. Men should wear a suit (or sports jacket/pants) and tie. Women should wear a pantsuit, or dress pants and jacket/vest.
- ☒ Be well-rested
- ☒ Obtain the cell phone number of a contact person at the show in case of travel or other problems.
- ☒ Arrive at the show at least 30 minutes prior to the starting time.
- ☒ Discuss with your ring steward where animals are to be lined up, keeping in mind the final lineup should be viewed from behind by the largest audience and also respecting traditions of the show.
- ☒ Establish the location of the closest washroom
- ☒ Carry yourself with composure and presence, without arrogance.
- ☒ Display confidence
- ☒ Recognize the cows as the main attraction; do not grandstand.
- ☒ Inspect every animal closely in each class.
- ☒ Attempt to establish a pattern. Animals placing high in individual classes should portray the same traits.
- ☒ Have someone provide feedback on the sound system after your first set of reasons.

>> Giving Good Reasons: Tell Them Why

Effective reasons describe your placings accurately and compare animals in the class.

Your role is to analyze each animal, place the class and describe to exhibitors and spectators why you have placed the cattle the way you have.

You do not need to attend a judging school to practice giving good reasons. While avoiding canned reasons, slowly practice the words you might use in placing a class. Practice in front of your family and friends, and do it often. It is also advisable to review a video of yourself giving reasons to help identify areas of improvement.

Add new phrases as you gain confidence and success, keeping in mind that reasons must always reflect the class being judged. Never give an inaccurate reason or one that does not describe the class at hand.

Step-by Step Guide

1. Once you've finished a class, stand behind the top four to six animals and organize your thoughts. It is not necessary to explain your placings to the top grouping in private—save this for the microphone.
2. Start your first set of reasons of the day with a cordial statement indicating your pleasure/honour to be invited to judge.
3. Speak slowly, crisply and confidently into the microphone as the animals parade past. Stand up straight, but relaxed.
4. Start each set of reasons with an opening statement. Use only descriptive terminology at the beginning or end of a set of reasons to generally describe the class and/or the first place animal. For example: this is a superior lineup of aged cows; we have an easy winner on top; the first three cows caught my attention as soon as they entered the ring.
5. Use simple words and do not use slang or trendy words that ringside spectators don't understand (e.g. chrome on udder).
6. Comparative terminology must be used, comparing one animal to the animal placed below it; the animal should not be described. Comparative terminology uses words ending in "er", such as longer, wider, taller, deeper, etc.
7. The obvious points of difference should be your primary concern. Use one really good point, plus another couple of points of difference for each pair of animals.
8. Always start with the most important reasons as to why one animal places over another. Consider only the major points of superiority. Grant an obvious advantage to a lower placing animal, especially with close-placings.
9. Keep your reasons brief in classes that are void of quality animals. Do not try to manufacture something that is not there.

10. Try to avoid over exuberance on any one class. Leave your options open for better animals in the following classes. Then you can build up to your champions.

11. Always be positive when giving reasons.

12. Allow your brain to work faster than your tongue.

13. Conclude the show with complimentary remarks about the quality of the show, support of exhibitors, etc. It is also advisable to thank whoever was responsible for asking you to judge the show.



Top prospects for champion are lined up head to tail as the judge prepares to give his reasons. While the selection of the champions is an exciting and dramatic part of the show, remember that there are many spectators watching. Indicate your choice with an enthusiastic handshake or congratulations to the leadsperson.



Canadian judges receive training and practice giving reasons to support their placings.

Summary of Giving Good Reasons Following a Class:

- *Start with a descriptive statement*
- *Emphasize only the main points of difference*
- *Use comparative terminology (not descriptive) to compare one animal to another*
- *Be accurate*
- *Be positive*
- *Grant an obvious advantage to a lower placing animal*

>> Associate Judge: The Silent Partner

Larger shows often have both time restrictions and large classes. Correct use of an Associate Judge in these situations makes the judging smoother and saves time. When selecting your associate you should choose someone you work well with, and clearly explain your expectations of them.



Whether you are asking someone to be your Associate, or YOU are the Associate, keep these key Associate Judge responsibilities in mind:

- ☑ Understand your role – you are not the selected official judge
- ☑ Avoid making predictions about the outcome of the show prior to the event
- ☑ Speak when asked a question and only voice an opinion when asked for one in the ring
- ☑ Analyze every animal as though you are the official judge as this will enable you to provide educated feedback when asked.
- ☑ Do not block the view of the official judge at any time
- ☑ After the show, avoid voicing opinions different than the official placing – support your judge
- ☑ Do not carry a copy of the official program in the ring
- ☑ Be professional—avoid small talk with exhibitors during classes
- ☑ Confer with the official judge ahead of time about dress code. You should dress in the same formal manner but not overshadow the judge.



>> Visiting the Exhibitors in the Barn

In addition to being great public relations, it is important to exhibitors that you visit them in the barn after the show.

Be sure to divide your time fairly among all exhibitors. First-time showpersons and those standing down the line deserve your attention as much as the top winners. You have a wealth of expertise to share, so be courteous and open to questions so that they have the opportunity to ask what they did well and what they can improve.

Try to visit all exhibits and end your tour with the Premier Breeder, Premier Exhibitor and the exhibitors of the Grand and Reserve Champions.

It is perfectly acceptable to socialize and enjoy the after-show atmosphere, but remember your official position – you are representing the breed. Always conduct yourself in a professional manner and finish your judging experience in the same professional way that you started out your day – Always end on a high note!



Canadian judges are ambassadors for the dairy cattle industry and the National Holstein Judging program. They represent the Canadian breeding philosophy and the efforts of fellow breeders from coast-to-coast.

>> Social Media Etiquette for Judges

Social Media is a great way to share information quickly. Judges should consider the questions to the right before posting or commenting on any social media medium.

The wrong message or word choice can cause damage to your reputation, the reputation of others, the judging program, or even the breed in no time at all – be sure to think twice before clicking “Post”!



>> The Value of Judging Beyond the Show Ring

If you have a passion for dairy cattle and competition, judging may be the challenge for you! Judging cattle is a fantastic and fulfilling experience. The knowledge and practical skills gained through closely evaluating, reasoning and making decisions extends far beyond placing animals, translating to valuable skills for use in many of life's situations.

If you plan to breed cattle, make business management decisions or invest in the dairy industry, judging cattle can help you develop a keen eye for detail. Judging involves looking for particularities and weighing differences. Evaluating cattle and making logical, quick decisions are valuable tools in managing any viable dairy business.

We are not born with the natural ability to reason through difficult situations, work under pressure or make sound decisions quickly. These skills are developed through experience. Judging in a time-limited setting sharpens this reasoning and decision-making expertise.

Solving the dilemma of "Which cow do I place first?" is a complex process of weighing facts, utilizing information gained from experience and then making a decision.

Life is full of moments when you must explain your ideas and decisions. Presenting oral reasons in the ring or in the barn, you learn to organize, prioritize and present your thoughts in a clear, concise manner. It's about presenting yourself as a professional, sharing your ideas and explaining them to others – it's all about communication!

Additionally, judging develops confidence and a sense of achievement. The respect and admiration earned from a job well done bring great satisfaction, and the contacts and friendships you make working with likeminded people remains one of judging's greatest added benefits!

Life skills developed through judging include communication, problem solving and decision making.



>> The National Holstein Judging Program

The National Holstein Judging Program has fostered a great number of well-trained, well-respected and knowledgeable judges for many years. As long as meaningful shows are held in Canada and abroad, training for competent judges is required.

The provinces organize and host their own Evaluation Clinics/Judging Schools. These judging workshops have in-class and practical judging classes. Heifers and cows of multiple breeds and showmanship are judged. Practical judging classes provide an opportunity for all judges to practice giving oral reasons, and allow for discussion using real life examples.

Each province has their own Judging or Show Committee which reviews scores, professionalism and past experience when selecting which people advance. A list of judges who fall into the “Aspiring” or “Official” categories is then sent to Holstein Canada.

Both Aspiring and Official Judges must attend a provincial evaluation clinic each year to ensure positive scores are met and their judging status upheld.

National Judging Conference

The National Judging Conference is organized by Holstein Canada and held every three years. 50 to 60 Official and Aspiring judges, selected by their provinces, are invited to attend along with a few international judges. Timely show and judging topics are discussed throughout the event, which features an in-class day with presentations and speakers and a practical judging day. This national workshop helps to ensure a standardized judging program across the country.





CHAPTER TWO

Director of the Ring

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Dairy people love to attend shows both as exhibitors and as spectators!

Cattle shows have been staged for years dating back to settlers who would compare animals with their neighbors as a means of breed improvement. Today's cattle shows still provide that same opportunity to make comparisons that ultimately will lead to breed improvement, not only on a herd basis but on a national level as well. Shows provide breeders and spectators the opportunity to see the best daughters of a bull and make decisions as to whether they will incorporate those genetics into their breeding programs. Shows are also a stimulus for discussion and other topics such as promotion and marketing.

Animals are presented at their very best and it is the responsibility of the judge to place those animals and give descriptive reasons to justify those placings.

Spectators come to these shows to not only see the animals, but to view the judge in action and try to see what he or she is seeing. They want a good view of what the judge is looking at—that's where the "ring steward" comes into play.

In dairy shows all around the world, it has become a common practice to engage people to assist the judge in staging a first class event. Ring stewards are being used at all levels of competition from a local or county level, to regional and district shows, to provincial and national levels. Even our larger youth shows engage the assistance of a ring steward.

In an effort to provide uniformity in presentation, the following guidelines should be very useful.



>> Duties & Responsibilities



The duty of the ring steward is to choreograph the show and not judge the animals being paraded.

Good communication is the key to a smooth running show. Be friendly yet firm with your instructions to the people presenting the animals so they know precisely where you need them to be. This will allow the judge to focus all attention on judging the animals in each class. Communicate with your judge regarding movement of animals, secondary lineups, best udder in milking classes, etc.

Additionally, you have a responsibility to the spectators who come to watch the show. Discuss with your judge the best places to work with the animals to give the spectators the best view. Make sure the animals are paraded and lined up in a manner that allows the best views by the majority of the ringside.

Preparedness:

A: Arrive Early – 30-45 minutes prior to the show is ideal

This allows you to meet with your judge(s) and formulate your plan for the show. Discuss the ring technique with your judge according to their personal style. You can also become familiar with the show

officials, announcer, ribbon presenters, photographers and ring custodians.

B: Survey the Show Ring

Familiarize yourself with several aspects of the show. This will allow you to position animals in a way that the majority of the spectators get the best views. Check to see where photographers are positioned, presentation areas, entrance and exit of exhibitors, etc. Additionally, obtain a copy of the show catalogue and quickly scan for number of entries. Keep it handy in case the judge has a question regarding an entry. Be sure to see if there is a timeline for the show. This way you can keep the show moving at a pace that is within those timelines. Check with the people marshalling the cattle in the ring. Appoint one of them to start sending the next class into the ring at the appropriate time.

Late arrivals will inevitably occur. Should this happen, quickly move the animal(s) along the outside of the ring into the appropriate order, according to age.

Lastly, make yourself aware of the ring custodians. Everyone likes a tidy ring and your contact with these custodians will help keep the ring clean and tidy.

>> Dress Code



Officials working in the show ring should always look professional and dress accordingly:

- ✓ The higher the level of competition, the more formal your attire should be.
- ✓ Tuxedos should always be reserved for the judges unless the event is extra special.
- ✓ Shirt and tie should be the order of the day for most shows.
- ✓ As the level of competition moves to district, provincial or national level, then dress for success with a suit jacket and tie.
- ✓ Footwear should always be comfortable, clean, polished leather shoes or boots.
- ✓ In warmer weather, a conservative looking golf shirt and casual dress slacks are acceptable.
- ✓ Do not wear athletic shoes, shorts, blue jeans or work boots when asked to be a ring steward
- ✓ Ladies working as ring stewards should also dress appropriately

>> Ring Procedure

Once the show begins, **stand at the entrance** where the cattle are entering the ring. Speak to the exhibitors as they enter and give them clear directions as to where you wish them to parade their animals. It is important to get the entire class into the ring quickly.

Because most judges like to view the entire class from a distance, **ask the exhibitors to move their animals at a faster pace**, walking forward until the entire class is in the ring. Also, encourage exhibitors to use the entire show ring area. Keep the animals to the outside as much as possible as many leadspersons tend to crowd in on the judge.

Occasionally, you may have large gaps between animals. This can be caused by an uncooperative animal or by a leadsperson who moves very slowly. Go directly to the animal causing the delay and gently nudge the animal or **ask the leadsperson to close up the gap**. This gets all animals into the ring and enables the judge to get a good view. This also helps the judge to assess animals in a favourable area in the ring. Try to position animals so the judge is not analyzing an animal in a corner where it may be awkward to move it into a desirable pose.

Once all animals are in the ring, **be as inconspicuous as possible** while still maintaining control of the show. **Stay to the outside**, but be ready to move quickly to the centre of the ring once the judge has made his or

her initial evaluations and is about to make first pulls into the centre. Position these animals in a straight line and in such a manner that the judge can make a second or even third lineup, if necessary, and still have enough room to manoeuvre.

Once the judge has made the initial picks, he or she might signal for the rest of the class to line up in another area. **Move quickly to the designated area** and signal the remaining contestants to line up their animals in a secondary straight line. Do not make this line too close to the first line. Leave some room for the judge to work with the first pulls. Once the second line is in place, notify the judge the second line is ready for viewing. He or she may find an animal missed in the first pull, and that animal is then easily moved forward.

If the judge wishes to see a **secondary line** from the first pulls, then **move the animals forward a reasonable distance** without getting boxed in. Once

the judge has indicated his or her preferences, ask the leadpersons to parade their animals again in a large circle utilizing all of the ring space available. This allows the judge to see the class head-to-tail again. While the judge is making the final judgment, go to the second line and ask them to move forward as a group. This cuts down on the steps the judge has to take and moves the class to conclusion more quickly. Again, make sure the final lineup is in a straight line. Stay close to the animals to assure this happens.

Communication with your judge is important. As the **class nears completion, stay close by** so the judge can indicate to you the class is finished. At this time, if the classes are in milk, have the judge indicate which animal(s) is designated as best udder(s). You, as ring steward, may then indicate the completion of the class to the recording stewards and announcer, and tell the ribbon presenters which animal(s) is designated as best udder(s).



The judge then has a few moments to prepare his or her reasons as the placings on the class are recorded and the ribbons distributed. It also gives you the opportunity to **tell the leadspersons how to parade their animals and exit the ring**. Be prepared to lead the procession to the exit, listening to the judge's reasons and controlling the speed of the exit. The leadspersons should lead their animals out of the ring in a timely and orderly manner so the judge can present his reasons on the class and the spectators have a clear view of the animals paraded head-to-tail. Keep the entire class in single file to avoid congestion at the exit.

In the **championship classes**, you should have discussed with your judge his or her **preferred way of displaying the class winners**. In most cases, the class makes one trip around the ring and is lined up side-by-side. The judge then has the opportunity to move the top prospects forward. If possible, the champion contenders should be lined up head-to-tail so the majority of the spectators have a clear

view of the winners. Once the winners have been named, the rest of the class may be excused in an orderly fashion.

Group Classes

Group classes should again be lined up with the rear of the animals facing the majority of the spectators. **Line the groups up in close proximity to each other, allowing the judge to work from the centre of the ring**. Line the groups, once judged, head-to-tail down the centre of the ring.

Conclusion of the Show

As ring steward, once the show has come to an end, be sure to congratulate the official judge on his or her performance and say thank you for the opportunity to work together. Be sure to check with the official's desk to make sure all of your duties are complete prior to departure.



Moving into position, the ring steward directs leadspersons in parading their animals

>> Youth Showmanship

Showmanship classes present a new dimension for ring stewards.

In smaller competitions, the ring steward usually stands near the entrance encouraging contestants while giving them clear instructions as to size of ring, where lines will form and also where the final lineup will be.

Once the entire class is in the ring, you should stay on the sidelines until the judge is ready to make the first selections.

Should an animal get in trouble (balk, get soiled or lie down) move quickly to assist with the situation.

Once the judge is ready to make the first pulls, move quickly to the designated spot where the lineup is to begin.

When the first animal is in position, move away from the lineup until the judge has made most or all of his or her decisions.

Part of showmanship is keeping animals straight in line with adequate spacing between each animal. Set the first position only and then step away.

The judge will direct the rest of the class into line. Again, always be ready to assist with an unruly animal.

Once the class is finished, instruct the contestants how to parade while the judge is giving reasons and where to exit the ring in single file.

In the case of several heats of showmanship, the judge will indicate how many contestants are to return for the final group. The ring steward should communicate this number to the recording stewards or create a little wider space between the last qualifier and the rest of the contestants so there is no mistake as to which contestants will return for the final placings. Again, instruct the contestants to exit in single file to reduce congestion at the exit.



>> Youth Conformation

Conformation classes involving youth participants are always interesting and fun to watch. Handle these classes the same as a regular show. Remember, however, some contestants may be a little nervous, and once in a while, their calves do not co-operate. Some calves may balk and refuse to move.

If a calf is creating problems, quickly come to the competitor's aid. Oftentimes, the leadsperson is frustrated or shows emotion. Offer him or her reassurance and assist in moving the calf along. A friendly smile and warm encouragement goes a long way to rebuilding the competitor's confidence.



>> Timely Reminders

Communication during the show is extremely important – especially between the judge and ring steward. Stay close enough to hear the judge's instructions. However, at no time give the appearance you are judging the class. For younger aspiring judges, working as ring steward with a seasoned judge is a great learning experience.

Also, communicate with the ring announcer, clerks and ribbon presenters. Good communication helps the whole team function smoothly.

>> Catalogues

People often say the best view in the house is from the centre of the ring. While this is true, a good ring steward has little time to study a catalogue. Your focus should be on what's happening in the ring. Should the judge have a question regarding an animal, quickly reference a catalogue and then return your focus to what's taking place in the ring. Recording stewards will note which animals will return for championship classes. If you would like a marked catalogue from the show, ask someone at the officials table to mark one for you that you can retrieve at the end of the show.

>> Keep In Mind

Fraternizing:

Exhibitors always appreciate a smile and a friendly greeting as you move past their animals. Be careful not to obstruct the judge's view as you move around the animals. It is also appropriate to acknowledge people and friends watching the show, but again, keep your focus on the ring. Arrange to meet these folks in the stable area after the completion of the show.

Lunch/Refreshments:

Larger shows often run through lunch time. When lunch arrives, select an opportune time to step to the sidelines for a quick bite. Leave all food and beverages at the officials table as there will be several opportunities to partake of these throughout the show. Keep food and beverages out of the centre of the ring.

Touching of Animals:

Over the years, times have changed and several professional photographers and breed publications provide coverage of shows. This includes everything from county shows right up to district, provincial and national levels.

This is a great promotional tool and as such, animals need to be at their best at all times. Speak to the handler of the entry regarding touching their animal. Be prepared to give assistance when an animal makes manure, etc. Hold the switch, provide a wipe or set the tail down, as you never know when cameras are rolling. Always carry some paper towel in your pocket just in case an animal soils herself. You, the ring custodians or the leadsperson can then quickly get the animal cleaned up. Be prepared to take the halter should the leadsperson wish to check the rear end of the cow.



>> Summary

These helpful guidelines will help you in most situations as a ring steward. By following these useful tips, you will be confident in your role.

Take your assignment seriously as your judges, the exhibitors and especially the ringside truly appreciate your work and performance.

It's a team effort...
"there is no / in team"



The content for this publication was drafted as a cooperative effort between Holstein Canada and Murray Reissner of Woodstock, Ontario. One of Canada's foremost ring experts, Murray has choreographed numerous shows across Ontario. Murray has been the lead ring steward at the National Holstein Shows at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair for over 20 years.

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