

Beef Handbook

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, color markings and wool covering in sheep.

Broodiness - female breeding stock term that means she has a favorable 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. Refinement of hair coat, freedom of wrinkles in hogs and freedom of roughness, patchiness in cattle indicates quality.

Ruggedness, Stoutness - the quality of being heavy or large boned. This is usually determined by the size of the cannon bone (from the knee to the ankle).

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.