Market Cattle Terminology

Muscle

Desirable

- More structural width
- Carries his thickness more uniformly from front to rear
- Shows more muscle in every dimension
- More correct turn along his topline
- Works with more muscle spread down his top
- Meatier down the top
- More muscle content down his topline
- Comes out of his shoulder with more natural muscle and kept that advantage over his top and into a deeper, fuller quarter
- Opened wider through his chest floor and had more expression to his top
- More pop to his stifle
- More bulging stifle
- More outer turn to his quarter
- Thicker from shoulder to stifle
- Has a more dimensional quarter
- Comes bigger out of his upper rump and is wider tracking
- Thicker quartered steer, thus enabling him to track wider behind
- Heavier muscled steer who is muscled closed to his hock
- More correct in his muscle to frame ratio
- More correct in his muscle to finish combination
- Bulge and expression to forearm
- Handled a deeper, more muscular loin
- More honest expression of muscle
More inside and outside portion of his quarter

Stouter hipped

More product oriented steer that clearly offers more muscle dimension down his top and out of his hip

Massive top

More muscle over a bigger, wider skeleton

More power and dimension over his rib and loin and comes more impressive out of his hip and down into his stifle and lower quarter

Undesirable

Funnels into his lower quarter

Came wider in his upper hip and dropped lower in his quarter

Expressionless through his lower quarter and is narrower tracking

Lightest quartered

Flat quartered

Tapering quarter

Narrow about the top

Tapered from hooks to pins

Narrow in its pin placement

Bigger framed steer that needs more evidence of muscle from front to rear

Correctness of Finish

Desirable

More packer preferred

More desirable degree of finish

More optimum in his maturity pattern to slaughter

More uniform in finish pattern

More kill ready
Was more consistent and complete in his cover
More evidence of finish through brisket and cod
Higher conditioned steer that could be termed more market ready
Freer of fat around his tail head
Meets the hand with more slip of cover over rear rib
Cleaner/trimmer patterned
Appears to be more advanced in his degree of finish as I study him through his brisket, cod and flank
Handles a more uniform and adequate degree of cover down his top and over his ribs
As evidenced by his indicators of cover, he appears to be closer to his ideal endpoint
He is a smoother patterned steer who reads to be more optimum in his degree of finish
Handles with more ideal finish
Higher in his degree of cover
Fuller in his fat indicators

Undesirable

Harshest conditioned steer who would likely require the most days on feed
An extremely light muscled, over-finished steer that should have a low cutability carcass
Irregular in his uniformity of cover
More open in the upper portion of his rib
Short bodied, conventional steer carrying an excess amount of finish
I appreciate the fact that he appears to be the easiest feeding, unfortunately today this works to his disadvantage, as he is clearly the most excessive in his cover
Falls short of the market readiness in my class winner
Who both need more time on feed to maximize their carcass value
Who could both benefit from more time on feed
**Balance/Eye Appeal**

*Desirable*

- More correctly balanced with more muscle and eye appeal
- Fresher appearing
- Cleaner through his lower 1/3
- Deeper from chest to flank
- Blends more smoothly from his shoulder into his forerib
- Carries his weight more uniformly from front to rear
- Profiles the more extended, cleaner front
- More show ring appeal
- More fit and bloom
- Straighter lined and stronger topped
- More attractive profiling

*Undesirable*

- Leathery-fronted
- Heavy sheathed
- Narrow chested
- Heavy/course shouldered
- Poorest balanced

**Volume**

*Desirable*

- Bolder in rib design
- More spring and arch to his rib
- Deeper and looser bodied
● Offers more depth and spring of rib
● Bigger bodied
● Undesirable
● Flatter ribbed
● Shallower bodied
● 2-dimensional

**Structural Correctness**

*some terms can be incorporated into breeding cattle also*

Desirable

● More correctly patterned
● Leveler and squarer from hooks to pins
→ ● Walked out with a longer, freer stride
● Stood down and tracked off more structurally correct hind legs
● Comes and goes with more base width
→ ● Leads with more flex and ease of movement
● Strides with more reach and flex to his hock and pastern

Undesirable

● More structurally incorrect
● Easy topped
● Slope to hip
→ ● More restricted and choppier stride
● Straightest off both ends, being the most labored in his stride
General Appearance

- More practically made
- Appears to be easier feeding
- Obtains a softer look of a more practical fat steer
- Offers an apparent weight per day of age advantage
- Easier feeding look
- More powerfully constructed
- More circumference of bone
- More rugged
- Greater spread from birth to yearling
- Combines good practical market steer character with added showsteer look

Carcass Projection

Desirable

- Most carcass potential
- More apt to grade Choice
- Should hang a carcass with a higher more optimal degree of finish
- Hang a more uniformly covered carcass of higher quality and greater market acceptability
- Would likely possess a more industry acceptable carcass in terms of muscle, finish, quality grade, yield grade, or carcass weight
- More total pounds of edible meat
- Should yield a carcass ribbing a larger eye
- Rail an advantage in primal yield
- A meatier carcass with a higher ratio of lean to fat
- Because of his combination of muscle and trimness, he'll potentially open the higher cutability carcass
- The finish he possesses leads me to believe he will be more apt to grade Choice
Greatest quantity of high-priced cuts

Open up a larger and higher quality ribeye

Open and larger eye and potentially reveal a higher degree of marbling

He is a trimmer patterned steer that handles leaner over his ribs and loin edge, thus should go to the rail with a yield grade/cutability advantage

He is a more moderately framed steer who meets my hand with a greater turn to his loin edge and thus should kill with a larger ribeye relative to carcass weight

He is optimum in his degree of finish, and this coupled with his apparent Angus influence suggests he could potentially obtain a quality grade advantage

Should stamp a lower numerical yield grade

With his higher degree of finish, I would expect him to reach higher into the Choice grade

Yield a higher % of boneless trimmed retail cuts

Higher % trimmed, most valuable primal s

Quality/yield grid oriented EPDs

Potentially merit a more profitable yield/quality grade

Higher quality eating experience for the consumer

Greater muscle mass stretched over a more 3-dimensional skeleton and should therefore hang a carcass with more total pounds of product

At most logical endpoint and I would expect him to excel in a grid pricing system, as he best combines muscle and correctness of finish

If genetics allow, he’ll clearly rail more pounds of a higher quality product

Undesirable

Should cut out the least ribeye

Hang a carcass that would likely attain the lowest quality grade

An excessively finished steer that yield a higher numerical yield grade

Carcass requiring the most retail fat trim

Beyond logical endpoint
Crossbred Market Steers

I align the Crossbred Market Steers 1-4-2-3, starting with the two heaviest muscled, most correctly finished steers in my top pair. In my initial comparison, I prefer 1 over 4, as 1 has a decided advantage in structural correctness, having a more desirable set to his hocks and his front legs drop more squarely from his shoulder, 1 is a freer tracking, more functional steer. In addition, 1 is pounds heavier and handles with the softest finish. I would expect 1 to hang more total pounds of high quality product on the rail. I know that 4 is the heaviest muscled steer in the class, with the biggest squarest hip. However, if I could redesign 4, I would give him more desirable angle to his shoulder blade.

With these concerns in mind, I chose 4 over 2 in my intermediate pair. 4 is more ideally finished and shows truer meat animal shape, having more natural thickness throughout. I would expect 4 to excel in a grid pricing system. I realize that 2 is freer moving and should offer the highest quality eating experience to the consumer. But this does not compensate for the fact that 2 is overly conditioned and should require the most fat trim, having the most fat in brisket, flank and cod.

Nonetheless, 2 is still a more desirable market animal when compared to 3 in differentiating my final pair. 2 should have a higher chance of making the choice quality grade, premium in today’s market system. Furthermore, 2 has more correct set to his hocks and a more desirable angle to his shoulder blade. I will be the first to concede that 3 should calculate a lower numeric yield grade than 2; however, I criticize the post legged steer and placed him last as he is least market ready in the class being the most under finished.
Sample Reasons

Market Steers

I placed the market steers 2143. In my initial comparison of similar finished steers, I preferred the extra muscle shape and balance found in 2. From the side he's more extended from his shoulder forward, while being leveler down his top and out his hip. He further separates himself as he offers more expression and shape of muscle on his topside, while maintaining this distinct advantage when viewed from behind. I appreciate the red steer's muscle dimension and extension; however, he's comparably less desirable from a muscle mass and balance standpoint, so I left him second.

Nevertheless in my intermediate comparison, I logically opted for the stouter and more powerfully made 1 over 4. Here's the other correctly finished steer, that is not only stouter featured and wider chested, but along with this, he has a squarer shape down his top, is more powerful from hooks to pins, while displaying more outward turn to the base of his quarter. Thus, if genetically able, I would expect him to rail a more desirable combination of quality and yield grades. I'll be the first to admit that 4, the pounds heavier steer, is more growth oriented; however, he's the narrowest made and lightest muscled, so I marked him third.

Despite these criticisms, I still preferred his additional performance and aligned him over 3. There's no question that the baldy has a weight per day of age advantage, and this coupled with his added extension from the side, leads me to believe that he offers more total dimension of muscle throughout. Consequently, his higher performing look should prove more profitable to the feedlot operation. Sure, 3 is more powerfully made with a squarer shape out of his shoulder, more muscle expression down his top, and through his lower quarter. Even so, I left him to close, as he is the coarsest shouldered and shortest bodied, while being the poorest performing of any in the class.
Market Steers

I placed the Market Steers 2431. In my opinion, the brockle steer sorts to the top rather quickly as he alone combines the image of a muscular, practical fat steer with added showring quality and attractiveness from the side. Plus, he’s easily the biggest topped, highest performing steer who should cut open the biggest rib eye area and have the most pounds of primal yield on the rail. Yes, the 4 steer is laid in flatter at his shoulder but after this he is a distant second as he is a shorter bodied, trailer made steer who simply gives up too much product to compete with my class winner.

Still, in a more challenging middle pair of black steers that differ in type, it’s 4’s bigger bodied, softer look from the profile that sorts him over 3. More specifically, he’s a stronger topped steer who is deeper and better in his heart and flank and certainly handles himself more comfortably on the move. Now, some may like the added length and apparent cutability advantage of the coarse jointed 3 steer, but to me he’s questionable in his degree of finish and it’s his obvious balance and structure issues that keep him third on my card today.

Despite these harsh criticisms, it is easily 3 over 1 in my bottom pair. He’s a wider based, heavier boned steer who comes out of his shoulder with more shape and dimension laying down his top. Therefore, see him as the higher yielding steer of the pair who should return more dollar value to the producer. Sure, the baldy steer is cleaner jointed and more comfortable when set in motion, but he is simply the flattest, lightest muscled steer who is the lowest performing in the class.