



Dairy Judging - Giving Reasons

When judging you need to be able to give a clear and concise set of reasons as to your order. The following notes are designed to guide and help you in this task.

If every exhibitor and each person observing a show would place the class exactly the same as the Official Judge, there would be no need to present reasons. Judging cattle provides an excellent opportunity to make logical decisions and then state concisely your reasons for making such decisions. Successful reasons describe accurately and compare animals in the class. We all see cattle slightly differently and will place greater emphasis on certain traits. Once you have analysed animals and placed the class, the next most important task is to describe to all in attendance precisely why you have placed the cattle in the way you have.

Reasons-Preparation

Organisation of ideas

The most obvious points of difference should be your primary concern. Two to four points in each pair of animals should be sufficient.

Accuracy

Your reasons should reflect the class being judged and always giving a reason that is inaccurate or does not fit the class.

Emphasise Differences

Judges should always start with the most important reasons as to why one animal places over another. Only consider the major points of superiority. Do not be afraid to grant an obvious advantage to a lower animal, especially in close-placing pairs.

Terminology

Terminology should be exact and fit the particular class. Comparative terminology compares one animal to the animal placed below it. It does not describe the animal. Descriptive terminology is used only at the beginning of a set of reasons to describe the class and/or placing of an animal. Comparative terminology utilises words ending in 'er', such as 'longer', 'wider', 'taller', 'deeper', etc.

Terminology for a desirable head

- head exhibiting more breed character
- broader muzzle
- more breed character and style about the head

Terminology for a desirable neck

- longer, leaner, cleaner neck
- cleaner about the throat
- more feminine in the head and neck

Terminology for desirable withers

- sharper over the withers
- stands taller at the point of withers

Terminology for desirable shoulders

- shoulder blends more smoothly into the body
- blends more smoothly from neck to shoulders

Terminology for a desirable body capacity

- wider in the chest floor
- greater spring of fore rib
- deeper-bodied, more open ribbed
- longer in the rear rib
- greater spring of both fore and rear rib

Terminology for desirable ribs

- more openness and sweep in the rib
- greater spring and openness to the rib
- cleaner and flatter-boned rib

Terminology for a desirable rump

- more width between the pins
- tail head sets in neater between the pins
- more refined about the tail head
- higher and wider in the thurls
- more structurally correct about the rump
- longer from hook to pins

Terminology for a desirable top line

- straight and stronger over the topline
- stronger in the loin
- fuller in the chine region

Terminology for desirable thighs

- cleaner and more in-curving thighs
- flatter and cleaner in the thighs

Terminology for desirable feet and legs

- cleaner and flatter bone in the rear leg
- more correct set to the rear leg
- cleaner and more refined in the hocks
- stronger in the pasterns
- deeper in the heel
- tracks/walks more correctly on her feet and legs

Terminology for a desirable fore udder

- longer, smoother fore udder attachment
- more firmly attached in the fore udder
- more evenly balanced fore udder
- fore udder blends more smoothly into the body wall

- more balance and fullness to the fore udder

Terminology for a desirable rear udder

- higher, wider, more firmly attached rear udder
- a higher, wider rear attachment
- more evenly balanced and more strongly attached rear udder
- fuller at the top of the rear udder
- more bloom to the udder
- carries the udder higher above the hock

Terminology for a desirable median suspensory ligament

- displays more centre support to the udder
- stronger median suspensory ligament

Terminology for desirable teats

- teats hang more squarely on the udder floor
- teats are more correct in size
- more correct distance between front and rear teats

How to start and finish your reasons

At a stock judging event or show, **start your reasons** with a general comment about the class or make descriptive comments on your winning animal. e.g. "This is a fine class of senior heifers with an outstanding winner who has the advantage over the second placed heifer in her etc..." or "I lead this class with a tall, long dairy cow who is showing a lot of dairy character, being more open of her rib, longer in the neck and cleaner in her thighs than the young cow I have in second. Second over third etc"

To **finish your reasons**, if it is a large class, just give reasons on your first six animals and finish by saying thank you. If it is a stock judging event with six or fewer animals in the class, finish by giving reasons on your fifth over sixth placing and do not mention your last animal other than to compliment her. e.g. "Fifth over sixth for being higher and wider of her rear attachment and walking on a more desirable set of legs, though I admit my sixth placed cow has an advantage in stature and capacity over my cow in fifth".

Presenting reasons at a show

Once you have finished the Judging class, take a moment or two to stand behind your top four to six animals. Use this time to concentrate on this group and begin to summarise two to four main points of difference between each pair. This brief time will allow you to organise your thoughts. Once you are ready to present your reasons, have your steward bring the class forward at a moderate pace.

Ideally you can present your key points as the animals parade past you.

Remember

Emphasise only the main points of difference

Utilise comparative terminology

Be accurate

Grant obvious advantages to the lower placing animals