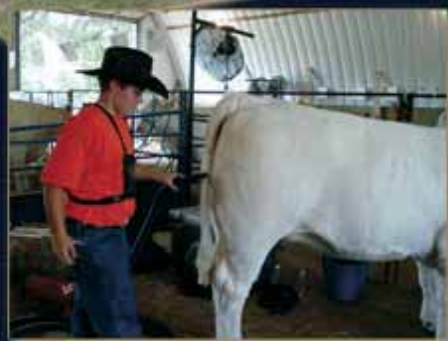


# Into The Ring



PRESENTED BY THE CANADIAN CHAROLAIS ASSOCIATION

# The Story of SILVER BULLET

by David Hobbs



**“H**ave you seen him?” This is a question heard and repeated countless times leading up to the steer show at any livestock event—from county fairs to major exhibitions all across the United States.

Recently, the question was heard at one of the country's great livestock competitions, the American Royal Livestock Show. And this time, the question referenced a Charolais-cross steer named Silver Bullet, owned by 12-year-old Brock May of Mineral Point, Wis.

The story of Silver Bullet begins with Charolais breeders John and Rowana Rudiger of Calgary, Alberta. From the Rudigers' November 11, 1997, Rudiger Roundup '97 Production Sale, Keith Herr, Log Cabin Farms, Shafer, Minn., selected Lot 51. This female, Lazy JR Miss Zing 629F, was a daughter of the 1993 National Western Reserve Senior Champion Bull, Lazy JR Zing 32Z. Comments in her footnote stated that her dam “consistently produces top progeny.”

In 2003, Keith and his brother, Ciel, of Herr Show Cattle, Fontanelle, Iowa, flushed Miss Zing to the club calf sire, Friction. One of the resulting calves was Silver Bullet, born April 13, 2004. In September that year, they sold him to Goretzka Show Steers, Iowa. In turn, he sold to Brock's family on October 16, 2004.

After just over a year of hard work, Brock, a member of the American-International Junior Charolais Association, his family and Silver Bullet, arrived in Kansas City. After winning Division II of the American Royal Steer Show on the morning of October 22, the crowning moment arrived later that evening. Three division champion steers and three reserves were led into Kemper Arena in front of several thousand frenzied rodeo fans.

When asked how he felt as he led Silver Bullet into the arena with lights flashing and immense noise, Brock states, “I was nervous and excited. I had an adrenalin rush. It was so much fun that words can't explain!”

The following evening in the American Royal Junior Premium Livestock Auction, a new record was set for the event as Silver Bullet sold for \$100,000. Brock donated a portion of the money back to the American Royal Junior Heifer Shows with the remainder going toward a new steer and his college fund.

For 2005 American Royal spectators, the question of “Have you seen him?” was answered. A positive boost for Charolais genetics.





# GREETINGS FROM THE CANADIAN CHAROLAIS ASSOCIATION

Neil Gillies

The Canadian Charolais Association's members are pleased to present this edition of the Into the Ring informational guide in support of Junior and 4H members, as a tool to assist with heifer and steer calf projects. We communicated with a group of beef industry professionals and asked them for their opinions in areas of their personal expertise, relating to the various steps required in completing successful beef cattle projects. These views are presented in this handbook. Readers should note that these opinions are not necessarily the only essential techniques available in achieving success with beef cattle projects, and although we obviously refer to Charolais influenced animals throughout the handbook, the information applies to all beef cattle projects.

A 4H beef project can be a daunting

task especially for young participants undertaking a beef project for the first time, so the purpose of this handbook is to educate and inform young beef cattle enthusiasts by providing practical, hands-on information to help in his or her initial efforts with heifer and steer projects.

The course of action in the selection of a beef calf project can vary considerably between members in the same club or the same beef breed organization. Some young cattlemen may have the ability to purchase designer calves through club sales, while the majority will pick a calf from a family herd or a respected neighbor's herd. Either way the challenge is to try and predict how the calf will match its intended objectives at the end of the project.

A reality that should not be overlooked is that competition is an integral part of these beef cattle

projects and the quest to place well and sell high, is a joyful occasion for those who experience the feeling. However, it is just as important to enjoy working with a calf in a one-on-one relationship and enjoy the camaraderie of working with fellow club and youth members.

In closing, the members of the Charolais Association hope that this handbook will offer some useful insight into the business of selecting, feeding and preparing your beef calf project. If more handbooks are required please contact the Association at [www.charolais.com](http://www.charolais.com) and we will endeavor to fill your request.

Good luck and enjoy your beef cattle project experience

Neil Gillies – General Manager,  
Canadian Charolais Association

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# HEIFER AND STEER SELECTION

## BEEF CATTLE SELECTION

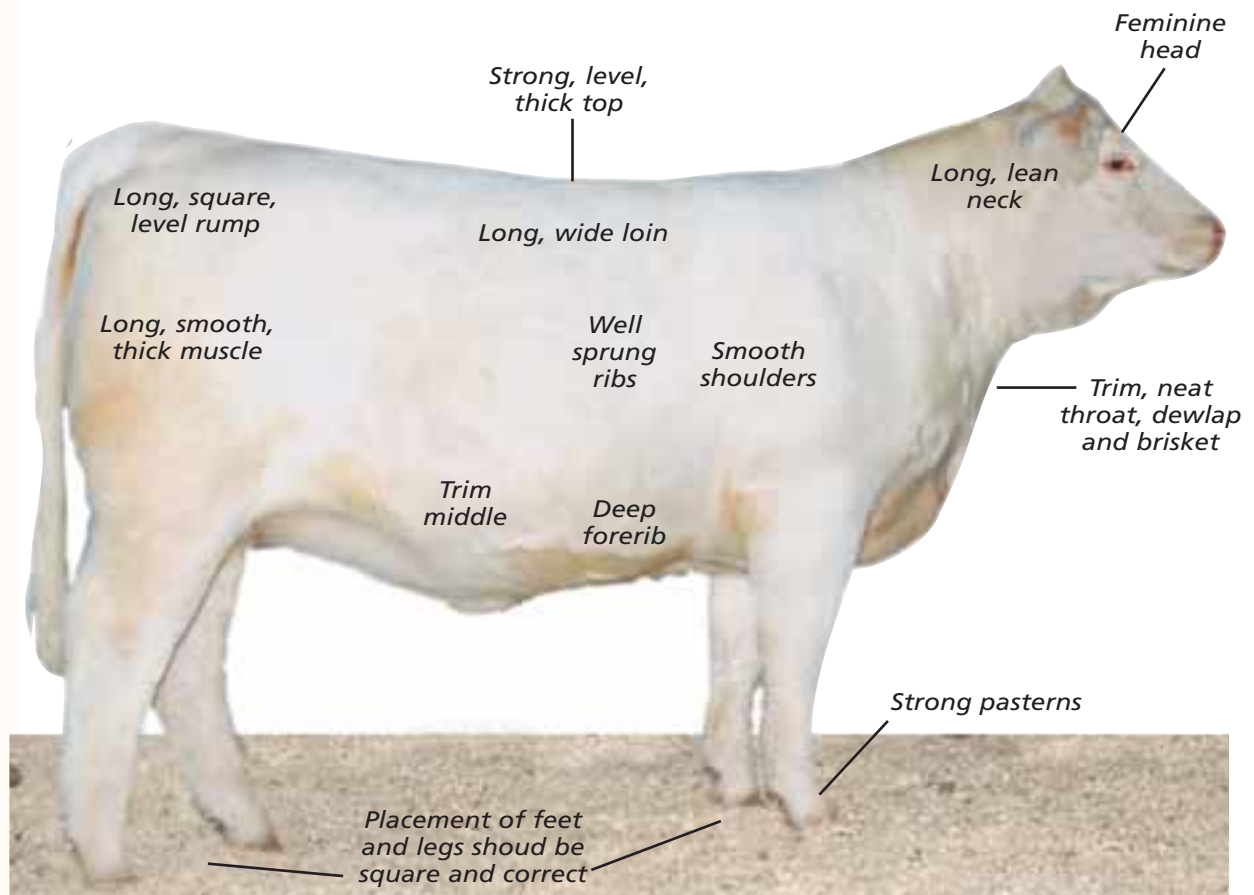
The ideal beef animal is a combination of many factors. Emphasis has been put on a variety of different traits over the past 40 years changing the cattle from small, overly fat cattle to a bigger more muscular cattle. As a judge of beef cattle, it is important to note a balance of traits that needs to be selected to have a well-balanced animal that is proportionately correct.

Cattle, both breeding and market, should first be structurally sound. The figure below depicts the ideal

breeding female. Note the straightness of lines, yet she possesses the correct angulation to her shoulder, hip, hock and pasterns. These correct angles will allow the heifer to move in a fluid manner, taking a long, free, easy moving stride. If the lines where the bones were straighter, then the animal would be restricted in its movement.

Cattle that are extremely straight move on a short stride and set their feet down hard. Feet and leg placement should be square on a large hoof. Extremely curved legs are

also called sickle hocked because they resemble a sickle. Sickle hocked cattle tend to walk underneath themselves and are uncoordinated in their movement. Bowlegged cattle have hocks that point outward and also move on a short stride. Cattle that are cow hocked are in at their hocks and their feet point outward. Abnormalities of the front legs are also important. When an animal has incorrect leg and feet placement, this affects their movement greatly. These animals often hold their head lower and move on a short stride.



## FEMALE DESIGN

A female should possess those characteristics that are ideal to a female. The neck is long and thin with a feminine head. Her body has a

broody appearance with well sprung ribs. Females should have a correct amount of muscle. Far too often some cows are bred to have excessive amounts of muscle and become very coarse in their appearance. These

females often do not milk as well and may not have the longevity of cows which are more feminine. Females should flesh easily on an adequate amount of feed and not be narrow or hard fleshing cattle.

## **MARKET ANIMAL DESIGN**

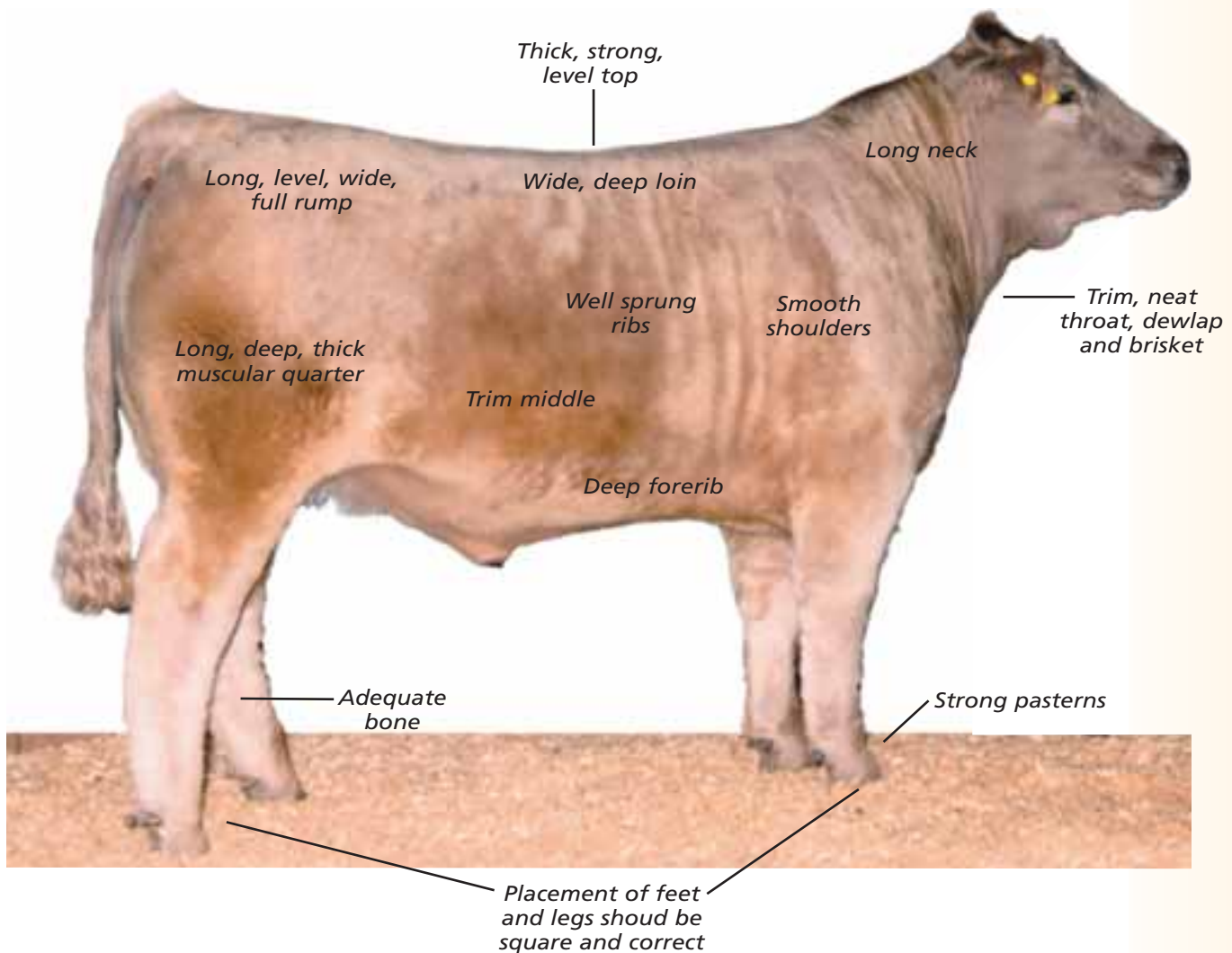
Just as breeding cattle have changed and progressed over the years, market cattle also have changed from cattle that were excessively fat in the 50s, to excessively large-framed cattle in the early 80s, to a more modestly framed, muscular steer of the 90s.

The ideal market steer should be a stout, fast growing animal that is heavy muscled and carries a minimum amount of outside fat. From the side, the ideal steer should

be free of extra leather in the throat area and have a clean, neat brisket and dewlap. The middle should be trim with a clean, long underline. The flank should not be excessively tight, nor should it be excessively deep as some judges prefer it "today". Extra depth and excessive fullness to the flank is nothing but waste fat. The animal should have a muscular forearm, a thick, strong muscular top, and a long, level, wide rump. The quarter should be long and deep with

flare and expression throughout. Structural correctness should be emphasized just as it is in a breeding animal. Market animals should move in a free, easy manner and stand square and straight on their feet and legs.

The object of all market animals is to produce a carcass that results in the maximum amount of lean red meat yield, with a minimum amount of waste fat.





# BASIC NUTRITION AND FEEDING CONCEPTS FOR JUNIOR BEEF CATTLE EXHIBITORS

Dr. Aaron Grant

So, you've decided to join a Junior Beef Breed Association or 4-H Beef Club. Way to go! You've now entered the exciting world of caring for, feeding, training, and showing beef cattle, as well as meeting many new friends and learning some very important life lessons along the way. This article will touch on some of the basic strategies to use when selecting, raising, and feeding steer and heifer projects.

## SHOW STEER BASICS

### CHOOSING YOUR STEER

#### Determine a Weight Range of Steer Calves to Choose From

Part of what judges look for on show day is the appropriateness of a steer's size and market weight. Therefore, before you buy a calf, it is important to make some estimates of their performance, size, and market weight. An ideally finished market steer should weigh between 1150 and 1350 lb. and possess 8-12 mm of backfat on show day. A good formula to use in choosing a calf of an appropriate size and weight is given below.

Example: If possible, taking a frame size measurement of a calf before you buy it is a good idea. Steers between 6 to 8 months of age should be 44 to 48 inches tall (when measured from hip to ground) to finish at a desirable weight. By making sure your calf is within this height range at this age, you may stop yourself from buying a calf that may be too small or too big at finish. Next, figure out the number of days you will be feeding the steer by counting the number of days from the date of purchase to the show day. For example, from November 1st (theoretical date of purchase) to June

8th (theoretical show day) there are 220 days on feed. If fed correctly, most steers should gain between 2.75 and 3.5 pounds per day (lb/d).

Therefore, if you want the steer you buy to weigh 1300 lb. on show day, you must calculate his total weight gain by multiplying 220 days on feed by an estimated daily gain (3.0 lb/d) = 660 lb. Then, take the calf's estimated finished weight and subtract its estimated weight gain to come up with an approximate purchase weight: 1300 lb. (finished weight) - 660 lb. (total weight gain) = 640 lb. (Purchase weight). So, in this case you should search for a steer that weighs roughly 650 lb. Experience is always helpful in predicting what steer calves of different frame sizes and breed-types will gain per day and weigh when they are finished. Therefore, asking a parent or knowledgeable person to help you in estimating your steer's daily gain and finished weight is always a good idea.

### OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If purchasing a steer calf, it is very important to find out as much as possible about him before you buy him. Some good questions to ask are: How long has he been weaned? What vaccinations has he had? What type of feed is he used to eating? Has he been

implanted?

Has he ever been sick, and if so, what treatments has he had?

All of these questions are very important in helping you determine what your steer may need to stay healthy as well as what type of feed(s) may be used to start him on feed quickly and easily.

### FEEDING YOUR STEER

Before you decide on what you are going to feed your steer there are a few points that you need to consider. Feeding your steer yourself helps you learn about raising your calf and tends to help tame them more than having someone else feed it for you. Feed your steer 2 times per day rather than once as this will keep the feed fresh and should increase the amount of feed your calf will eat per day. Feed your steer in a pen along with at least one pen mate (another steer of similar weight) as this encourages them to eat more and also helps keep them calm.

Check the water bowl in your steer's pen every day and keep it as clean as possible as this will help keep them healthy as well as encourage them to



eat more feed.

Make sure your calf is kept in a clean pen that is free of mud and has plenty of bedding to help him stay clean, healthy, and warm. Muddy, poorly bedded pens are bad for your calf's hair coat and can reduce his average daily gain.

Depending on your feeding program, only feed your calf the amount of feed you want him to eat, or feed him exactly what he can eat each day, without overfeeding him. Overfeeding can cause stomach problems like bloat or acidosis.

Remove old, stale feed from the feeder(s) often as stale feed will become moldy, smells bad, and will reduce your calf's feed intake.

### **TYPES OF FEEDS**

Cattle feeds may be classified as grains, proteins, roughages, concentrates, minerals, vitamins, and feed additives.

**Grain:** Grain is high in energy and therefore has a huge impact on the growth and fattening of your show steer. Barley and corn are the most common grains fed to cattle but some rations may also include wheat and oats. Although the different types of grains vary in their energy content, it is the energy density of the diet, not always the type of grain being fed, that needs to be considered when feeding your steer. Feeding high quality grains that are properly processed is a key factor when it comes to energy utilization by the animal. Barley and wheat are best digested and absorbed by the animal when rolled, while oats and corn can either be rolled or fed whole depending on the situation.

**Protein:** Growing/Fattening cattle need to be fed adequate amounts of protein to encourage proper feed

digestion as well as bone and muscle development. Along with the protein contributed by the feedstuffs included in cattle rations, protein is also normally added to the diet in the form of a commercial protein/mineral/vitamin supplement. Some common protein sources that may be included as feedstuffs or components within commercial supplements are canola meal and soybean meal as well as byproducts such as distiller's grains. Urea can also be used as a protein source in cattle diets as rumen microbes are capable of converting the nitrogen contained within urea into protein.

**Roughages:** Silage and hay are the main roughage sources fed to cattle. Roughages contribute a portion of the animals' energy and protein requirements and also serve to reduce the chance of digestive upsets such as



bloat or acidosis. As roughages may vary greatly in type and quality (alfalfa hay vs. grass hay vs. silage etc.), it is very important to keep the type and quality of roughage consistent throughout the feeding period in order to avoid any digestive problems.

**Concentrates:** Concentrates such as molasses, fats, oils, and many different byproducts may be used in cattle rations to increase the energy and (or) protein density of the diet. Products such as molasses or different types of oils can also aid in reducing the amount of dust or feed particle separation, as well as add a good flavor or taste to rations. As these products also vary in type, quality, and consistency, it is important to have a good knowledge of them prior to feeding them to your steer.

**Minerals:** Minerals are required for bone and tissue development as well as all major physiological processes in the body. Cattle that do not receive the proper amount and type of minerals will not grow as well and may be less healthy than those that do. Minerals can be classified into macro and micro minerals.

Macro-minerals include: Calcium, Phosphorus, Magnesium, Potassium, and Salt. These must be fed at a certain percentage within the diet each day for your calf to grow and finish properly. Your steer also requires many different micro-minerals each day but these are needed in smaller (parts per million) amounts. To meet your calf's mineral requirements, they are normally included in the diet along with protein and vitamins in the form of a commercial protein/mineral/vitamin supplement.

**Vitamins:** Vitamins are essential to the general health, maintenance, and growth of your calf. Vitamins may be classified into two categories: fat-soluble and water-soluble. The fat-soluble vitamins include vitamins A, D, E, and K, while the water soluble vitamins include vitamins B and C. Although the daily requirements among vitamins vary, they are normally included in the proper

amounts within the commercial protein/mineral/vitamin supplement to satisfy your calf's needs.

**Feed Additives:** A feed additive may be classified as any commercial product that can be added to a diet that improves an animal's growth and/or health. Although there are too many to mention in this article, some common feed additives used in finishing cattle diets include antibiotics and ionophores.

**“...to ensure that they are properly finished, most steers should normally be on a finishing ration for 100 to 150 days prior to show day.”**

Antibiotics (medicine) may be included in a ration to keep your calf healthy in times of stress. Ionophores such as monensin or lasalocid are normally fed to improve an animal's feed efficiency. Although some of these feed additives may be added directly to cattle rations, most can be included in the proper amounts within commercial protein/mineral/vitamin supplements.

**Commercial Supplements and Complete Rations:** When feeding your show steer/heifer, it is very important to meet all of their nutrient requirements. As stated above, commercial protein/mineral/vitamin supplements (formulated by a Beef Cattle Nutritionist) can be included on a percentage basis within your calf's ration to aid in providing the correct amount of protein, minerals, vitamins, and feed additives. As the ingredients within a supplement will vary depending on the types of

feedstuffs being fed, it is always best to talk to a Nutritionist or feed company about providing the appropriate supplement to your calf. Supplements may be added to cattle diets in liquid, pelleted, or granular form. Feed companies also manufacture complete show cattle rations which are comprised of the correct percentages of grain, protein, minerals, vitamins, and feed additives to meet your calf's needs. When these rations are fed along with the appropriate amount of roughage, the nutrient requirements of your calf should be met.

### **FEEDING PHASES AND TYPES OF RATIONS FOR FINISHING CATTLE**

There are 3 main phases when it comes to feeding show steers (Starting, Growing, and Finishing). “Holding” is another phase that can be used from time to time when your steer has fattened too quickly and thus must be fed a lower energy diet to ensure he is not overfat on show day. Each of these phases requires slightly different rations which will enable your calf to grow as optimally as possible. The amount of time spent in each one of these feeding phases depends greatly on the growth, health, breed-type, and frame size of your calf.

**Starting:** Getting your steer off to the right start is a very important factor in proper feeding management. Starter rations are formulated to provide energy, protein, minerals, and vitamins in the correct quantities to satisfy the requirements of calves that are not used to eating different types of feeds and/or may be stressed due to weaning. Below are some tips on the types and quantities of feed that starting cattle normally eat.

Feed as much good-quality, grassy-type hay as your calf will eat along with 0.5 to 0.75% of your calf's body weight of a starter ration for the first few days of feeding.

If your starter ration includes hay or silage, you may gradually decrease the amount of grassy hay fed to your steer and increase the amount of

starter ration being fed over the next 5-7 days until the grassy hay is completely eliminated.

If you are feeding a commercially prepared ration, start your calf off by feeding free-choice hay along with 0.5 lb. ration per 100 lb. of body weight.

**Growing:** Growing diets are normally formulated for cattle that range between 400 and 900 lb. that have previously been fed a starter ration for an appropriate period of time.

Growing diets are normally fed free choice and are moderate in energy to properly develop an animal's frame size and muscle before moving them to a finishing ration. Growing diets may be formulated for different amounts of gain (normally between 1.5 and 2.5 lb/day) and for different amounts of time depending on the frame size and maturity pattern of your calf. As previous experience is the key to knowing how long, and for what target average daily gain a calf should be fed a grower diet, consulting with an experienced cattle feeder, Nutritionist, or feed company is always a good suggestion.

**Finishing:** Finishing rations are designed to be high in energy which helps to increase average daily gain, muscle, and fat deposition. Most finishing rations are low in roughages (10% to 30%) and high in grain (70% to 90%). It is important to be careful when moving cattle from starter or grower rations to finishing rations as if you move your calf up to a finishing ration too quickly your steer will not be able to handle the high amount of grain in the diet and may become sick (bloat and/or acidosis) as a result. The amount of time steers should be on a finishing diet will vary according to breed type and frame size. However, to ensure that they are properly finished, most steers should normally be on a finishing ration for 100 to 150 days prior to show day.

Table 1 and Table 2 provide examples of different types of rations that can be used in feeding finishing steers. These are to be used as examples only, as changes in types of feeds and ingredients will affect the rations and

ultimately the performance of your calf. Always check with a Nutritionist or feed company to ensure you are feeding your calf a balanced diet in the correct amounts.

calf would be in each feeding phase if there were 220 days on feed from the time of purchase to the show date. Care must be taken when increasing the amount of commercial ration

TABLE 1	INGREDIENTS	STARTER	GROWER	F1	F2	F3	F4
	Dry Rolled Barley	27.0%	31.0%	37.0%	49.0%	61.0%	72.0%
	Commercial Supp. (pellet)	2.0%	2.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
	Barley Silage	71.0%	67.0%	60.0%	48.0%	36.0%	25.0%
	Approx. Days on Ration	14	60	8	8	8	122

TABLE 2	INGREDIENTS	STARTING	GROWING	FINISHING
	Commercial Ration	0.5 to 1 lb/100 lb BW	1 to 2 lb/100 lb BW	2 to 4 lb/100 lb BW or Free Choice
	Hay	Free Choice	Free Choice	2 to 5 lb/day
	Approx. Days on Ration	14	60	146

Table 1 describes a typical set of rations for steer calves fed for 220 days if you have the capability to mix the feed ingredients with a feed truck or wagon. Also listed is the approximate number of days a calf would be on each example ration as he is moved from the starter, to the grower, to the intermediate (F1, F2, F3), and finally to the top finishing ration (F4). In this example the steer would be allowed to eat as much as he would like each day as long as he is not overfed. Using this feeding system, care must be taken when changing from one ration to another to give your calf time to adjust to the higher amounts of barley being fed. Remember, the specific rations you feed at home, and the number of days you feed each ration, may vary greatly depending on the nutrients supplied by each ration ingredient, as well as the calf's breed type, frame size, and degree of fatness.

Table 2 is an example of how to feed a steer when using a commercially prepared, high-grain feed that includes all of the protein, minerals, and vitamins necessary to meet the animals' needs. The pounds of commercial ration to feed each day are listed as lb. per 100 lb. of body weight (BW). So, if you want to feed a steer 2 lb./100 lb. BW of the commercial ration and your steer weighs 600 lb., take 2 lb x 6 (600 ÷ 100) = 12 lb. of feed/day. Also, listed is the approximate number of days a

given to your calf in order for it to have time to adjust to the greater amounts of ration being fed. Remember, the specific type of complete ration you feed, and the number of days an animal should be kept in each feeding phase, will vary greatly depending on the nutrients supplied by the ration, as well as the calf's breed type, frame size, and degree of fatness.

**Holding:** Buying the right weight of calf and feeding them appropriately for their frame size and breed-type should reduce the likelihood of having an overfinished or underfinished steer. However, if you know your steer will be too fat for the show and you still have some days left before show day, the best advice is to increase the percentage of roughage in the diet and reduce the amount of grain. If we use Table 1 as an example, we may move the steer from an F4 ration back to an F3 or F2 ration in order to slow their fat development. If using Table 2 as an example, we would likely reduce the amount of commercial ration the calf is being fed while increasing the amount of hay. Holding a steer for an upcoming show is not easy and requires experience and skill. So, if you expect your calf may be overfinished by show day but don't know exactly what to do, ask someone with experience to help you devise a plan on how to reduce the rate of growth and fat development of your calf.

## SHOW HEIFER BASICS

When picking out or purchasing your heifer you will need to consider some very important factors that will influence how she will be judged at the fair. Heifers are different from steers in that they are judged primarily on structural soundness, balance, muscle, and volume.

Therefore, picking out the right heifer in the fall is very important to how successful you will be at the show in the spring.

However, the weight a heifer needs to be on show day is more related to her age than it is a target weight for the particular day.

## FEEDING YOUR SHOW HEIFER

Feeding show heifers is a somewhat different process than feeding show steers, as the objective is to grow them for optimum reproductive development rather than finish them for slaughter. There is no ideal weight range for heifers to be successful in the show ring. What is more important is that heifers are fed appropriately for their given age, frame size, and breed-type. If a heifer is not fed enough for her given genetics, the potential exists for her not to breed at an optimal age. Alternatively, if a heifer gets too fat, she may lose a great deal of her potential for future milk production. Some helpful hints in feeding your heifer project correctly are listed below:

For optimal reproductive performance, heifers should weigh at least 65% of their mature weight at breeding time (15 months of age). Therefore, to determine what your heifer needs to gain per day, estimate the mature weight of your heifer when you purchase her in the fall and multiply that weight by

0.65. Then, back calculate using the days on feed to determine what your heifer needs to gain to reach her target breeding age weight.

Example: On November 1st a 550 lb. exotic cross-bred heifer calf born on March 1st is 7 months old. A heifer calf with this genetic makeup should weigh 1,500 lb. at maturity. Therefore,  $1,500 \text{ lb.} \times 0.65 = 975 \text{ lb.}$  (Target weight at 15 months of age). From November 1st to July 1st (15 months of age) there are 242 days.  $975 \text{ lb.} - 550 \text{ lb.} = 425 \text{ lb.}$  of weight

gain required.  $425 \text{ lb.} \div 242 \text{ days} = 1.75 \text{ lb./d.}$  Thus, your heifer needs to gain at least 1.75 lb/d to reach her target breeding weight at the appropriate age. This will give you a good target estimate as to how well your heifer calf is gaining throughout the feeding period.

Although the above example sets a good standard to go by, one must remember that each heifer differs greatly in their rate of growth. Also, to be successful in the show ring, show heifers are usually required to gain

more and have a greater amount of fat cover than ordinary replacement heifers. So, to reach an optimum amount of condition for show, a heifer may need to gain anywhere between 2.0 to 2.5 lb/day. Therefore, feeding a growing diet like those in Table 1 or Table 2 (after feeding the correct starter rations for the appropriate amount of time) would likely be adequate for a show heifer.

## SUMMARY

This article provides some basic tools and information regarding the selection and feeding/nutrition of beef cattle project(s) for young and upcoming cattlemen. Please remember when reading this article that the example rations are just that! They are not intended to be used in the literal sense, as every animal is different and ration composition and feedstuff characteristics are always subject to change. Consulting with a Nutritionist, experienced cattle feeder, or feed company when it comes to designing specific rations for your project(s) is always a good idea. Always keep in mind; the more questions you ask the better, so don't be afraid to talk to as many people as possible about any topic related to feeding or showing your calves. Good luck and most importantly, **Have Fun!**

*Dr. Aaron Grant is an Independent Consulting Beef Cattle Nutritionist with Nutrition Service Associates in Okotoks, Alberta.*

**“There is no ideal weight range for heifers to be successful in the show ring.”**





# HALTER BREAKING

Craig Flewelling

**H**ave you ever imagined exhibiting the Grand Champion at your local fair? Do you raise purebred livestock, either as a business or a hobby? Do you have competitive genes flowing through your veins as well as the desire to compare your cattle with those of your peers? If you do, then you will know that there is no greater feeling than being awarded the Championship honour.

There are basically three things that have to coincide to make a Champion. First of all, you must have the goods. The animal that you are exhibiting must be worthy of being named Champion. Second, you must have luck. A little bit of luck on your side helps to make things possible. In these times of rapid technology and breed advancement, as well as stronger breeding establishments, competition is much more equal. It sometimes seems that luck is the deciding factor. Third, it takes a lot of hard work to achieve the maximum potential of your animal. If you are considering winning a championship, you must realize that maximum potential because the competition today is so competitive, and they have so much ability that you can be assured they will realize the maximum potential from their animals.

Halter breaking may seem to be one of the less colourful roles in the making of a champion, but let me tell you if it is done properly and in the correct time period, it can give you a tremendous advantage.

Many people have asked me, when should I halter break our show calves? My reply is: if you are thinking of halter breaking, now is a

good time to do it. It seems you have to be in the right mind set to proceed with halter breaking, preferably you will need to devote three or four hours each day, for a period of three of four days in a row. If you are halter breaking outside, the weather should be moderate, not raining and not hot.

Personally, I think the most opportune age to halter break your calves is about three and a half to five months of age. At this age they seem to be able to respond to being under your control and are at an age where you can gain their trust fairly quickly. Another reason to halter break at this earlier age is that they usually don't have the strength or desire to hurt themselves like more mature cattle would. Cattle that are more mature can still be halter broken, it just takes more time. When halter breaking females, it is a lot easier and safer to halter break heifers before they are pregnant. They don't need to be subjected to that much stress when they are in calf. Bulls that are going to bull sales should be done as early as possible. I find cattle that have been halter broken earlier are quieter around people. They also have a lot more ability to gain. Probably the best reason I can give for halter breaking early, is that the numbers on my birthday cards are getting bigger, and the smaller the calves the better I enjoy it.

There are a couple of things you need before you head out to halter break. One, you should always have a pocket knife in your possession when working with livestock. You never know when a situation will arise that you need to cut a halter, and please make sure your knife has an edge on

it capable of just that. If you work around cattle long enough, you will undoubtedly come upon a situation where you have to free an animal that has gotten itself in some trouble. That little knife in your pocket could easily be the difference between a satisfactory outcome or an unhappy one.

Secondly, you must have patience to halter break. If you don't have patience, "don't bother". There are few things more satisfactory than gaining a young animal's trust. Your patience and gentleness will return rewards very quickly. It is amazing how fast you can gain the trust of most young animals. I am sure there are different ways to halter break, but this is the way that has been successful for me.

**Halter Breaking:** Confine the group or individual animals that you plan to halter break in a chute or alleyway where you are in control of them. Using a one half inch diameter nylon rope halter, fit it correctly on each animal's head. Make sure that the eyelet hole in the halter is large enough for the rope to pass through it easily. The mechanics of halter breaking are fairly simple. With as little fan fair as possible, get your animal to a sturdy post and secure your rope approximately 18 to 24 inches off the ground. Give the animal about 12 to 18 inches of slack in the rope, and tie the rope using a knot that you can easily get undone. The first time that you tie an animal up, they are naturally going to put up a scrap. Also, this is the reason the eyelet hole in the halter must be open enough for the rope to slide easily. Back to the mechanics, the more the

calf pulls, the tighter the rope gets, the more pain it inflicts under the calf's chin and behind its ears. As the calf learns to stand with slack in the rope, the pressure on the rope is reduced, and the calf will stand there without pain. If the eyelet is too small, the rope will not release, and the calf will be in pain constantly, and will probably never give up the fight.

Calves are similar to humans, they will all learn at different rates. Some will almost stand immediately, while others have a strong spirit and will fight and flop on their side. As long as these "flopsters" keep their neck straight, they will usually get up on their own. If you feel they need assistance getting to their feet, untie the rope and they will get up. When approaching an animal that is on its side, always do so along their back. Do not get close to their legs, for when they start thrashing, they could make contact with you. If their head gets under their body, you are heading for trouble and need to intervene by releasing the rope. Get the calf on its feet and secure him to the post once again. Usually, this is caused by giving the calf too much slack, or tying them too high. Make sure you don't secure the rope too high up the post. If the calf does a flop, he could break his neck or collapse his windpipe, and that's when you need that pocket knife. As I mentioned earlier, the larger the cattle the more excitement you get. If you are like me, I can't stand too much excitement, so once again, halter break younger cattle. **Never** leave calves unattended on the first couple of days of halter breaking. After a short time of being secured, you can identify the calves that are responding the quickest, and with a brush or comb, start making one on one contact. They will likely fly around for a short time, but with your patience, they will quickly respond to the comb. I like to use a blower later on the first day, and without getting too

aggressive, they will begin to respond. The lead shank on the rope should be 8 1/2 to 9 1/2 feet long for halter breaking. With a rope this long you can make your knot further away from the calf's head.

On the first day I like to keep the calves tied up for about four to five hours. The more times you make advancement toward the calf and touch him with a brush or comb, the quicker they seem to become comfortable being around you. At the end of the first day, take the halters off and let the calves back in their pens or back to their mothers.

The second day you will find some of the calves are harder to catch. They are some of the tougher ones and know what is in store. Again tie each calf to a secure post of their own. Keep them far enough apart from each other that they won't get tangled up. When you have them all tied up, get your comb or brush and proceed to gain their confidence again.

The third day you will find the majority of the calves will just stand at the posts, offering very little resistance to the rope or your actions. By this time, some of the calves are anticipating being brushed or combed, and the blower is having very little affect on them.

By the fourth day, you can usually run the calves in a small confinement, and once the calves feel the halter on their head, they will stand still. Most of the calves will lay down at the post they are secured to as well as look forward to your attention. Now that the calves have respect for you and the halter, it is a good time to continue the halter breaking process and teach them to lead. As long as they are quiet and have respect for the rope, they will lead easily.

You will also find that when you have visitors call to view your calves, once you enter the field with a stranger, the

calves will be very quiet. This has a two-fold effect. It is very impressive to a visitor when these animals have a quiet disposition. Secondly, a potential buyer can get close enough to the animal to analyse them to their fulfillment. Also, quiet animals will take to feed so much easier and get the utmost potential from the feed.

Once an animal has been halter broke they will usually respect the halter for the rest of their life. This will prove very beneficial when animals are offered for sale, treating in the pasture, or securing your animals to give them assistance.

**Leading:** To teach cattle how to lead, once again requires patience. When you have gained their confidence, and they have respect for the halter, you can begin the process of training your cattle to lead. Begin by leading each calf back to the gate where they will meet with their mothers or return to their pens. By pulling on the halter with constant pressure, they will often bolt ahead. Don't let them get past you or get advancing too fast. When they stop, put pressure on the halter again to make them come forward. Remember, as your animal begins to move forward, release the pressure on the halter. In essence you are rewarding the calf for responding to your lead. Eventually your calves will walk beside you or behind you, as they know they are going back to their pens. It seems quiet cattle often get stubborn at home, yet in a lot of instances, they will lead surprisingly well when taken to a strange environment.

Once the calves have total respect for the halter, you can start tying them with their head higher (approximately eye level). This will help in training your calves to stand still. They will remain at ease while fitting them for the showing as well as during stall preparation. Good Luck and Have Fun!

# MAKING A ROPE HALTER



Start with 12' to 15' feet of 1/2" nylon rope.



Measure off 15" to 18" from one end. This will be the nose band.



Spread the rope at 15" to 18" passing the long end through it.



Form a loop a little bigger than the rope so the rope will slide through it.



Open the braid next to the loop and bring the short end through it.



Twist the short piece of the rope to form three loops.



Bring the long piece through the three loops.



Continue the long piece through the three loops then through the first loop.



A formed halter.



Cole Harvie

# FITTING DEMO



Scott Harvie

You will need the following equipment to wash your animal:

- washsuit or wash pants
- rubber boots
- water bucket
- soap
- scotch comb
- scrub brush
- water hose



First comb out your animal to get rid of all of the loose hair, dirt and debris.



Start to wet your animal at the feet, to get them used to the water.



Hold the hose high pointing down on your animal, taking care not to soak anyone around you.



Completely wet your animal, starting at the back and working forwards, from top to bottom.



When you are washing the head, hold the ears shut to ensure water does not get in their ears.

# Washing



Mix the soap and water in a bucket.



Using a scrub brush, apply soap to the head and stained areas on your animal.



Slowly pour the bucket of soapy water down the back of the animal starting at the tail and moving to the front.

Using a scrub brush, scrub the rest of the body in a forward motion.



With the hose, rinse out all of the soap starting at the back to the front, and top to bottom.



After your animal is completely rinsed, use the back of your comb and squeegee off the excess water.

Comb your animal straight down from back to front, and then comb your animal all forward, from back to front.



# Blow Drying



Blower

Start blowing at the front on the neck and work your way to the back from top to bottom, blowing all hair forward.



Ensure your animal is completely dry before you begin to clip or fit.

Clippers:

*Left* – Small clippers for fine work.

*Top* – Shears for longer hair.

*Bottom* – Flat head clippers for tight shaving close to the skin (head, tail and brisket).



Shave the tail using the flat head clippers. This makes the animal's rump appear wider.

Shave the head with the flat head clippers. This will make the skull appear longer.



# Clipping



Shave down the front of the neck and brisket. This helps the front end look tidier and the neck extension appear longer.

Using the shears, clip the longer body guard hair. Start on the top line working from back to front and top to bottom.



With the shears, trim and blend the shaved areas so there are no lines and all the hair is blended in.

Trim the longer belly hair to even out the under line of your animal, to make your animal appear deeper.



Blend in the shoulders to make them look smooth.

Blend in the top of the neck to make the neck appear longer.



# Fitting



The first step in fitting is boning the legs. Boning the legs makes the animal appear to have more bone and makes the animal appear more structurally correct. Using a grooming glue spray the glue on the outside of the back leg, a little at a time, starting at the hoof and working up, pulling the hair straight up each time. Be sure to spray a little glue at a time and then comb upwards and forward.



Bone the inside of the back leg up to the hock.



When boning the front legs, the outside of the front leg should be done up to the top of the leg. The inside of the leg should be boned up to the knee.



Comb the hair on the tail head up and spray it with glue.



Using the shears, trim the tail head down to make the spine and the animal look longer and straighter.

Clip the legs to give them the proper shape and correctness.



Comb the top line upwards and forwards and then spray with glue. Using the shears, clip the topline straight.

Spray on show oil and using the blower, blow it in forwards to make the hair coat shine. Do not spray show oil where you have used glue as it will soften the hold of the glue.

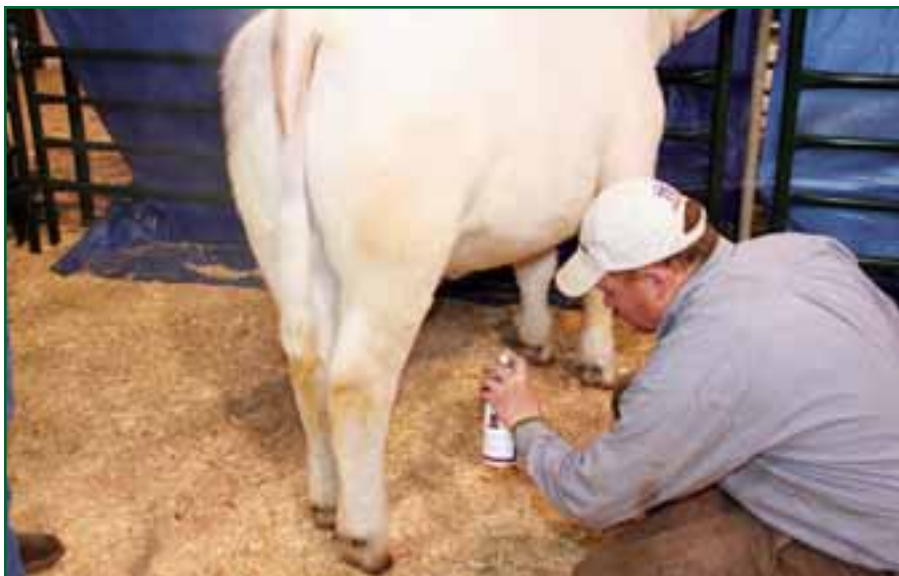




Before photo



After photo



After showing, you will need to remove the glue from your animal. Use show oil spray or glue remover everywhere glue was used and rub it into the hair and then comb through to ensure all glue is being removed. You will then need to completely wash your animal to remove all of the show sprays and oils used for fitting.

## *How to Use a Halter*



The noseband is too low on the nose.



The noseband is too high.

This is the proper placement of the halter.



## *How to Grip a Halter*



The correct way to grip the lead shank when setting up your animal.



The correct way to grip the lead shank when leading your animal.

The correct way to hold the lead shank and show stick when leading your animal.



*Showing*

## *Leading Your Animal*



Holding the head of the animal too low.



Holding the head of the animal too high.

## *Proper Stances for Photos*



The animal is too stretched out.



The animal is not stretched out enough.



This is the proper placement of feet for a photo.



# SHOWMANSHIP

*Craig Scott, Charolais Banner*

Showmanship is the ability to show your animal off to the judge to have the best chance of winning. Showmanship starts at home by working with your animal, if your animal knows you and feels at ease with you, it will be calmer and act better in the show ring. There are many aspects of showmanship. When you show up at the ring have your animal well presented and have the right equipment; show halter, show stick, scotch comb, and a show harness with the right show number in it. Be at the ring early for your class to help the marshal get the class lined up to go.

## SHOW RING PROCEDURES

- Dress clean and neat.
- The show person should walk at the left side of the animal's head, so the judge can get a good look at the front of the animal.
- You should keep the halter shank tight at all times so you can feel the movement of the animal.

- You should know who the judge and ringman are, and keep an eye on the judge at all times. Be alert and respond to the directions given by the ringman.

- When you stop, switch the show stick to the right hand and the shank to the left, letting the excess shank hang down.

- Set the animal's feet square under them. If you wish the inside back leg (the one on the judge's side) may be slightly back.

- Keep your animal's head up in a natural position.

- Scratch the underline of your animal with your show stick to keep it content. Scratch slow and easy, you are not trying to saw the animal in half. Do not try to keep them calm by rattling the chain on the halter.

- When you are setting the feet, apply pressure on the halter, push back when you are moving the feet back, and pull forward when you

are moving the feet forward. Try just to use your foot not the show stick to move the front feet.

- You should stand about 8" to 12" away from the animal.

- When the judge approaches, smile, stop scratching and step back slightly so that the judge can get a good look at your animal. Try not to get in the judge's way when they are looking at your animal.

- If the judge touches your animal, take your scotch comb and comb the hair back in place, after he moves on to the next animal.

- Keep watching the judge but don't stare at him.

- When asked to line up, move as soon as you are asked to do so. Leave enough room between animals so you can use your show stick.

- When you are asked to change positions, pull straight out of line turn to the right and go back through the hole you just came out of, and pull into the position you were told to move to.

- Keep your animal in as straight a line as possible.

- Do not stop showing until you are out of the showing, you can still win showmanship regardless of where your animal placed.

- After the judge has completed placing, stay alert and continue showing. Watch for the ringman's directions to leave the ring.

- For the most success, stay calm and have fun. You have worked hard all year so enjoy your show day.





When moving the front feet of your animal apply pressure with your foot.



When moving the back foot forward place the hook of the showstick just above the hoof and pull forward also pulling slightly forward on the halter.



Moving the back foot back push just above the split of the toes also push back on the halter.



When the judge approaches from the handler's side take a step out in front of your calf and scratch your calf between the front legs with your showstick.



When the judge moves to the front of your calf take a step back to the side. Always keep your eye on the judge.



# ON MARKETING YOUR PROJECT STEER

*Kari & Kimberly Kondratowicz*

**Y**ou may not realize it now, but knowing how to successfully market your steer will be a very beneficial skill that will take you to places and carry you forward in life no matter which path you take.

Marketing, simply put, is the ability to sell your product to as many people as possible. In our case, the product of course, is your animal.

The benefits of a successful marketing campaign are endless. You may notice a common denominator...

Short-term benefits? More money for your product. The more prospective buyers you have, the higher the purchase price, right?

Long-term benefits? Even more moola! You are acquiring what we would like to call an essential life skill. As producers, no matter the industry, being successful at marketing your product allows you to continue to thrive and enjoy profits in your business.

So let's get started! Be passionate. Be confident. Be knowledgeable. Believe in your product and stand behind it. That is what has brought us a sense of satisfaction – sticking with Charolais in an Angus dominated market. Words cannot express the feeling of being slapped Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion with a set of identical Char cross steers, and then walking back into the ring the following year to do it all over again.

Keep in mind, this does not magically happen. Getting your steer 'ready' involves a solid commitment and work ethic. It starts with animal selection, halter breaking, a solid feeding and finishing program, hair training and clipping, and let us not forget, marketing! Remember, it is to your advantage to put in the time. Come

show or sale day, you will have no regrets. The most important part of marketing is to create relationships... and always be memorable. Remember, they are actually buying into Y-O-U, so sell yourself! Show them the value of you as their investment. Be enthusiastic about your product and what it means to you. This is where the passion lies. They are investing in you, the future. It is far beyond a business transaction. By supporting you, they are supporting what you represent – local community, education, and agriculture, ultimately allowing youth to prosper. And it goes full circle, as you too may be the future of their business.

Here are some steps:

**Meet & Greets:** these are a great way to establish a rapport with a potential buyer. Think of all the people your family does business with, and then go beyond. Be creative and think outside of the box.

**A formal letter:** reiterating who you are, what exactly you are requesting, the type and amount of investment you are proposing, and the return or benefits they will receive through their investment. You may wish to make mention of the potential for exposure and publicity. If you decide to approach a corporation, keep in mind that for the most part, they will have already allocated funds by the end of the year. Timing is everything. Approach them at the beginning of the year when they first get their budgets. Professionalism is important. Remember, you're asking for more than \$3 for a box of chocolates.

**Organize a social event:** this gives you an opportunity to invite prospective buyers...and don't forget to send out a personal invitation. This is an occasion for them to get to know you better, but

save the sales pitch! This is your opportunity to sell you, not your steer. They are buying everything you stand for. Be genuine and relate with them on topics other than the sale of your steer. Now that you've come this far, be sure to:

**Invite them to the sale.** You may wish to call a few weeks in advance to remind them of sale day. Don't take 'no' for an answer. If they are unable to attend, then get a reserve bid.

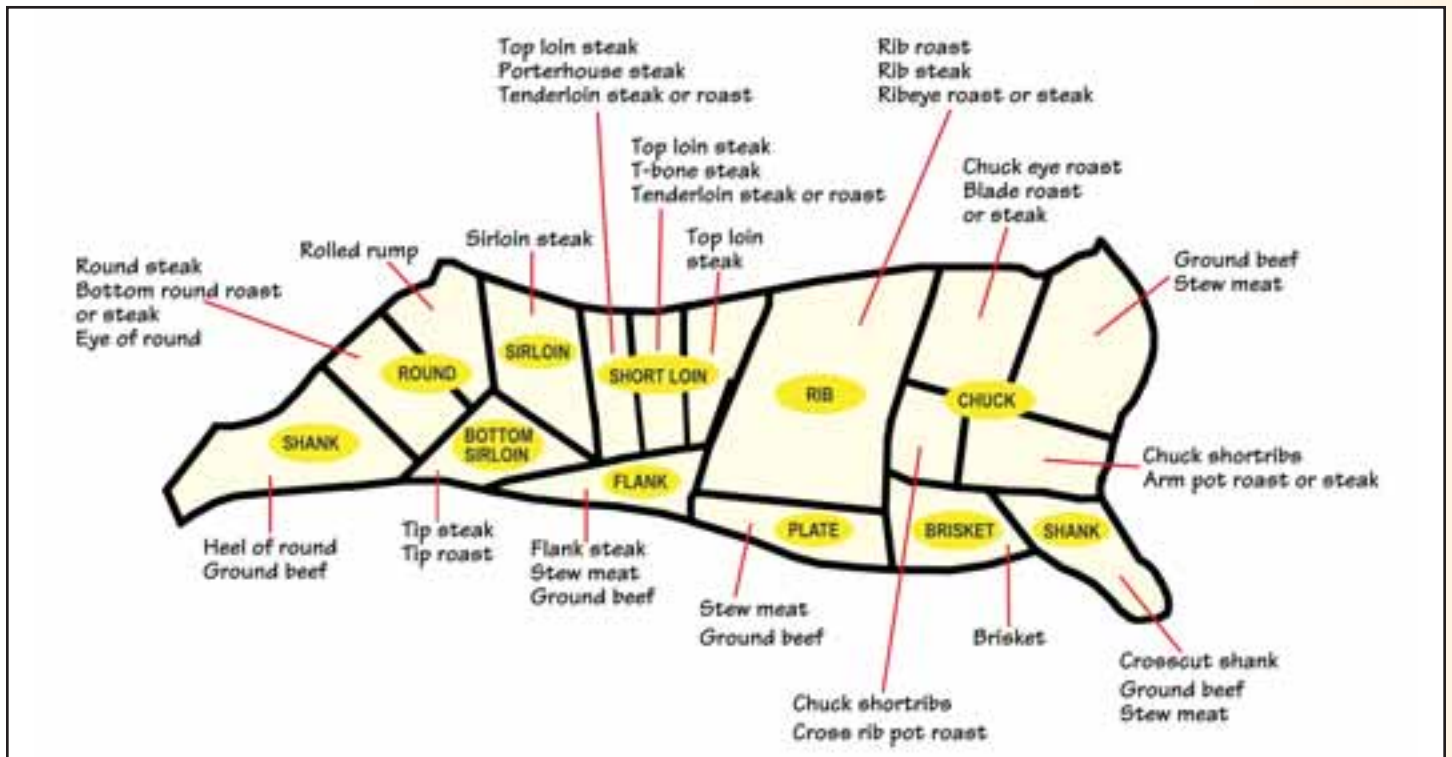
Your work is not over until the auctioneer says "Sold!". Continue to speak with prospective buyers, even if your steer is already 'sold'. This is a win-win situation; it creates hype in the sale ring and the price can only go up. Remember, don't stop short of the finish line!

**Say Thank You.** Send out a classy plaque with a picture of you and your steer and have your buyer's name engraved. This is a good way to show your appreciation and maintain the relationship.

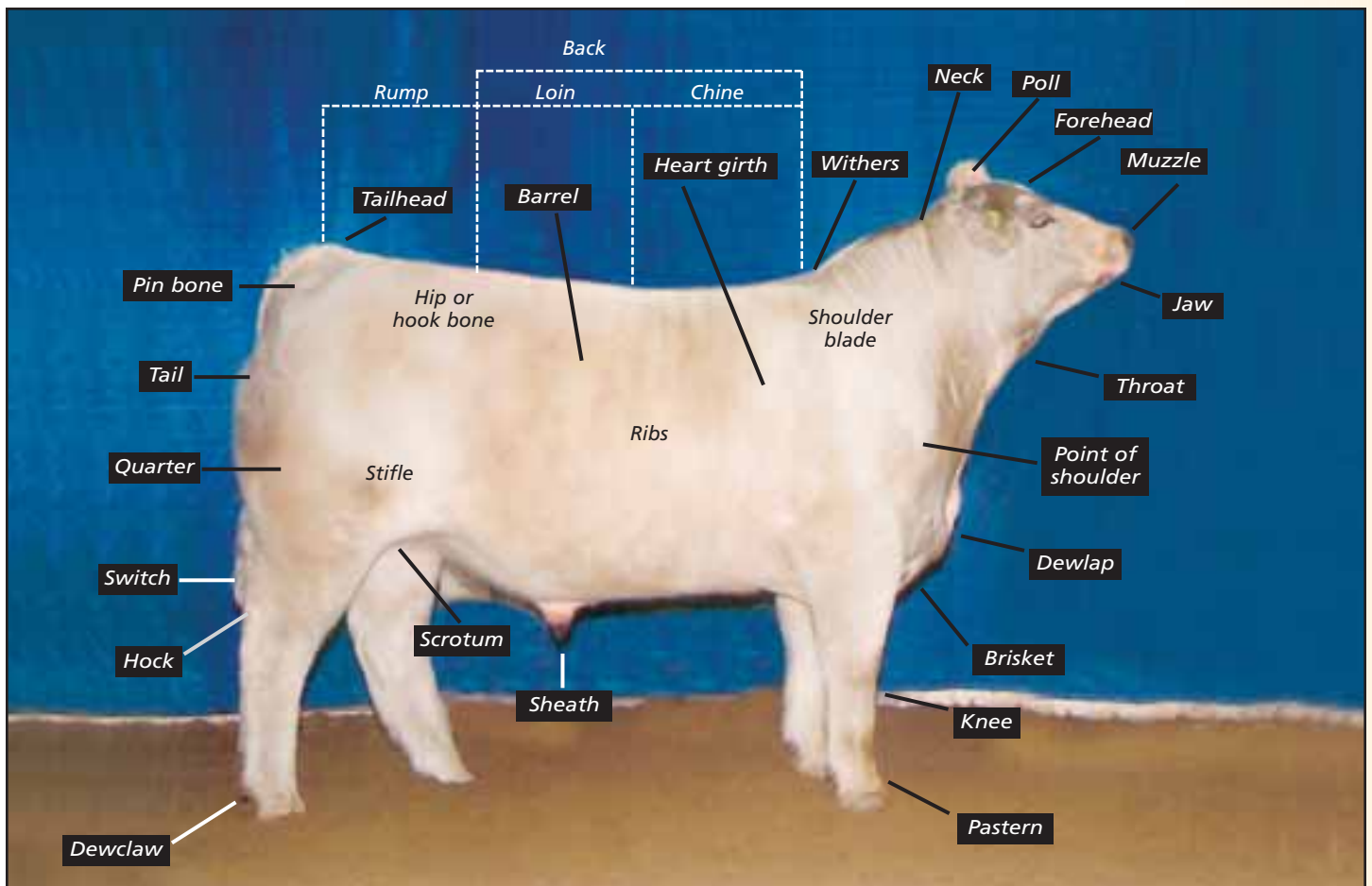
Quite truthfully, the skills we have acquired through our commitment to the Charolais breed and involvement in the 4H program are part of the foundation for which we have each built our existence today. Take it seriously. Hard work and perseverance pays off – not only in the money-sense. You will find it is the people and the experiences gained that will prove most valuable. And may you never forget to give your parents a hefty hug and Thank You. They are your strongest support system and without them, nothing would be possible.

Remember, it all starts with you, a lil idea, and some solid work ethic. Don't set limits for yourself and always dream BIG.

# ANATOMY OF THE BEEF ANIMAL



# PARTS OF THE BEEF ANIMAL



# BEEF GLOSSARY

## **AVERAGE DAILY GAIN (ADG)**

Measurement of daily body weight change in a animal on a feed test. Most tests are 140 to 160 days.

## **ADJUSTED WEANING WEIGHT (WW)**

An unshrunk weight adjusted to ether 365, 452 or 550 days of age.

## **ADJUSTED YEARLING WEIGHT (YW)**

An unshrunk weight adjusted to ether 365, 452 or 550 days of age.

## **BODY CONDITION SCORE**

A score on a scale of 1 to 9, reflecting the amount of fat reserves in a cows body, where 1 = very thin and 9 = extremely fat.

## **CARCASS QUALITY GRADE**

An estimate of palatability based primarily on marbling and maturity and generally to a lesser extent on color, texture, and firmness of lean.

## **CONCEPTION**

The fertilization of the ovum (egg). The act of conceiving or becoming pregnant.

## **CONFORMATION**

The shape and arrangement of the different body parts of an animal.

## **CONTEMPORARY GROUP**

A group of cattle that are the same breed and sex and have been raised in the same management group (same location on the same feed and pasture). Contemporary groups should include as many cattle as can be accurately compared.

## **CULLING**

The process of eliminating less productive or less desirable cattle from a herd.

## **CUTABILITY**

An estimate of the percentage of salable meat or muscle from a carcass vs. the percentage of waste fat.

## **DRESSING PERCENT**

A carcass measurement term which represents the (chilled carcass weight /live weight) x 100.

## **EMBRYO**

A fertilized ovum (egg) in the earlier

stages of prenatal development usually prior to development of body parts.

## **EMBRYO TRANSFER (ET)**

Removing embryos from one cow (donor dam) and placing these embryos into other cows (host or recipient cows), usually accompanied by hormone-induced superovulation of the donor dam. More calves can be obtained from cows of superior breeding value by this technique. Only proven producers should become donor dams.

## **EXPECTED PROGENY DIFFERENCE (EPD)**

The difference in performance to be expected from progeny of a sire, compared with that expected from future progeny of the average bull in the same test. EPD is an estimate based on progeny testing and is equal to one-half the estimate of breeding value obtainable from the progeny test records. EPDs for growth traits are generally expressed in pounds, either as a plus difference or minus difference from the population average. EPDs are generally reported in the units of measure of the traits (e.g., pounds, cm, cm<sup>2</sup>, percent, etc.)

## **F1**

Offspring resulting from the mating of a purebred (straightbred) bull to purebred (straightbred) females of another breed.

## **FEED CONVERSION**

Units of feed consumed per unit of weight gained. Also the production (meat milk) per unit of feed consumed.

## **HETEROSIS (HYBRID VIGOR)**

Amount by which measured traits of the crossbreds exceed the average of the two or more purebreds that are mated to produce the crossbred.

## **HETEROZYGOUS**

Genes of a specific pair (alleles) are different in an individual.

## **HOMOZYGOUS**

Genes of a specific pair (alleles) are alike in an individual.

## **HOT CARCASS WEIGHT**

Weight of carcass just prior to chilling.

## **LACTATION**

The period following calving during which milk is formed in the udder.

## **MARBLING**

The specks of fat (intramuscular fat) distributed in the muscle tissue. Marbling is usually evaluated in the ribeye between the 12th and 13th rib.

## **PROGENY**

The offspring of animals.

## **RIB EYE AREA**

Area of longissimus muscle measured in square inches at the 12th and 13th rib.

## **SCROTAL CIRCUMFERENCE**

A measurement of testicle size obtained by measuring the distance around the testicles in the scrotum with a circular tape.

## **SCURS**

Horny tissue of rudimentary horns that are attached to the skin rather than the bony part of the head.

## **SEEDSTOCK BREEDER**

Producers of breeding stock for purebred and commercial breeders.

## **TERMINAL SIRE**

Sires used in a crossbreeding system where all the progeny, both male and female, are marketed. For example, F1 crossbred dams could be bred to sires of a third breed and all calves marketed. Although this system allows maximum heterosis and complementary of breeds, replacement females must come from other herds.

## **ULTRASONIC MEASUREMENTS**

Used to estimate carcass and reproductive characteristics. Operates off the principle that sound waves echo differently with different densities of tissue.

## **WEIGHT PER DAY OF AGE (WDA)**

Weight of an individual divided by days of age.

# Stan Jacobs

Cow Boss  
Douglas Lake Ranch

Jacobs is the Cattle Manager at the historic Douglas Lake Ranch. The 514,000 acre Douglas Lake Ranch runs a 7000 head cowherd of which 2500 are black baldie (Horned Hereford x Black Angus) cows weighing 1200 lbs. on average. These cows have been successfully bred to Charolais bulls for over 20 years. This cross breeding system has been very productive in this harsh environment. The cows graze on average 320 days a year, then for the remaining 45 days leading up to calving, are fed a low maintenance ration.

"The cows start calving March 20th in the pasture on grass. The easiest calving cows at Douglas Lake are the Baldies bred to Charolais bulls, next to zero time is spent calving these cows. We are also very pleased with the extra weight the Charolais calves provide, with 40 extra pounds at weaning time. These silver and buckskin calves are easy to market in the fall. In the past 4 or 5 years the silver calves bring as much as the buckskin or tan calves. There are no discounts on the silvers and in some cases they bring more. We are very satisfied with the repeat buyers we have purchasing our calves. The buyers are really happy with the carcass yield, grade and the close out at slaughter."

"Charolais has helped the ranch and done a good job for us, Charolais definitely have proven themselves. Instead of being something that they are not, go with what they are. It's definitely correct to say that Charolais is the #1 Terminal Sire."

"In the past 4 or 5 years the silver calves bring as much as the buckskin or tan calves"

"The easiest calving cows at Douglas Lake are the Baldies bred to Charolais bulls, next to zero time is spent calving these cows".

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# ARE YOU INTERESTED IN...



- ✓ Having *FUN* & meeting *NEW FRIENDS*?
- ✓ Getting involved in *GROUP ACTIVITIES*?
- ✓ *LEARNING* more about yourself & the cattle industry?
- ✓ Developing leadership and *IMPROVE* social skills?

Then check us out at:  
<http://youth.charolais.com>



Canadian Charolais  
Youth Association