

6.3 Management post weaning

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VETS30030 / VETS90123



Bodyweight change

- Ideally use electronic scales to be able to measure change of bodyweight over time to meet growth rate needs (CMW or sale weight)
- Can draft on bodyweight to feed separately e.g. feed smaller heifers more to get whole herd to ideal CMW

Condition score

- Important skill as quick and cheap to do
- Reference range for individual and herd
- Note there are different systems around world, Australian beef system is 1-5 (images here and following this video)
- Note dairy system in Australia is 1-8, not 1-5
- Weighing better able to monitor small changes but impacted more by gut fill (or empty)
- Difference in single BCS may equate to 50kg or more hence doesn't pick up small change

Minimum required condition scores (expect an average condition score to be at least 0.5 higher) ¹					
		Joining	Calving	Mid lactation	Weaning
SPRING CALVERS	Helpers	Depending on the breed, heifers should join when 300+ kg	3.0		
	Cows	3.0	2.5	2.5	2.5
	Bulls	3.5			
AUTUMN CALVERS	Helpers	Depending on the breed, heifers should join when 300+ kg	3.0 – 3.5		
	Cows	3.0	3.5	2.5 – 3.0	3.0
	Bulls	3.5			

Autumn-calving cows need extra body condition, compared with spring-calving cows, as a resource to use if the feed supply does not provide enough energy for themselves and their calf.⁴

Body condition score 1 – Poor

A very low level of musculature, and no evidence of any fat. Skeletal structure is very pronounced.



Body condition score 2 – Backward

Backbone, shoulder bones and hips are visible. Tail head is slightly recessed. Ribs faintly visible.



Body condition score 3 – Moderate

Hip bones are faintly visible, ribs are usually not visible. Tail head is not recessed. Body outline is almost smooth.



Body condition score 4 – Forward

Ribs are well covered and hip bones are not visible. Tail head is slightly bumpy. The overall body shape is rounded.



Body condition score 5 – Fat

Hip bones show fat deposits. Tail head has large lump of fat. Ribs bones are very well covered. Overall shape is bulging due to fatness.



Photos: Jo Miller, formerly Queensland Government. Click here for a two-page print-friendly copy.

Bull testing (BBSE)

- Bull breeding soundness examination – BullCheck
- Physical exam – structure and reproductive tract
- Exam testes and scrotal size
- Serving assessment
- Collection/assessment semen
- Laboratory exam semen
- Some of these processes done at or soon after weaning e.g. assess testes



Pregnancy testing

- Important to know which cows in calf and when for (especially in long joining)
- If seasonal herd, likely to occur similar time each year
- Now using ultrasound +/- manual (including lay operators)
- Still act of Veterinary Science in some states
- Generally >6 weeks post bull removal from herd



Supplementary feeding

- Significant variation from one enterprise to next
- Variety of different feedstuffs depending on local availability
- Overall a form of higher energy (often grain base) with roughage
- May occur in paddock, containment area or feedlot
- May need to make decisions on what stock should be retained if supplementary feeding costs are too high compared to stock value



Fat score

- Fat score used for readiness for market segment
- Different to condition score (note 1-6)

There is increasing pressure for cattle sellers to meet market specifications for fat depth, and a failure to meet fat requirements will often result in significant price discounts offered by cattle buyers. Outlined in Appendix 1, table 9 (page 11), there are six fat scores ranging from 1 (lean) to 6 (fat). The amount of fat coverage for each score is shown in table 3.

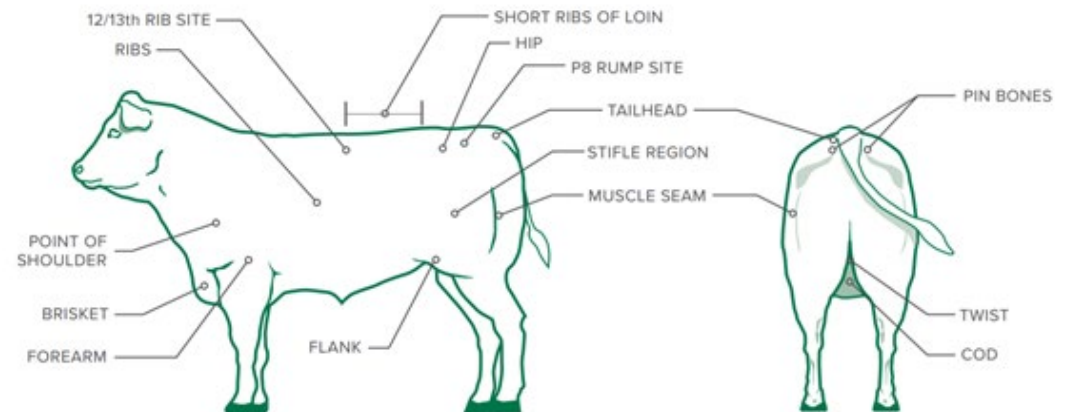
Table 3: Score fat table

Score	P8 site (mm)	12th rib (mm)
1	0-2	0-1
2	Over 2 up to 6	2-3
3	Over 6 up to 12	4-7
4	Over 12 up to 22	8-12
5	Over 22 up to 32	13-18
6	32+	18+

Source: AUSmeat



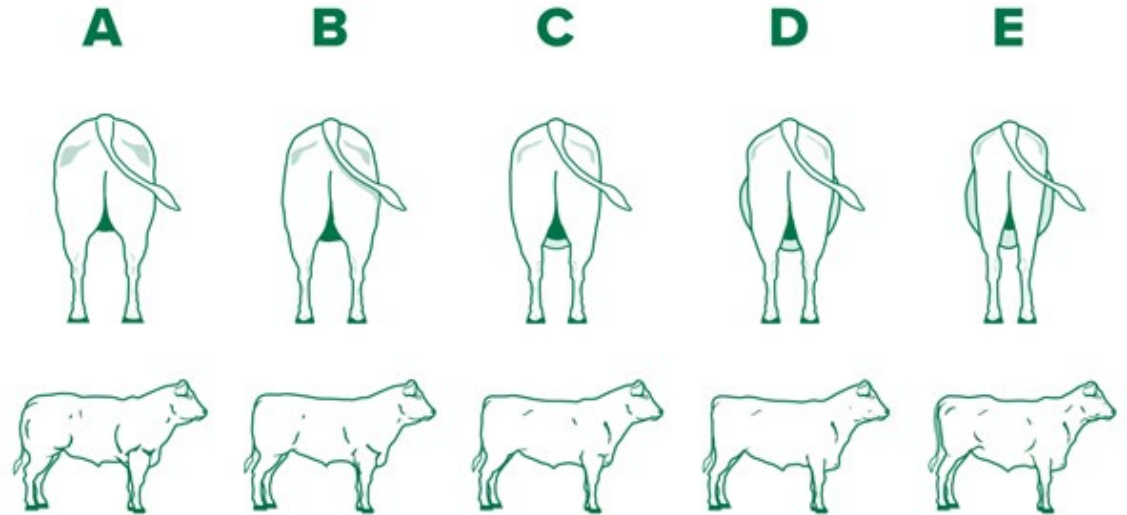
Figure 1: Reference points used for fat assessment



Muscle score

- Beef cattle generally higher muscle score than dairy
- Muscle score used as a descriptor for carcass quality
- Beef cattle generally C or greater (varies on breed etc), dairy cows often D or E

Figure 2: The five muscle scores



https://www.mla.com.au/globalassets/mla-corporate/prices--markets/documents/minlrs-information-brochures-etc/mla_cattle-assessment-manual_jan-2017.pdf

Cattle sales

- Range of sales may occur
 - Prime – ready for abattoir
 - Store – to be fattened elsewhere (farm/feedlot)
- Store sales may happen at any age, no need to be “finished” stock
- Sales via Auctionsplus direct from farm (either prime or store)
- Sales of prime stock direct to abattoir – either through agent or direct
- Larger farms and farms based in northern Australia more likely to sell via direct sale to an abattoir, via a grid or via Auctionsplus
- Smaller farms more likely via saleyard

TEYS AUSTRALIA NARACORTE PTY LTD

GRASS FED HGP FREE GRID

HGP FREE ONLY

MSA GRASS
MSA ANGUS
EU GRASS

Grid No 007

Tey's Australia Grading System

DATE: 22/03/21

GRASS FED	EU GRASSLANDS				GRASSLANDS				ANGUS				MSA STEER				STEERS							
BONING GROUPS	1-4	5-8	1-4	5-8	1-4	5-8	1-4	5-8	1-8	1-8	Y0 S	Y1 S	Y2 S	Y3 S	Y4 S	Y5 S	S	S1	S2	S3				
TEETH	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-2	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4
FAT	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22	5-22
FAT PENALTIES	Fat Penalties apply over 22mm																							
BRUISING	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4
MEAT COLOUR	1B-4	1B-4	1B-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4	1A-4
FAT COLOUR	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-4	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-3
WEIGHT	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	180-360	180-360	180-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420	240-420
PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE	PRICE
360+	PREMIUM PRICES CONTACT YOUR NEAREST TEYS BUYER										660	655	650	620	610	600	590	580	570	560	550	540	530	520
340-360											660	655	650	620	610	600	590	580	570	560	550	540	530	520
320-340											660	655	650	620	610	600	590	580	570	560	550	540	530	520
300-320											660	655	650	620	610	600	590	580	570	560	550	540	530	520
280-300											655	650	645	615	605	595	585	575	565	555	545	535	525	515
260-280											650	645	640	610	600	590	580	570	560	550	540	530	520	510
240-260											645	640	635	605	590	580	570	560	550	540	530	520	510	500
220-240											640	-	-	-	585	575	565	555	545	535	525	515	505	495
200-220											635	-	-	-	575	565	555	545	535	525	515	505	495	485
180-200											630	-	-	-	565	555	545	535	525	515	505	495	485	475
160-180											-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
140-160											-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
120-140											-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
100-120											-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
< 100											-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

- EU, PRICE APPLIES ONLY TO EU ACCREDITED PRODUCERS & ARE SUBJECT TO CHILLER ASSESSMENT MC 1B-4 FC 0-4

- EU CATTLE ARE REQUIRED TO BE MSA REGISTERED & ACCOMPANIED WITH AN MSA DECLARATION

- GRASSLANDS PRICES APPLY ONLY TO ELIGIBLE CATTLE FROM PHS ACCREDITED UNDER THE GRASSLANDS PASTUREBRED STANDARD

- MSA ANGUS (BLACK ANGUS MINIMUM 17% ANGUS MINIMUM 1 DECK APPLIES) AND TEYS ANGUS DECLARATION WITH CONSIGNMENT

- MSA PRICES APPLIES ONLY TO MSA ACCREDITED PRODUCERS WHERE AN MSA DECLARATION IS SENT WITH THE CATTLE

- EU, GRASSLANDS, ANGUS, MSA PRICES APPLY ONLY WHEN MINIMUM MSA REQUIREMENTS ARE MET (100 kg fat > 30mm, pH=5.71, adequate fat distribution) PLUS COMPANY SPECIFICATIONS

- A MINIMUM OF 1 DECK OF MSA CATTLE APPLIES PER CONSIGNMENT TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR PREMIUMS

- DISCOUNTS WILL APPLY FOR THE FOLLOWING: FAT & MEAT COLOUR, FAT DISTRIBUTION, BRUISING & DOG BITES

- Y0, YP & PR HEIFERS WITH MC & FC = 4 WILL BE PAID BUNKS LESS THAN STEER PRICE (S, S1, & S2)

- Y0S, YPS, PRS, S, S1, S2, Y0H, YPH & PRH: 1-4 BRUISE WILL BE 10 CENTS DISCOUNT

- WEIGHT IS EXPRESSED AS HOT STANDARD CARCASS WEIGHT IN KILOGRAMS

- EMERGENCIES \$350.00 PER HEAD DISCOUNT

- ANY ANIMAL DETECTED WITH BUCK SHOT WILL BE CONDEMNED BY TEYS

- REMOVAL OF DECEASED BEAST \$350 PER HEAD

- ALL CATTLE MUST HAVE A NUS DEVICE - CATTLE WITH RUMEN BOLUS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

- GRIDS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE UNTIL CATTLE VERBALLY CONFIRMED

FAT PENALTY FOR ALL CATTLE (OR WHERE STATED)

A	5-22 MM	ZERO PENALTY
B	23-32 MM	LESS 5 CENTS KG
C	33-42 MM	LESS 30 CENTS KG
D	43-49 MM	LESS 50 CENTS KG
E	50MM +	LESS 80 CENTS KG

BULLS		
TEETH	0-8	
FAT	ANY	
FAT PENALTIES	ANY	
BRUISING	ANY	
SHAPE	ANY	
MEAT COLOUR	ANY	
FAT COLOUR	ANY	
WEIGHT	ANY	
BULL WGTs	PRICE	
450+	340	
440-480	480	
300-440	510	
280-300	500	
260-280	495	
240-260	490	
220-240	460	
200-220	445	
180-200	430	
160-180	350	
140-160	235	
120-140	205	
100-120	185	
<100	165	

Cattle sales

- Comparing carcass weight to liveweight (dressing percentage)
- Varies with time “off-feed”
- Need to be able to estimate yield to ensure get cattle at correct level on grid (otherwise price penalty)
- Weight and fat (and teeth)

Guide to dressing percentages

Estimated dressing percentages based on HSCW, approx 2 hours off pasture

Fat score	Fat depth (mm) P8 rump site	Vealers/ yearlings	Young cattle/ steers & heifers	Heavy steers	Cows <200 kg	Cows 200-250 kg	Cows > 250 kg	Bulls
1	0-2	49-50	50-53	48-52	38-40	41-44	42-45	<200 kg 48-54
2	3-6	50-53	51-54	50-53	39-41	42-45	43-46	200-300 kg 53-57
3	7-9 10-12	51-55 52-56	52-55 52-56	51-54 52-55	40-42 41-44	45-50 46-53	44-48 48-50	>300 kg 54-58
4	13-15 16-21	53-57	54-57 55-58	53-56 54-57	43-48 46-49	47-52 49-51	49-51 50-55	
5 & 6	20+		56-59	55-58	47-50	50-56	51-56	

https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/103992/dressing-percentages-for-cattle.pdf

Freeze brand

- Freeze branding very similar to fire brand – same branding device but cold rather than heat
- Use liquid nitrogen or dry ice plus alcohol
- Leave on white haired animals for longer to remove all hair (similar outcome for appearance to fire brand)
- Dark hair turns white
- Can be done pre or post wean but if done later brand stays similar size