

Approach to Placing a Market Steer Class

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MUSCLING

Muscular steers exhibit greater roundness and definition to their musculature. The forearm, shoulder, back and rear quarter are all indicators of muscling. Handle for muscle shape immediately behind the shoulder blade and follow down the spine to the loin area. The longissimus which runs on both sides of the spine should handle with some fullness of shape and width. Lighter muscled steers typically possess a more angular shape to their top with less width and fullness. Thick steers will have more definition of muscle in forearm and shoulder and more roundness of shape to their quarter as viewed from the side as well as more width of quarter as viewed from behind. Muscular steers typically stand and walk wider off both the front and rear legs.

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STRUCTURAL CORRECTNESS

Study the steer as he stands and walks. He stands squarely on the corners with proper angulation to his shoulder, knee and pastern in front and hip, hock and pastern behind. Steers that are structurally sound will take long strides, move about with ease and have flex and give in their joints.

BALANCE

Since they are show steers, balance is also evaluated in placing a class. Balance can be defined as a combination of factors such that the proportions are correct for a certain purpose. In steers, this includes a balance of lines and proportionality. The topline should be level, the steer should possess adequate depth to the ribcage and present a rectangular body shape as viewed from the side. A well balanced animal looks as if all of the parts were made for each other.

OVERVIEW

In general, the steers that combine the most of the best of the above traits are placed in the top pair. On the other hand, overfinished extremely light muscled, structurally incorrect, underfinished, and unbalanced steers are candidates for the bottom pair or last place in the class.

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