

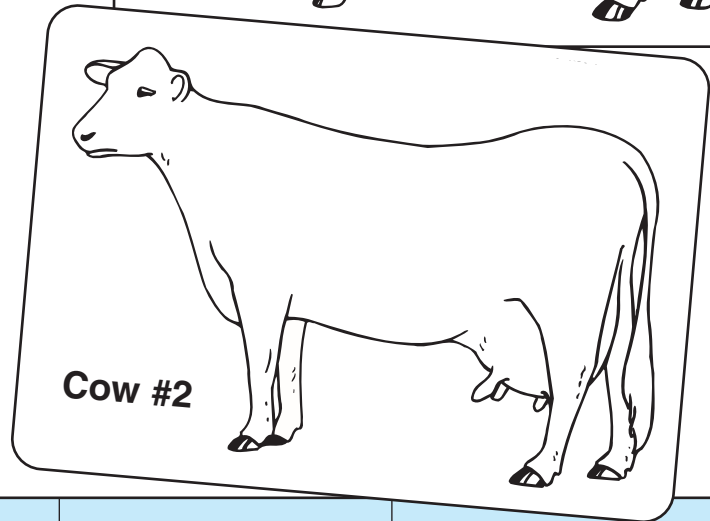
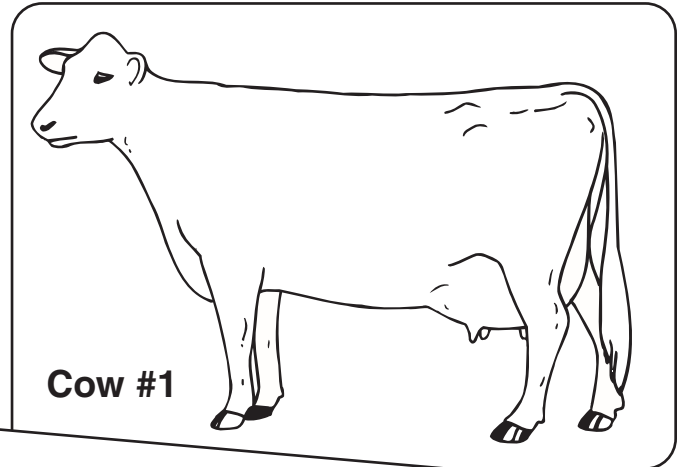
You Be the Judge

- Dairy Project Skill:** Recognizing desirable traits of a dairy cow
- Life Skill:** Making decisions—gathers information and formulates judgment
- Success Indicator:** Identifies desirable and undesirable traits of dairy cattle.
- Educational Standard:** NS.K—4.3 Understanding of the characteristics of organisms.

The primary reason for raising dairy cows is to produce milk. For dairy cows to be highly profitable, they must have traits that function properly. For example, a firmly attached udder that is held above the hocks, correct feet and legs, and width of chest and rump are all desirable traits (characteristics). When selecting dairy cattle for your project or to increase your herd size, you will need to understand how to select them based on the “ideal” breed characteristics. To do so, you will need to learn how to judge dairy cattle.

Taking On the Challenge

Test your decision making skills...you be the judge! Compare several structural traits of the two cows shown and describe what you see in the space provided. Then write a comparative term in the third column that tells why you would place one over the other. A comparative term is usually a word ending in “er” like deeper, firmer, longer, taller, etc.



Structures	Cow #1 Description	Cow #2 Description	Why I Placed #1 over #2 (Comparative Terms)
Depth of rib			
Fore udder attachment			
Pasterns	<i>strong pastern, deep heel</i>	<i>weak, shallow heel</i>	<i>stronger pasterns</i>
Rear leg placement			
Rear udder attachment			
Rump			
Teat length			
Teat placement			
Topline/loin			
Udder depth			
Udder floor			

Ruminations

Say Cheese! (Share)

- Which of the cows did you think was the better animal?

Chew Your Cud (Process)

- Why do you think dairy farmers need to consider desirable traits for their replacement heifers?
 - What information do you need to select a good animal?
-
-

Chore Time (Generalize)

- What traits do you think are the most important when considering the purchase of a 4-H project animal?
 - What sources of information do you trust?
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Mooving Along (Apply)

- How will knowing the ideal structures of a cow help you make better judging decisions?
 - How can you improve your judging skills?
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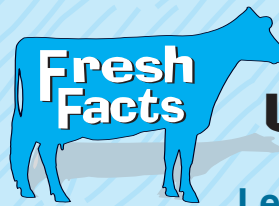


Projects Online

www.n4hccs.org/dairycattle

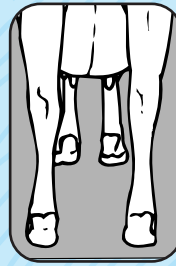
Hoard's Dairyman Magazine Cow Judging Contest

Hoard's Dairyman "Judging for Young Dairymen"

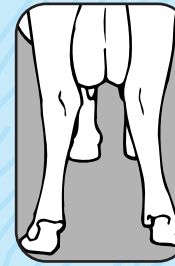


Desirable and Undesirable Traits

Leg Placement



Correct (straight and squarely placed)



Cow hocked



Post legged

Feet



Deep Heel and Strong pastern



Weak Pastern and Shallow heel

Udder Floor



Ideal (level)



Tilted



Quartered

Fore Udder Attachment



Ideal-Tight attachment



Bulgy attachment

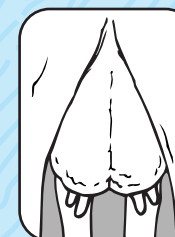


Broken attachment

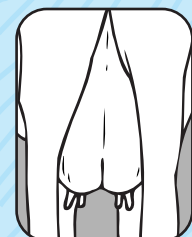
Rear Udder Attachment



Ideal-High, wide attachment

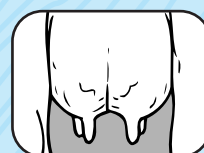


Low, narrow and pinched

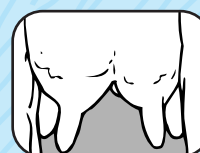


Too low

Teat Placement



Ideal



Strutting



Too far back