

ASA Presentation Notes Lesson 9.2

What is Conformation?

- The appearance or type, form, and shape of a live animal.

Conformation Priorities in Animal Selection.

- Muscularity.
- Capacity.
- Frame Size.
- Condition.
- Structure.
- Balance.
- Udder.
- Sex Character.
- Breed Character.

Muscularity.

- The natural fleshing of an animal.
- Inheritable trait.
- Evaluate at the.
 - Hip and rump.
 - Back.
 - Shoulder.

Capacity.

- Also referred to as volume.
- Considerations:
 - Spring and shape of rib.
 - Depth of body.
 - Length of body.
 - Width of body.

Frame Size.

- Skeletal size.
- Used in moderation in beef cattle.
- Indicators:
 - Length of body.
 - Length of cannon bone.
 - Height.
 - Length of face and neck.

Condition.

- The degree of fatness.
 - Also referred to as finish or leanness in market animals.
- Market animals need adequate quantity for meat quality.
- Breeding animals need adequate quantity for health and reproductive soundness.

Structural Soundness.

- The physical condition of the skeletal structure, especially the feet and legs, of an animal.
- Considerations:
 - Levelness of top and hip.
 - Angle to shoulder, pastern, hock.
 - Ease of movement.

Balance.

- The way an animal puts other traits together in proportion.
- Combination of desirable qualities.

Udder or Underline.

- Important in producing females, particularly dairy animals.
- Inheritable trait - sires can pass desirable and undesirable traits to female offspring.

Sex Character.

- Masculinity.
 - More rugged appearing.
 - i.e., broad shoulders, thick neck, wide head, thick musculature.
- Femininity.
 - Daintier appearance.
 - i.e., refined head, neck, and shoulders, lighter muscling.

Breed Character.

- Animals should exhibit the traits that make their breed desirable and identifiable.
- Examples:
 - Arabian horse – dished face; long, arched neck; high tail set.
 - Holstein dairy cattle – black and white spots, large frame size.

Evaluating Animals.

- Outline Horse Priorities:
 - Balance.
 - Body is in three nearly equal parts.
 - Structure.
 - Stands square on legs.
 - Level back.
 - Muscle.
 - Expression in chest and hindquarter.
 - Quality.
 - Refined head and neck.

ASA Reflection Page

List 5 key points that are important to remember from this presentation.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

List 3 ideas or concepts that this new information has in common with previous things learned.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List questions or ideas that remain unclear about the information presented that should be asked for clarity at the appropriate time.