

ADCA Dexter Owner's Handbook

This handbook is a compilation of information on the registering and caring for Dexters. It is meant to be an online book that can be changed when helpful information is found. If you have a contribution or need information not covered, email your comments to Pam Malcuit at Mornstarranch@cs.com



Thanks to Pam Malcuit for finding and putting together the information to get this project started.

American Dexter Cattle Association

Member Handbook

An ongoing project to assist members with the care of their Dexter Cattle.

Purpose: To make available for download from the ADCA website up-to-date information to help with the breeding, testing, and maintenance of Dexter Cattle.

Please place your pages in a loose-leaf notebook or binder so that you may add or remove pages as necessary. Pages will be updated or added online as soon as available. If your questions are not addressed, please notify your director so that we may better serve your needs.

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Breed Guidelines

The following guidelines for the Dexter bull and cow are meant as a guide to Dexter enthusiasts and breeders and represent ADCA consensus as to desired characteristics. These guidelines are not to be used to determine the registration of animals, which is solely a matter of pedigree. The Dexter is both a milk-producing and a beef-making breed.

Description of the Dexter Bull

Color

Whole black, red or dun, the three colors being of equal merit. A little white on the organs of generation is permissible.

Head

Broad forehead, tapering gracefully toward the muzzle which should be broad with wide, distended nostrils. Strong lower jaw with the jaws meeting properly. Eyes should be bright and prominent.

Neck

Well set into the shoulders which, when viewed in front, should be wide.

Horns

These should be moderately thick, springing well from the head, with an inward and slightly upward curve. Removal of horns is allowed without penalization.

Body

Well-proportioned regarding height to length. Shoulders of medium thickness, full and well filled in behind which, when viewed from the front, show thickness through the heart, the breast coming well forward, the chest with a wide floor resulting in ample width between the legs. Hips wide; quarters thick and deep and well sprung, wide across the loins. Legs short to moderate but not excessively long, and well placed under the body; forelegs straight, wide apart and squarely placed; hind legs nearly perpendicular from hock to pastern when viewed from the side, and straight and wide apart when viewed from the rear. Feet short, well rounded with deep heel, level sole and toes properly spaced. Tail well set and level with the back.

Skin

Skin should be soft and mellow, and handle well; hair fine, plentiful and silky.

Weight

Bulls at three years old and over should not exceed 1,000 lbs. live weight.

Height

Bulls should not exceed more than 44 inches in height nor stand less than 38 inches at the shoulder at three years of age.

Description for the Dexter Cow

Color

Whole black, red or dun, the three colors being of equal merit. A small amount of white on the udder and underline is permissible but not forward of the umbilicus. A few white hairs in the tassel of the tail is permissible.



Head

Broad forehead, tapering gracefully toward the muzzle which should be broad with wide, distended nostrils. Strong lower jaw with the jaws meeting properly. Eyes should be bright and prominent.

Neck

Well set into the shoulders, not too thick or too short.

Horns

These should be moderately thick, springing well from the head, with an inward and slightly upward curve. Removal of horns is allowed without penalization.

Body

Well-proportioned regarding height to length. Shoulders of medium thickness, full and well filled in behind which, when viewed from the front, show thickness through the heart, the breast coming well forward, the chest with a wide floor resulting in ample width between the legs. Hips wide; quarters thick and deep and well sprung, wide across the loins. A straight underline with udder firmly attached front and rear with strong center support. Udder and teats should be of moderate size with the teats of equal size squarely placed on an udder with clearly defined halving. Legs short to moderate but not excessively long, and well placed under the body; forelegs straight, wide apart and squarely placed; hind legs nearly perpendicular from hocks to pastern when viewed from the side, and straight and wide apart when viewed from the rear. Feet short, well rounded with deep heel, level sole and toes properly spaced. Tail well set and level with the back.

Skin

Skin should be soft and mellow, and handle well; hair fine, plentiful and silky.

Weight

Cows at three years old and over should not exceed 750 lbs. live weight.

Height

Mature cows should not exceed 42 inches in height nor stand less than 36 inches in height at the shoulder.

Buyers check list

- ☒ Never buy an animal sight unseen.
- ☒ Be sure the animal is registered (registration certificate).
- ☒ If the animal is not registered, ask for it to be registered BEFORE you purchase it, at the very least make sure it can be. Animals without registration papers may not be able to be registered. If there is any question about the registration paper of the animal to be purchased, its sire or dam, the buyer may be buying a grade animal. (Avoid disappointment later.) **If there is a question about registration, contact the [Registrar](#).** Remember, there are animals that can not be registered.
- ☒ Heifers and cows over one year and bulls over two years may require Parentage Verification. (Avoid costly bills later or worse not being able to register them)
- ☒ Be sure the tattoo number on the paper matches the number in the animal's ear.
- ☒ Make sure the animal can meet your state's health requirements--(for example blood testing for brucellosis, etc.)
- ☒ As a precaution, ask that the animal receive any necessary shots (such as for B.V.D.) prior to shipping.
- ☒ If buying a bull, you may want to request semen testing.
- ☒ Be sure the price is right--shop around--call other breeders--don't buy the first Dexter you see--go visit several herds if possible.
- ☒ Ask to see progeny or sire and dam, of the animal you are buying. Anything you can see will be helpful to you in making your decision. Hint check the [online pedigree pages](#), there may be pictures posted.
- ☒ Be sure if you purchase a bred cow that you get the proper signatures on the white application for registry so you can get your calf registered.
- ☒ Make sure the animal fits your needs (if you want to milk the animal make sure she has a good sound udder).
- ☒ Make sure to see copies of any genetic testing that you deem important such as Chondrodysplasia, PHA, Color, A2 Beta-Casein, or Genotyping. Make sure they are on file with the ADCA and will be printed on your registration certificate.

The Buyer Beware statement is well founded. Most conscientious breeders and members will be more than happy to provide you with the proper paperwork.

The ADCA encourages all prospective buyers of Dexter cattle to verify the registration or qualification for registration of any animal prior to purchase of the animal. If there is any question about the qualification for registration of an animal, contact the Registrar before committing to its purchase."

Tattoo letters guidelines

The tattoo letter for 2010 is "X". The Table below gives each year and its associated tattoo letter.

Most breeders use the following sequence for tattooing:

First, the letter initial of their farm, followed by the number of the calf for the year, and then the associated tattoo letter for the year.

EXAMPLE: If your farm name is "Cherrydale" Dexter Farm, and you are tattooing the 5th calf that is born in Year 2009, then the tattoo for this calf will be: **C5W** (Where "C" stands for the farm initial; "5" identifies it as the fifth calf born this year; and "W" stands for the tattoo letter associated with Year 2009.)

Tattoo Letters for year:

A--1991	G--1997	N--2003	W--2009
B--1992	H--1998	P--2004	X--2010
C--1993	J--1999	R--2005	Y--2011
D--1994	K--2000	S--2006	Z--2012
E--1995	L--2001	T--2007	A--2013
F--1996	M--2002	U--2008	B--2014

Tattoo suggestions:

1. Halter or muzzle the animal, if necessary.
2. Cleanse the area to be tattooed using a cloth dampened with a cleansing fluid, such as alcohol, to remove dirt, grease, and wax.
3. Insert the correct symbols into the pliers and press down firmly over the needles with a thin rubber sponge pad. This pad helps to release the needles from the skin.
4. Check the correctness of the symbols by making a mark on a piece of paper.
5. Smear ink on the needles and on the skin, choosing an area free from freckles and warts, if possible. Place the symbols parallel to and between the veins or

cartilaginous ridges of the ear. The accidental piercing of a vein may spoil the tattoo.

6. Make the imprints with a quick firm movement and immediately apply a further amount of ink from the container onto the ear and rub vigorously and continuously for at least fifteen seconds to ensure penetration. This is very important. The most effective method is to rub thumb and forefinger, though a brush may be used.
7. Remove the rubber pad and rinse it and the needles in water, then dry. The sponge rubber pad should be discarded when it begins to lose its elasticity. The brush, if one is used, should also be rinsed.
8. Do not disturb the area until the healing process is complete, which may be from 5 days to 21 days, depending on the age of the animal.
9. Keep a list of tattoo numbers with names of animals and enter same in your private breeding records.

DNA Testing

(Why do it? What to do? How do we do it?)

WHY do we TEST?

Genotyping: The ADCA requires that the DNA Genotype of all bulls used for breeding be on file in its Registry Office before calves sired by those bulls can be registered. This is true for AI bulls as well. *(While any AI bull whose blood type was on file in the Registry Office prior to January 1, 2003, is exempt from the DNA Genotyping requirement, the person who sells semen from that bull is encouraged to request DNA Genotyping for the sake of future reference or parentage questions.)*

Texas A&M – Dr. Gus Cothran’s Lab – is the lab of choice for genotyping. That is where the database for genotyped animals is housed. If you test at a different lab, you must make sure that their process is compatible with that at Texas A&M in order to transfer the results to the database. The genotype results must be sent directly from the testing lab to the A&M lab – and there is generally a small fee for that process at A&M.

Genotyping is a means of ensuring the purity of the Dexter Cattle Breed. If there is a parentage question on a calf, the genotype of the bull will already be on record and can be used to determine the sire of a calf. It is not usually difficult to determine the dam. Many people are beginning to genotype all their animals. This will insure that the calf is both Sire and Dam Qualified. At this point, it is not mandatory to genotype the dam.

Chondrodysplasia: Dexter Cattle can carry a genetic mutation called Chondrodysplasia. This mutation causes defective bone growth which results in short legged, heavy bodied animals. Although this short legged animal is very appealing with its small stature, the gene can be lethal. If two carrier animals mate, the statistics indicate that one in four calves would be a “bulldog” calf – grossly deformed and born dead. Statistically, one in four would be a non-carrier, and two in four would be carriers.

In order to be better informed so that a breeder can establish successful breeding practices, it is recommended that animals – especially the shorter legged animals – be tested for chondrodysplasia. A well-informed breeder can then make appropriate choices in sire and dam in order to avoid calf loss due to this particular gene. If only one of the two is a carrier, then the bulldog calf will not occur. There will be a fifty-fifty chance of producing carrier calves if one or the other parent is a carrier. If neither is a carrier, then the problem is eliminated entirely.

PHA (Pulmonary Hypoplasia with Anasarca): Pulmonary Hypoplasia indicates incomplete formation of the lungs. Anasarca indicates an accumulation of fluids in tissues and body cavities. PHA-affected calves are either aborted or stillborn. Because of the anasarca, the PHA calf may be tremendously swollen which would make delivery exceedingly difficult and potentially life threatening for the cow. The PHA affected calf occurs when the PHA gene is inherited from both the sire and the dam. If only one of the parents carry the gene, the calf will appear normal, but can carry the PHA gene.

The statistics are similar to the chondrodysplasia carriers. When both parents are PHA carriers, there is a 1 in 4 chance of a PHA (dead) calf; a 1 in 4 chance of a non PHA carrier; and a 2 in 4 chance of producing PHA carrier calves. When a PHA non-carrier is bred to a PHA carrier, the chances are 50% of producing a PHA carrier and 50% of producing a PHA non-carrier.

It is possible for a chondrodysplasia non-carrier to carry PHA. It is possible for a chondrodysplasia carrier to also carry PHA. The two genes do not appear to be related.

Testing give the breeder the knowledge of his animals' genetic status so that he/she can make appropriate decisions on breeding practices. By breeding non-carriers to carriers, you can avoid the dead calf and potential damage to the cow. By gradually eliminating PHA carriers from your herds, you can build a herd that doesn't carry this lethal gene. Unlike the chondrodysplasia carrier, PHA carriers cannot be identified visually. PHA carriers may be either longer or shorted legged animals.

Color Testing for Red or Dun: If a dun calf is born of parents that are not dun, or only one is dun, then the calf must be color tested for dun in order to be registered as dun. The same is true of a red calf born of parents that are not both red, or only one parent is red. The calf must be color tested for red in order to be registered as red.

A-2 Milk Testing: Of the protein found in cow's milk, about 1/3 of it is made up of the protein called Beta Casein. There are many different forms of this protein, and the one we are looking at is one of the most common – called the A2 variant.

It is believed to be the most ancestral form of the protein. That just means that the other forms are derived from the A2 variant. We are interested in the A2 variant because population based studies of people consuming milk suggest that having milk that contains the A2 variant of Beta Casein may be linked to lower rates of heart disease and type 1 (juvenile) diabetes. It may also be linked to lower rates of other diseases. We don't yet know why this might be true, or what levels are best. Studies are ongoing on this topic. *(Thanks to Eleanor Conant, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Dr. Gus Cothran's Lab, Texas A&M University.)*

The test that we will do is similar to the test we do for chondrodysplasia, so we can tell if a cow or bull has 0, 1, or 2 copies of the A2 variant gene (which will then produce the protein). So, if a bull has 2 copies, then his offspring should have at least 1 copy of the A2 variant.

At this point, it is really important to know that, if both parents have been tested as non-carriers of chondrodysplasia or PHA, it is unnecessary to test the offspring. They will be “Obligates” as non-carriers. If you don’t own the parents, you can go to the online pedigree on the ADCA website (www.dextercattle.org) and check the status of the sire and dam. If you look at their individual pedigrees, it should indicate if non-carrier status has been obtained through testing.

WHAT TO DO:

To DNA test your animals for any of the above tests, you should acquire the appropriate paperwork – downloadable from the ADCA website. If you do not have computer access, you may request that the forms be sent to you by the ADCA liaison. (Currently the liaison is Pam Malcuit, 936-394-2606) There are also copies of all the A&M forms in this handbook. Please keep them to make master copies so you may copy and print them whenever needed. They are included in this handbook for your convenience.

Go to the ADCA website: www.dextercattle.org, and click on DNA testing. You will find different tests listed. If you click on the blue lettered text titles, the necessary forms and information will pop up for you to download or print.

Presently, Texas A&M is the lab of choice for chondrodysplasia testing, DNA genotyping, Color factor (red and/or dun) and A-2 milk testing. This lab has not yet received licensing for doing the PHA testing. Those labs are Pfizer, Igenity, and AgriGenomics – also listed online on the DNA testing tab at the ADCA website.

HOW TO DO IT:

Once you download the forms, please fill them out carefully and neatly. Make sure you include all information requested. If the animal is not yet registered (pending testing) simply put “pending” under the registration number. You MUST have a permanent ID for the animal – either specific brand or tattoo that is unique to that animal. No two animals should have the

same tattoo or brand number or there is no way to differentiate them if there is ever a question regarding paternity, etc. This unique tattoo number will be listed on the database along with the animal's registered name (or the exact name under which it WILL be registered if registration is currently pending awaiting test results) and the test results.

Now it is time to acquire the hair samples used for the DNA testing.

DNA material is contained in the root bulbs (follicles) of the hairs. Make sure to PULL out the hairs in order to include the follicles. Do NOT cut the hair off of the animal or you won't have the follicle needed for testing.

FOR TESTS BEING DONE AT TEXAS A&M:

1. Use a separate paper envelope or resealable plastic baggie for each animal's sample. Before collecting the samples, label each bag with the complete name of the animal. There is a form for this that will be included in your downloaded information. **Fill out this form completely and attach it to your hair sample envelope or baggie.** If, for some reason, your sample gets detached from your form at the lab, then this complete identification will enable the folks at the lab to know the identity of the hair sample.
2. Thoroughly wash your hands and the scissors, pliers, hemostat, etc., that you will be using to pull the hairs. Have a roll of paper towels ready near your sample bags or envelopes.
3. Use clean (no manure) coarse hairs from the switch at the end of the tail for your sample. Pull hairs from the switch using a sharp, jerking motion (using sterilized pliers or a hemostat) and make sure that the root bulbs or follicles are attached to most of them. It is best to pull about 10-15 hairs at a time, so you will need several pulls to obtain the 30-50 hairs required for a sample. It is often easier to twist the hairs around your tool before you jerk the hairs out as it seems to keep them from slipping through and gives you a better hold on them for pulling. Collect them on a clean paper towel – aligning the root ends as you lay them down.
4. Using scotch tape, tape the hairs into a bundle – about 4 inches from the root ends. Then, using your clean scissors, trim the excess ends off and dispose of them – being sure to keep the bundle that includes the root ends.
5. Place the bundle of root ends/hairs into your envelope, gently press out most of the air, and seal the bag.
6. Clean your hands and the instruments before taking the next sample and before each successive sample. You can use rubbing alcohol or antibacterial handwash for this sterilization process. The goal is to keep each animal's DNA sample untainted by another animals or by your DNA. It is MOST important that you not touch the actual root bulbs or follicles as this is the target area for the lab to extract the DNA.

Once you have finished with hair collection, you will need to mail the samples (with the sample identification form attached to each sample) along with the completed applications for the desired testing, a STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE (for the test results to be sent to you) and a check for the necessary fees payable to the ADCA. Send all this to the ADCA Liaison – Pam Malcuit, 17087 Dixie Farms Lane, iola, TX 77861.

You will receive two certified copies of each result, so plan your postage accordingly on your SASE. Usually 4 sheets of paper will go for the standard rate – or the results of 2 tests.

It generally takes 2-3 weeks to get results from Texas A&M.

FOR TESTS BEING DONE AT OTHER LABS – CONTACT THE LAB TO GET THEIR REQUIREMENTS FOR SAMPLES AND HANDLING AS WELL AS THEIR FORMS AND TEST KITS.

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Once you receive your results, you then send one certified copy to the ADCA Registrar, Chuck Daggett, for recording on the animal’s pedigree – or accompanied with a registration form for any new registrations. Keep the other copy for your records on that animal.

American Dexter Cattle Association

DNA Genotyping

Texas A&M University

Owner Name _____

Dr. E. Gus Cothran Lab CVM, VIBS

Farm/Ranch _____

(979) 845-0229

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Breed: Dexter Cattle

DNA Genotyping/Record of Identification

Sex	Name of Animal (indicate if a twin)	Registration Number	Tattoo or Permanent ID
Sire			
Dam			

Use a separate application for each animal tested. Payment must accompany this application. Make check in amount of \$25 payable to ADCA.

Acknowledgement: I hereby certify that the animal listed above was identified at the time of sample collection with its certificate of registration. If the certificate of registration was not available or pending, the animal was positively identified by its tattoo or permanent ID number on this form. I further certify that I understand that the results of this test will be mailed to me, and I am responsible for sending a certified result to the ADCA.

_____ Date _____

Signature of Recorded Owner or Authorized Representative

American Dexter Cattle Association

Chondrodysplasia Test

Texas A&M University

Owner Name _____

Dr. E. Gus Cothran Lab CVM, VIBS

Farm/Ranch _____

(979) 845-0229

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Breed: Dexter Cattle

Name of Animal to be Tested	Registration Number	Tattoo or Perm. ID	Sex	Sire Name and Registration Number	Dam Name and Registration Number

Payment must accompany this application. Make check in the amount of \$35 (per animal) payable to ADCA.

Acknowledgement: I hereby certify that the animal listed above was identified at the time of sample collection with its certificate of registration. If the certificate of registration was not available or pending, the animal was positively identified by its tattoo or permanent ID number on this form. I further certify that I understand that the results of this test will be mailed to me, and I am responsible for sending a certified result to the ADCA.

_____ Date _____

Signature of Recorded Owner or Authorized Representative

Dexter Genetic Test Reporting

Red Test Only

Test Result	Comment
E^D/E^D	Black or dun animal does not carry red
E^D/E^+	Black or dun animal carries red
E^D/e	Black or dun animal carries red
E^+/E^+	Red animal
E^+/e	Red animal
e/e	Red animal

Dun Test Only

Test Result	Comment
B/B	Black or red animal does not carry dun
B/b	Black or red animal carries dun
b/b	Dun or red animal (additional red test needed to determine color)

Color Profile Test (Red and Dun)

Test Result	Comment
$E^D/E^D B/B$	Black animal does not carry red or dun
$E^D/E^D B/b$	Black animal carries dun but not red
$E^D/E^+ B/B$	Black animal carries red but not dun
$E^D/E^+ B/b$	Black animal carries both red and dun
$E^D/e B/B$	Black animal carries red but not dun
$E^D/e B/b$	Black animal carries both red and dun
$E^+/E^+ B/B$	Red animal does not carry dun
$E^+/E^+ B/b$	Red animal carries dun
$E^+/E^+ b/b$	Red animal is homozygous for dun
$E^+/e B/B$	Red animal does not carry dun
$E^+/e B/b$	Red animal carries dun
$E^+/e b/b$	Red animal is homozygous for dun
$e/e B/B$	Red animal does carries dun
$e/e b/b$	Red animal is homozygous for dun
$E^D/E^D b/b$	Dun animal does not carry red
$E^D/E^+ b/b$	Dun animal carries red
$E^D/e b/b$	Dun animal carries red

American Dexter Cattle Association Dun/Red DNA Test

Texas A&M University

Owner Name _____

Dr. E. Gus Cothran Lab CVM, VIBS

Farm/Ranch _____

(979) 845-0229

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Breed: Dexter Cattle

Name of Animal to be Tested	Registration Number	Tattoo or Permanent ID	Sex	Sire Name Regis. #	Dam Name Regis. #	Test for Dun	Test for Red

Payment must accompany this application. Check in amount of \$35 for one test only, and \$60 for both dun & red (per animal) payable to the ADCA.

Acknowledgement: I hereby certify that the animal listed above was identified at the time of sample collection with its certificate of registration. If the certificate of registration was not available or pending, the animal was positively identified by its tattoo or permanent ID number on this form. I further certify that I understand that the results of this test will be mailed to me, and I am responsible for sending a certified result to the ADCA.

_____ Date _____

Signature of Recorded Owner or Authorized Representative

American Dexter Cattle Association **A-2 Milk DNA Test**

Texas A&M University

Owner Name _____

Dr. E. Gus Cothran Lab CVM, VIBS

Farm/Ranch _____

(979) 845-0229

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Breed: Dexter Cattle

Name of Animal to be Tested	Registration Number	Tattoo or Perm. ID	Sex	Sire Name and Registration Number	Dam Name and Registration Number

Payment must accompany this application. Make check in the amount of \$35 (per animal) payable to ADCA.

Acknowledgement: I hereby certify that the animal listed above was identified at the time of sample collection with its certificate of registration. If the certificate of registration was not available or pending, the animal was positively identified by its tattoo or permanent ID number on this form. I further certify that I understand that the results of this test will be mailed to me, and I am responsible for sending a certified result to the ADCA.

_____ Date _____

Signature of Recorded Owner or Authorized Representative

American Dexter Cattle Association

Parentage Verification

Texas A&M University

Owner Name _____

Dr. E. Gus Cothran Lab CVM, VIBS

Farm/Ranch _____

(979) 845-0229

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Breed: Dexter Cattle

DNA Parentage Verification

Sex	Name of Animal (indicate if a twin)	Registration Number	Tattoo or Permanent ID
Sire			
Dam			

Use a separate application for each animal tested. Payment must accompany this application. Make check in amount of \$25 payable to ADCA.

Acknowledgement: I hereby certify that the animal listed above was identified at the time of sample collection with its certificate of registration. If the certificate of registration was not available or pending, the animal was positively identified by its tattoo or permanent ID number on this form. I further certify that I understand that the results of this test will be mailed to me, and I am responsible for sending a certified result to the ADCA.

_____ Date _____

Signature of Recorded Owner or Authorized Representative

Please fill out and attach to envelope containing hair sample.

Hair Sample Envelope

Breed/Species _____

Sample enclosed is from the Animal Identified as:

Name: _____ Sex: M ____ F ____

Registration Number: _____ Tattoo or Tag: _____

Name of Owner: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Completed Application Form MUST accompany this sample!

Dexter Genetic Test Reporting

Red Test Only

Test Result	Comment
E^D/E^D	Black or dun animal does not carry red
E^D/E^+	Black or dun animal carries red
E^D/e	Black or dun animal carries red
E^+/E^+	Red animal
E^+/e	Red animal
e/e	Red animal

Dun Test Only

Test Result	Comment
B/B	Black or red animal does not carry dun
B/b	Black or red animal carries dun
b/b	Dun or red animal (additional red test needed to determine color)

Color Profile Test (Red and Dun)

Test Result	Comment
E^D/E^D B/B	Black animal does not carry red or dun
E^D/E^D B/b	Black animal carries dun but not red
E^D/E^+ B/B	Black animal carries red but not dun
E^D/E^+ B/b	Black animal carries both red and dun
E^D/e B/B	Black animal carries red but not dun
E^D/e B/b	Black animal carries both red and dun
E^+/E^+ B/B	Red animal does not carry dun
E^+/E^+ B/b	Red animal carries dun
E^+/E^+ b/b	Red animal is homozygous for dun
E^+/e B/B	Red animal does not carry dun
E^+/e B/b	Red animal carries dun
E^+/e b/b	Red animal is homozygous for dun
e/e B/B	Red animal does not carry dun
e/e B/b	Red animal carries dun
e/e b/b	Red animal is homozygous for dun
E^D/E^D b/b	Dun animal does not carry red
E^D/E^+ b/b	Dun animal carries red
E^D/e b/b	Dun animal carries red

Basic Concepts of Dexter Color Genetics

This page contains the fundamental principles of the inheritance of color in Dexter cattle. These principles are stated in the form of ten basic concepts and are presented in logical sequence.

1. Dexter cattle occur in three distinct colors: black, red, and dun. Two pairs of genes that are located on separate chromosomes control these colors.
2. Black and red is one pair of alternative colors. In Dexter cattle, there are two different red genes. The two red genes are alternatives to each other, and they are not visually distinguishable. However, they are distinguishable by a DNA test. Both red genes are recessive to their black alternative. This means that every red Dexter contains two red genes, one inherited from its sire and one inherited from its dam.
3. Black and dun is another pair of alternative colors. The dun color in Dexters is due to a brown mutation, and it is recessive to its black alternative. This means that every dun Dexter contains two dun genes, one inherited from its sire and one inherited from its dam.
4. Two black Dexters can produce black, red, or dun calves. In order for two black parents to produce a red calf, each parent must carry a hidden red gene. In order for two black parents to produce a dun calf, each parent must carry a hidden dun gene.
5. In Dexter cattle red is the only color that breeds true. Two

red Dexters can produce only red calves even if each parent carries a hidden dun gene. A Dexter that contains two red genes and two dun genes is red in appearance.

6. If a red Dexter that has two dun genes is crossed with a dun Dexter that does not carry a red gene, the result will be a dun calf. Each dun calf resulting from this cross will carry a hidden red gene.
7. Two dun Dexters can produce dun or red calves. In order for two dun parents to produce a red calf, each parent must carry a hidden red gene. Every red calf that is produced by two dun parents will have two dun genes. (See #5 and #6 above.)
8. When a red Dexter that doesn't carry a dun gene is crossed with a dun Dexter that doesn't carry a red gene, the result will be a black calf. Each black calf resulting from this cross will carry a hidden red gene and a hidden dun gene.
9. A colored Dexter calf must be red if its sire or dam is known not to carry dun. Conversely, a colored Dexter calf must be dun if its sire or dam is known not to carry red.
10. Additional genes, independent of the genes for the basic colors, may be present in an animal's genotype and may modify the appearance of the animal. Such genes include but are not limited to those which are responsible for brindling, black noses in reds, black shading in reds, and the shade of color of reds and duns. Modifier genes do not alter the principles contained in the preceding nine concepts.

DEXTER COLOR BRIEF

Sandi Thomas

Dexters are recognized in 3 solid colors: Black, Red and Dun. Two unrelated pairs of genes located on separate chromosomes control the 3 colors:

Black and Red are one pair:

Dexters have 2 red genes, "E⁺" and "e: (The 2 reds don't appear different in appearance, but are identifiable through DNA testing for color.)

Both "E⁺" red and "e: red are recessive to black, so every red Dexter carries 2 red genes. A pair of red Dexter parents will only produce a red offspring even if both parents carry a hidden dun gene.

Black and Dun are the other pair:

A brown mutation is responsible for the dun color. Dun is recessive to black, so every dun colored Dexter carries 2 dun genes.

Breeding 2 Black Dexters:

2 black Dexters can produce Black, Red, or Dun offspring

Both Black parents must have a recessive Red gene to produce a Red offspring.

Both Black parents must have a recessive Dun gene to produce a Dun offspring.

Breeding 2 Red Dexters:

2 Red Dexter parents can only produce a Red offspring.

Breeding a Red Dexter to a Red, Black or Dun:

A Red Dexter can produce Black, Red, or Dun.

A Red, if bred to another Red, or to a Dun or Black carrying a hidden Red Gene./..

A Dun if bred to a Dun or Black if the Red carries a Dun gene...

A Black when bred to a Dun or Black...

Breeding 2 Dun Dexters:

Two Dun Dexters can produce Dun or Red offspring

A Dun Dexter bred to a Dun Dexter will produce a Dun offspring (either 1 w/red gene & 1 without, or both without Red gene)

A Dun Dexter (w/Red gene? Bred to a Dun (w/Red gene) can produce a Red offspring

Breeding a Dun Dexter to a Red or Black Dexter:

A Dun Dexter can produce a Black, Red or Dun offspring...

A Dun Dexter (w/out a Red gene) Bred to a Red Dexter (w/out a dun gene) will only produce a Black offspring...

A Dun Dexter (w/Red gene) bred to a Red (w/out a Dun gene) will produce Black or Red offspring...

A Dun Dexter bred to a Red (w/Dun gene) can produce a Dun or a Black offspring...

A Dun Dexter bred to a Black Dexter will produce Black, Red, or Dun if both carry a Red gene. These Black calves will carry a hidden Red gene and a hidden Dun gene; The Red calves will carry a Dun gene

Background & Example 1: Color Genetics Probability

In order to calculate the probabilities for offspring from a cross, you must first figure out what kind of sperm the bull can produce with respect to the trait or traits you're working on. The same thing is true for the eggs from the cow. Remember that all of this is a matter of probabilities, not guaranteed results.

I'll use a red bull who is E^+/e and a black cow who is E^D/e for my first example. Notice that I am talking only about the E genes- not any other color or trait.

This bull produces 2 different kinds of sperm: $\frac{1}{2}$ of his sperm will have the E^+ gene, and $\frac{1}{2}$ of his sperm will have the e gene. I'll use blue for the genes from the bull.

This cow produces 2 different kinds of eggs: $\frac{1}{2}$ of her eggs will have the E^D gene, and $\frac{1}{2}$ of her eggs will have the e gene. I'll use red for the genes from the cow.

Multiply the number of kinds of sperm (2) times the number of kinds of eggs (2) to find out how many squares you need in your diagram and how they are arranged in rows and columns. $2 \times 2 = 4$, so you need four squares that are arranged in 2 rows and 2 columns. For the sake of consistency, I'll put the bull's genes on the top of every diagram and the cow's genes on the left side of every diagram. After you've put the sperm and egg genes where they belong in the diagram, fill in the boxes to combine the genes from the bull and cow. Notice that I put the gene symbols in the same order (E^D, E^+, e) no matter which parent they come from. The reason for doing this is to keep the analysis of the results as simple as possible. I put the color analysis of the calf in each box in green.

	E^+	e
E^D	E^D/E^+ black	E^D/e black
e	E^+/e red	e/e red

You can see from this diagram that $2/4 = \frac{1}{2} = 50\%$ of the calves are black, and $2/4 = \frac{1}{2} = 50\%$ are red. Notice that the black calves carry red.

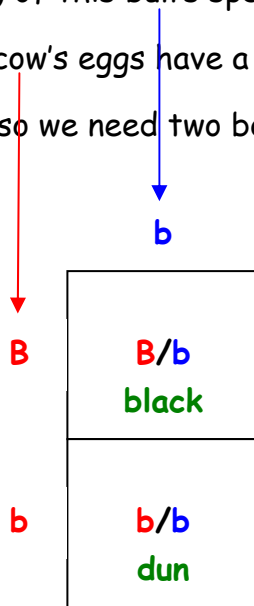
Example 2: Color Genetics Probability

dun bull (b/b) x black cow that carries dun (B/b)

All (100%) of this bull's sperm have a dun gene (b)

$\frac{1}{2}$ of this cow's eggs have a black gene (B), and $\frac{1}{2}$ of her eggs have a dun gene (b)

$1 \times 2 = 2$, so we need two boxes: 1 column with 2 rows



You can see from this diagram that $\frac{1}{2} = 50\%$ of the calves are black, and $\frac{1}{2} = 50\%$ are dun. Notice that the black calf carries dun.

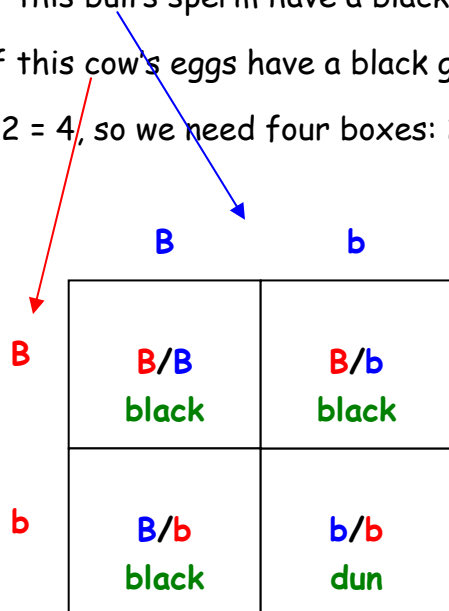
Example 3: Color Genetics Probability

black bull that carries dun (B/b) x black cow that carries dun (B/b)

$\frac{1}{2}$ of this bull's sperm have a black gene (B), and $\frac{1}{2}$ of his sperm have a dun gene (b)

$\frac{1}{2}$ of this cow's eggs have a black gene (B), and $\frac{1}{2}$ of her eggs have a dun gene (b)

$2 \times 2 = 4$, so we need four boxes: 2 column and 2 rows



You can see from this diagram that $\frac{3}{4} = 75\%$ of the calves are black, and $\frac{1}{4} = 25\%$ are dun. Notice that the $\frac{1}{3}$ of the black calves do not carry dun, and $\frac{2}{3}$ of the black calves do carry dun.

The cross of a black bull that carries red with a black cow that carries red works just like Example 3.

Example 4: Color Genetics Probability

black bull that carries red and dun ($E^D/e B/b$) x dun cow that carries red ($E^D/e b/b$)

This bull produces 4 different kinds of sperm: $E^D B$, $E^D b$, $e B$, $e b$
(each kind of E with each kind of B)

This cow produces 2 different kinds of eggs: $E^D b$, $e b$
(each kind of E with b)

$4 \times 2 = 8$, so we need eight boxes: 4 columns with 2 rows

	$E^D B$	$E^D b$	$e B$	$e b$
$E^D b$	$E^D/E^D B/b$ black	$E^D/E^D b/b$ dun	$E^D/e B/b$ black	$E^D/e b/b$ dun
$e b$	$E^D/e B/b$ black	$E^D/e b/b$ dun	$e/e B/b$ red	$e/e b/b$ red*

*See #5 of "Basic Concepts of Dexter Color Genetics"

You can see from this diagram that 3/8 of the calves are black, 3/8 are dun, and 2/8 are red. Remember that a Dexter that contains two red genes and two dun genes is red in appearance.

Example 5: Color Genetics Probability

black bull that carries red and dun ($E^D/e B/b$) x black cow that carries red and dun ($E^D/e B/b$)

This bull produces 4 different kinds of sperm: $E^D B$, $E^D b$, $e B$, $e b$
(each kind of E with each kind of B)

This cow produces 4 different kinds of eggs: $E^D B$, $E^D b$, $e B$, $e b$
(each kind of E with each kind of B)

$4 \times 4 = 16$, so we need sixteen boxes: 4 columns with 4 rows

	$E^D B$	$E^D b$	$e B$	$e b$
$E^D B$	$E^D/E^D B/B$ black	$E^D/E^D B/b$ black	$E^D/e B/B$ black	$E^D/e B/b$ black
$E^D b$	$E^D/E^D B/b$ black	$E^D/E^D b/b$ dun	$E^D/e B/b$ black	$E^D/e b/b$ dun
$e B$	$E^D/e B/B$ black	$E^D/e B/b$ black	$e/e B/B$ red	$e/e B/b$ red
$e b$	$E^D/e B/b$ black	$E^D/e b/b$ dun	$e/e B/b$ red	$e/e b/b$ red*

*See #5 of "Basic Concepts of Dexter Color Genetics"

You can see from this diagram that 9/16 of the calves are black, 4/16 are red, and 3/16 are dun. Remember that a Dexter that contains two red genes and two dun genes is red in appearance.



(You may copy this sheet or go to our website www.dextercattle.org and download a printable copy)

ADCA Registration Application

4150 Merino Ave. Watertown, Mn 55388

(Prices are valid for 2009)

To register a **Dexter heifer** under one year of age is \$20, over one year of age is \$40.
To and register a **bull** under two years of age is \$20, over two years of age is \$40.

**All bulls have to be genotype tested to be registered
The original verification certificate must be included.**

All Dexters born after Jan 1 2010 must have their sire's genotype on file with the ADCA to qualify for registration.

Try the new on line registration. Go to www.dextercattle.org/registration.htm Fill out form and submit.

Owners name (Owner at time of calving) _____ **ID #** _____

Breeder name (Owner at time of breeding) _____ **ID #** _____

Dam _____ **No.** _____ **Sire** _____ **No.** _____

(The animal name should start with the breeder's farm name or Abbreviation) Example: JDA Charlie

Animal Name _____

(All fields must be filled out to register your animal)

Birth Date ____/____/____ (Attach record of service form) **AI** Yes No **Tattoo Number** _____ left ear - right ear **Color** Black Dun Red

Polled ___ **Horned** ___ **Bull** ___ **Steer** ___ **Cow** ___ (Forms for testing results must be mailed to appear on the certificate)

Fill out below *only* if the sire was not owned by the Breeder

Owner of Sire
Name _____ Address _____ Submitted by _____ Date _____

Membership Form

American Dexter Cattle Association

You can update or correct personal information online at
www.dextercattle.org/



(Print)

Name _____

Street Address or Rural Route _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Farm or Herd Name _____ Animal Name Prefix _____

(If there is a duplication of Herd Name or Animal Prefix you will be contacted)

E-Mail Address _____ Website _____

Date Submitted ____/____/____ Phone Number _____

These fee rates are for 2009

Individual member dues	\$25	If paid by January 31 of 2009	1 Vote
Individual member dues	\$30	If paid <u>after</u> January 31 2009	1 Vote
Family/Partnership dues	\$45		2 Votes
Youth Membership dues	\$30		No Votes
Associate Membership dues	\$30		No Votes

**New members that own or become owners of ADCA registered cattle will receive their first year membership free for the calendar year.*

Costs of Animal Registrations and Transfers:

Registrations are a separate cost even if done at the same time as the transfer.

- Cows up to 1 year old \$20
- Bulls up to 2 years old \$20
- Cows over 1 year old \$40
- Bulls over 2 years old \$40
- Steers \$10

Transfers

- Regular Transfers \$20 (any age)

Write check to ADCA and mail to:
 American Dexter Cattle Association
 4150 Merino Ave
 Watertown MN 55388

1/01/09

(Online transfer and credit card payment are available at www.dextercattle.org)

Transfer Application 2009
American Dexter Cattle Association
4150 Merino Ave. Watertown, Mn 55388
(Must be a member to register the transfer)

If the new owner is not a member He/She should complete the membership form to become a member!

Buyer Information

*Last Name _____ Member # _____ (If known)
*First Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
*Farm Name _____ Animal Name Prefix _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Seller

Name _____ Member # _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____

Fee Schedule

January 1 to December 31 2009

Costs of Registrations and Transfers:

Registrations

Heifers up to 1 year old	\$20
Bulls up to 2 years old	\$20
Cows over 1 year old	\$40
Bulls over 2 years old	\$40
Steers	\$10

Transfers

Regular Transfers	\$20 (any age)
Steer Transfers	\$10

If animals are registered and transferred at the same time there is a registry and transfer Fee (\$40 total)

Membership Fees

New members that own or become owners of ADCA registered cattle will receive their first year membership free for the calendar year.

Annual renewal of dues \$25 In January \$30 after January

The seller should complete this form, and sent with proper payment to:

Chuck Daggett
4150 Merino Ave
Watertown MN 55388
952-215-2206

1/1/09



Artificial Insemination Form American Dexter Cattle Association

Cow/Heifer _____ Reg No. _____

Sire Name _____ Reg No. _____

Date of Service ____/____/____

(Signatures) Owner _____ AI Technician. _____

Owners Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Cow/Heifer _____ Reg No. _____

Sire Name _____ Reg No. _____

Date of Service ____/____/____

(Signatures) Owner _____ AI Technician. _____

Owners Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Cow/Heifer _____ Reg No. _____

Sire Name _____ Reg No. _____

Date of Service ____/____/____

(Signatures) Owner _____ AI Technician. _____

Owners Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Record Keeping

Record keeping is simply good business practice. There are many software programs on the market that are designed for both commercial and purebred cattle operations. Even an old-fashioned pen and paper beats no record keeping system at all.

The important thing is to find a method that you can manage, which allows you to maintain accurate, thorough, and timely documentation of your herd health program, nutrition program, and other important production factors. It is also essential to controlling your costs of production and keeping track of other data that help you make informed management decisions.

For example, animal health records tell the manager and veterinarian what treatments are being used so they can make sure that recommendations are being followed and decide whether treatment protocols need to be adjusted.

Your buyers will appreciate knowing that you have kept good records on your animals' health and nutrition as well. It is important to have documentation showing animal ID and the withdrawal time from any given medication or treatment. What is withdrawal time? If you give medications or shots to your animals, those medicines or treatments allow a certain "withdrawal" time that must be allowed before those animals are taken to slaughter – or even given some other medication as a follow-up. If you don't heed these withdrawal times, you run the risk of residue contamination of the beef.

Also, you should keep records on your use of pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals. Understand the remarks and safety restrictions with regard to withdrawal times and animal types (pregnant, lactating, etc.) that should not be treated or exposed to treated areas.

In addition, you should keep records of births and deaths, movements of animals from one pasture to another, Sales of animals (include all purchaser information), and Purchases of animals (include all seller information.)

Good record keeping will enable you to be a better manager and herdsman. It will certainly make your animals more attractive to prospective buyers if they know you have complete records on each animal. Keep your records up to date. Register and test your animals as needed and do it in a timely fashion. Carefully keep your medical records on your animals and stick to your schedules for inoculations, worming, etc. It may seem tedious, but it can save time and grief if you know the exact status of each of your animals.

Animal Treatment Records

1. Keep all records for at least two years from the date of transfer or sale of cattle. This will help you track the treatment history of the animal when it was in your possession.
2. The treatment record should contain:
 - a. Treatment date
 - b. Animal identification
 - c. Approximate weight of animal
 - d. Product administered
 - e. Product lot/serial number
 - f. Earliest date the animal could clear withdrawal time
 - g. Dose given
 - h. Type of administration (IM, SQ, etc.)
 - i. Location of injections
 - j. Name of person who administered the drug
3. A copy of the records should be made available to the buyer. Records should include all treatment history and other information as deemed appropriate.

Treatment Protocol Book

This is a plan for preventing and treating health disorders – with the assistance of your veterinarian:

1. Develop preventative health management plan.
 - a. Vaccinations
 - b. Parasite control
 - c. Injectables (Vitamins, etc.)
 - d. List withdrawal periods for each treatment
2. Develop treatment protocols for health disorders.
 - a. List the health disorders routinely encountered on your operation.
 - b. Develop a list of key symptoms associated with each disorder
 - c. Develop primary and secondary treatment protocols for each disorder.
 - d. Establish withdrawal periods for extra-label use.
 - e. List withdrawal periods for each treatment
3. Outline procedures for dealing with other disorders.
4. Record contact information for your veterinarian.
5. Have your vet sign and put his license number and date on your developed treatment protocol book.

(Thanks to Texas A&M and the Texas Beef Quality Producer Program)

Veterinary Drug Order

A list of pharmaceutical products approved by your veterinarian for use on your cattle.

1. Vaccines
2. Parasiticides
3. Antibiotics
4. All other injectables

(Thanks to Texas A&M and the Texas Beef Quality Producer Program for this information)

Veterinary Drug Order (VDO)

Category	Active Ingredient	Route of Administration	Brand Name (optional)

Category = antibiotic, anthelmintic, vaccine, vitamin, anti-inflammatory, etc.

Active Ingredient = penicillin, ivermectin, clostridial, etc.

Route of Administration = oral, topical, intranasal, injectable, (IV, SQ, IM)

Treatment Protocol Book (TPB)

Disorder: _____

Prevention

Product _____

Dose _____

Route of Administration _____

Frequency of Administration _____

Withdrawal _____

Special instructions:

Treatment

Indications for treatment:

Primary Treatment

Product/Active Ingredient _____

Dose _____ Route of administration _____

Duration/Frequency of Treatment _____

Withdrawal Period _____

Other Comments:

Secondary Treatment

Product/Active Ingredient _____

Dose _____ Route of Administration _____

Duration/Frequency of Treatment _____

Withdrawal Period _____

Injection Site Management

Improper administration of animal health products can lead to food safety risks.

Injection site lesions and abscesses do not pose a health risk to consumers. Quality defects caused by improper injection site management are a safety concern. Problems like broken needles and violative residues can lead to adulteration of the carcass. These problems make the affected beef products unsafe for consumption.

Best Management Practices – Injections

1. Follow instructions. Read the label and follow all labeling information before administering any animal health product. Avoid intramuscular (IM) injections whenever other labeled routes of administration are available.
2. Use proper restraint when administering injections to cattle. Improper restraint is the leading cause of broken needles and tissue damage.
3. All IM injections must be given in the NECK only – no exceptions. When administering subcutaneous (SQ) injections, use the “tenting” technique and place the injection in the neck. As a last resort, an acceptable SQ site would be behind the elbow in the elbow pocket.
4. Use SQ, oral, intravenous (IV) or topical administration of antibiotics, vaccines, and parasiticides when possible.
5. Never exceed 10 cc in any injection site. For example, if 24 cc is the recommended dose, use three 8 cc injections instead of two 12 cc injections.
6. If possible, do not place more than one SQ injection on the same side of the neck to avoid interaction of products or severe tissue reaction.
7. Properly space injections:
 - a. 3 inches between injection sites on calves and yearlings
 - b. 4 inches between injection sites on cows and bulls
8. Never mix products. Mixing products can cause unnecessary tissue damage, may reduce the effectiveness of the products administered or extend the withdrawal period before the animal can be sold and potentially go to a packing plant.
9. Use needles no larger than necessary. Proper needle size will vary depending on product viscosity, size of animal and route of administration (IM or SQ)
 - a. 16-18 gauge ½ to 1 inch needles work well for SQ injections
 - b. 16–18 gauge 1 to t-1/2 inch needles work well for IM injections
10. Protect needles from contamination.
11. Change your needle when it becomes contaminated or damaged. Change needles frequently (10-12 head per needle) to ensure minimal tissue damage. Change needles

on every animal if a blood-borne pathogen is known to exist in your herd. If a needle bends, stop immediately and replace it. Do not straighten it and use it again. Bent needles are much more likely to break off in the animal.

12. If a needle breaks off in the animal:

- a. If the needle remains in the animal, mark the location where the needle was inserted.
 - b. If a broken needle cannot be removed at the ranch, contact a veterinarian immediately to have the needle surgically removed.
 - c. If a broken needle cannot be extracted from the tissue, record the animal's ID to ensure that it is never sold or leaves the ranch. At the end of its productive life, the animal should be euthanized and disposed of properly.
13. Injection sites should be free of soil and manure. Processing cattle in wet weather increases the chance of injection site contamination.
14. Do not use chemical disinfectants to sterilize needles or syringes. To sterilize, boil syringe components and reusable needles in water for 20 minutes. Disinfectants can cause severe tissue irritation and will reduce the efficacy of products like Modified Live Virus vaccines. It is best not to disinfect the injection site as product contamination can occur, as well as increased tissue damage.
15. Develop a record keeping system and processing map to document individual animals or entire groups of animals that have been treated. Also, include the route of administration used (IM or SQ), product used, product lot number and serial number (in the event you encounter an episode of product or treatment failure).

GROUP PROCESSING / TREATMENT MAP

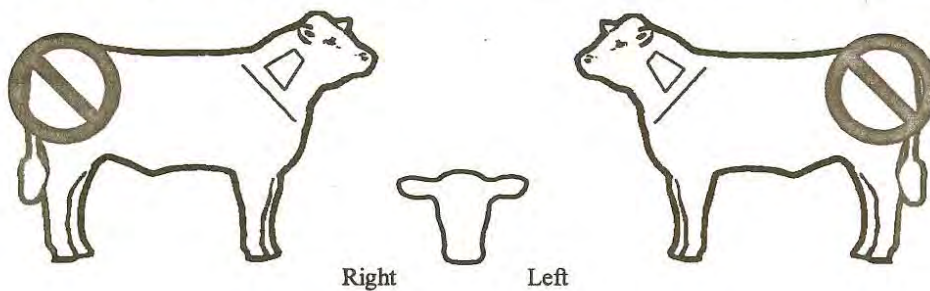
Select SQ products and never
give an injection in the rear leg or top butt.

Group: _____ Date: _____ ID: Rt. Ear/ Lft Ear: _____

Booster/Reprocess Date: _____ Pen/Pasture #: _____

Class: S / H / Bulls / Cows Age: _____ Weight: _____ Hd. Processed _____

Other Management (✓): Castrate _____ Dehorn _____ Other _____ Crew _____



	Product and Company	Lot or Serial #	Exp. Date	ROA*	Dose	Booster Date	Withdrawal Date
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							

*ROA – Route of Administration

Comments:

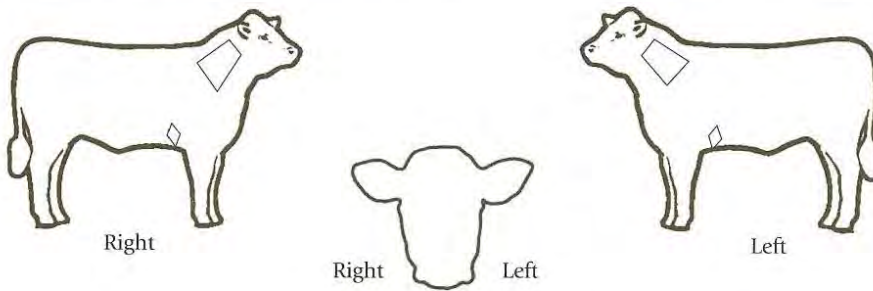
GROUP PROCESSING/TREATMENT MAP

When possible select SQ products and never give injection in the rear leg or top butt.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Number of Head: _____

In Weight (average/variation): _____ / _____ Breed: _____

Sex: S, H, Bulls/mixed ID: Right Ear of Left Ear/Group Number: _____



Product	Lot or Serial#	Company	Withdrawal Date	Route Admin	Dose	Booster Date	Crew Initials
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							

Proper Handling of Cattle

The primary goal when handling cattle is to avoid all unnecessary adverse stress on the animals. Stress has many adverse effects on cattle. Stress is defined as the body's reaction to physical and emotional stimuli.

The reactions which occur in the body of a calf in response to stress are detrimental to the health of the calf. Stress hormones are released in the body and have adverse effects on the immune system.

The common types of stressors that can have these adverse effects on cattle include running, crowding, roping, hotshots, castration, dehorning, injections, and dipping.

Other stressors that have adverse effects that are not commonly thought of include weaning, commingling of cattle from different sources, bulling activity, ration changes, weather changes, and dust.

Keep the following in mind when handling cattle:

1. Be patient! Take your time
2. Keep noise level as low as possible – excessive shouting is not necessary or effective.
3. Do not beat or kick cattle. A tail twist or the appropriate use of a hotshot is sufficient to move cattle
4. Use hotshots appropriately – which means as little as possible.
5. Cattle are creatures of habit. If their handling experiences are not threatening, they are more likely to cooperate this time and in the future.
6. If your set-up is such that the cattle can be around the equipment or even made to walk through the open chute on occasion without anything happening to them, they are less apt to stress out when it is actually time to work them.

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Proper Treatment Procedures

Proper Restraint is the most important factor in a successful treatment program. Safety is very important for both personnel and animals. Double check your equipment and facilities to make sure it is safe for cattle handling. Watch for protruding objects, etc., and make sure that all equipment is functioning properly. Also make sure to maintain proper sanitation – keeping both the treatment area (chute, etc.) and the medical equipment clean and sterile.

Attempt to minimize injury when restraining cattle. Calm handling also reduces stress on the cattle.

1. Don't attempt to push too many cattle into holding areas.
2. Keep noise level at a minimum.
3. Use hotshots as little as possible.
4. Do not beat or kick cattle. A tail twist is often sufficient to move cattle.
5. When cattle are coming through the chute, attempt to slow them down with the squeeze mechanism to prevent shoulder injuries on the headgate.
6. Use back-gates when possible to prevent cattle from piling up in the chute.
7. In order to prevent injury, do not overload the lane with cattle
8. When cattle are in the squeeze chute, always keep a close watch for signs of choke and release any animal in question.
9. When working with the head -- especially when giving intravenous (IV) injections, be sure the head is secured to one side. Use rope halters when necessary; use nose tongs as a last resort.

Immunizing Beef Calves

The following system is another vaccination program from Floron C. Faries, Jr. of the Texas A&M University System. This program is a high-maintenance, yet thorough program to help immunize the whole cattle herd.

Cow Herd Vaccines

Precalving Vaccination of Cows and Heifers

(7 to 9 months of pregnancy or twice a year)

1. 4-way Viral BRD Vaccine
2. Pasteurella Bacterin & Leukotoxoid
3. Haemophilus Bacterin
4. 5-way Lepto Bacterin
5. 7-way or 8-way Blackleg Bacterin
6. Scour Vaccine
7. Vibrio Bacterin
8. Trich Vaccine

Prebreeding Vaccination of Replacement Heifers and Bulls

(3 to 6 weeks before breeding)

1. 4-way Viral BRD Vaccine
2. Pasteurella Bacterin & Leukotoxoid
3. Haemophilus Bacterin
4. 5-way Lepto Bacterin
5. 7-way or 8-way Blackleg Bacterin
6. Vibrio Bacterin
7. Trich Vaccine (Heifers)
8. Anaplas Vaccine

Calf Herd Vaccines

Postcalving Vaccination of Nursing Calves

(2 to 3 months of age)

1. 4-way Viral BRD
2. Pasteurella Bacterin & Leukotoxoid
3. Haemophilus Bacterin
4. 5-way Lepto Bacterin
5. 7-way or 8-way Blackleg Bacterin

Prewaning Vaccination of Nursing Calves

(3 weeks before weaning)

1. 4-way Viral BRD Vaccine
2. Pasteurella Bacterin & Leukotoxoid
3. Haemophilus Bacterin
4. 5-way Lepto Bacterin
5. 7-way or 8-way Blackleg Bacterin
6. Bang's Vaccine (Heifers)

Various Vaccination Programs by Level

The following programs were placed together by Steven Wikse, DVM, from Texas A&M University. They are very beneficial programs that incorporate different financial and economical situations into implementation. The three levels of the program correspond to the cost and overall maintenance level of the program, related back to a ranking system of good, better, and best.

Good Program

This is the very minimal vaccination program for a beef cow-calf operation. It protects calves against the clostridial diseases and cows against the 3 most common reproductive diseases: brucellosis, leptospirosis and campylobacteriosis. These are must vaccinations! This would be a poor program for retained ownership because there are no vaccinations against respiratory tract pathogens. Also, it provides no protection against reproductive losses from the "big 3" viruses, which is the reason I don't recommend it!!!

Calves

At Calf Working (1 to 3 months):

1. 8-way clostridial toxoid
2. 5-way leptospirosis bacterin

At Weaning:

1. 8-way clostridial toxoid
2. 5-way leptospirosis bacterin

After Weaning (Heifers):

1. Brucellosis
 2. Campylobacter fetus bacterin (oil-based)
- Prebreeding (Heifers: 1 month prior to breeding):
1. Campylobacter fetus/ lepto-5 (oil-based)
 2. 8-way clostridial toxoid.

Cows and Bulls

Prebreeding:

1. Campylobacter fetus/ lepto-5 bacterin (oil-based).

Pregnancy Examinations:

1. 5-way leptospirosis bacterin

Cost Per 1000 Cow Herd

8-way clostridial toxoid .43/ds x 2,100 ds.....	\$903.00
Brucella vaccination @ \$3.00/calf x 300 calves.....	\$900.00
5-way leptospirosis bacterin .18/ds x 2,830 ds.....	\$509.40
Campylobacter fetus bacterin .52/ds x 300 ds.....	\$156.00
Campylobacter fetus/ Lepto-5 .48/ds x 1,345 ds.....	\$645.60

Total \$3,114.00

Per Cow \$3.11

Better Program

This is a good vaccination program because in addition to the good coverage, it provides intermediate degrees of protection against viral embryonic deaths or abortions and viral

pneumonia of calves. Also, adults are protected against clostridial diseases. In addition to vaccination of adults against the clostridial diseases, it adds multiple vaccinations against the "Big 3" viruses to calves and replacement heifers in an attempt to develop a long-lasting immunity. It's then hoped that, in adulthood, periodic exposure to the field strains of these agents will serve as "natural boosters". This concept of life-long protection is not proven and is more likely to work for IBR than BVD. Killed virus or MLV vaccines are options for nursing calves so conservatives can have the choice of using killed vaccine. It's not known, however, if killed virus vaccines can serve as primer immunizations like MLV vaccines in the face of maternal immunity.

Calves

At Calf Working (1 to 3 months):

1. 8-way clostridial toxoid.
2. 5-way leptospirosis bacterin.
3. IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (killed or modified-live virus*).

At Weaning or (even better) 3 weeks prior to weaning:

1. 8-way clostridial toxoid.
2. 5-way leptospirosis.
3. IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (killed or modified-live virus*)

After Weaning (Heifers):

1. Brucellosis.
2. Campylobacter fetus bacterin (oil-based).

Prebreeding (Heifers: 1 month prior to breeding):

1. Campylobacter fetus/ lepto-5 (oil-based)
2. IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (modified-live virus).
3. 8-way clostridial toxoid.

Cows and Bulls

Prebreeding (3 to 4 weeks prior):

1. Campylobacter fetus/ lepto-5 bacterin (oil-based).
2. 8-way clostridial toxoid.

Pregnancy Examinations:

1. 5-way leptospirosis bacterin.

Cost Per 1000 Cow Herd

Cost of Good Program.....	\$3,114.00
IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (Killed) 1.62/ds x 900 ds.....	\$1,458.00
IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (MLV) .70/ds x 1,200 ds.....	\$840.00
8-way clostridial toxoid (for adults) .43/ds x 1,030ds.....	\$442.90

Total \$5,854.90

Per Cow \$5.86

*Only specific MLV vaccines proven to not transmit from vaccinates to controls.

Best Program

This is a complete program for most beef herds. It provides better protection against reproductive losses due to the "Big 3" viruses and supplies all the vaccines required for preconditioning calves against pneumonia. The basic additions to the Better Program are annual vaccinations of adults against the "Big 3" viruses and the inclusion of a Pasteurella

hemolyticum toxoid in the calf vaccination program.

Calves

At Calf Working (1 to 3 months):

1. 8-way clostridial toxoid.
2. 5-way leptospirosis bacterin.
3. IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (killed or modified-live virus*).
4. Pasteurella hemolytica toxoid (steers only).

At Weaning or (even better) 3 weeks prior to weaning:

1. 8-way clostridial toxoid.
2. 5-way leptospirosis.
3. IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (killed or modified-live virus*).
4. Pasteurella hemolytica toxoid.

After Weaning (Heifers):

1. Brucellosis.
 2. Campylobacter fetus bacterin (oil-based).
- Prebreeding (Heifers: 1 month prior to breeding):

1. Campylobacter fetus/ lepto-5 (oil-based).
2. IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (modified-live virus).
3. 8-way clostridial toxoid.

Cows and Bulls

Prebreeding (3 to 4 weeks prior):

1. Campylobacter fetus/ lepto-5 bacterin (oil-based).
2. IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (modified-live virus vaccine given when cows are open).
3. 8-way clostridial toxoid.

Pregnancy Examinations:

1. 5-way leptospirosis bacterin.
2. 8-way clostridial toxoid.

Cost per 1000 Cow Herd

Cost of Better Program.....	\$5,854.90
IBR/PI3/BVD/BRSV (MLV) .70/ds x 1030 ds.....	\$721.00
Pasteurella hemolytica toxoid 1.86/ds x 900 ds.....	\$1,674.00
8-way clostridial toxoid .43/ds x 1030 ds.....	\$442.90

Total \$8,692.80

Per Cow \$8.69

*Only specific MLV vaccines proven to not transmit from vaccines to controls.

The above programs are to be used as a reference guide in order to ensure the overall health of a beef cattle herd. **A veterinarian should be consulted when beginning a vaccination or deworming program to ensure the relativity and effectiveness of the program within a respective area.**

(This information was found online from AgriLife Extension Services as part of the Texas A&M University System.)

Summary of Common Cattle Diseases

Respiratory Disease

Pneumonia (Bovine Respiratory Disease Complex)

Hard Breather

Diphtheria

- I. Classification of pneumonia
 - A. Bronchopneumonia/fibrinous pleuropneumonia (BRDC)
 - B. Interstitial pneumonia
 - C. Metastatic pneumonia
 - D. Verminous pneumonia
- II. Bronchopneumonia/Fibrinous pleuropneumonia

Bovine Respiratory Disease Complex (BRDC)

“Shipping Fever”

Cause: cumulative effects of a number of factors

1. Stress: weaning, gathering, transport, commingling, handling, processing, weather
 2. Viruses: IBR, BVD, BRSV, PI-3
 3. Bacteria
 - a. *Pasteurella multocida*
 - b. *Pasteurella multocida*
 - c. *Hemophilus somnus*
 - d. *Actinomyces pyogenes*
- III. Hard Breather -- Cause: uncertain
 - A. Allergic type reaction
 - B. Dust

Symptoms

1. Breathing hard
2. Problems get worse when animals are moved around
3. Open mouth breathing – tongue may protrude

Treatment

1. Supportive treatment

- a. Anti-inflammatory agents
- b. Antihistamines
- 2. Antibiotics

IV. Diphtheria (Necrotic Laryngitis)

- A. Cause
 - 1. Dust and other irritants causing persistent coughing
 - 2. Persistent coughing causes damage to surface of larynx
 - 3. Results in abscess formation – occludes airways
- B. Symptoms
 - 1. Animal wheezing
 - 2. Honking cough
 - 3. Fever- temperature 103 F.
- C. Treatment – same as hard breather

Digestive Disease

Scours, Coccidiosis, Overload/acidosis, Bloat, Enterotoxemia

- I. Scours
 - A. Causes – VERY MANY
 - 1. Salmonella – stressed induced
 - 2. Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD)
 - 3. Parasites – Ostertagia (Brown Stomach Worm)
 - 4. Chemical agents – arsenic, fluorine, copper, sodium chloride, nitrates, mycotoxins
 - 5. Nutritional changes
 - B. Symptoms
 - 1. Fluid diarrhea – may contain blood
 - 2. Color is not a diagnostic aid – yellow does not indicate salmonella
 - 3. Dehydration
 - a. Sunken eyes
 - b. Loss of skin turgor
 - c. Gaunt stomach
 - C. Treatment
 - 1. Supportive treatment
 - 2. Antibiotics
- II. Coccidiosis – another cause of diarrhea, usually bloody

Cause

1. Coccidia
2. Related to number of oocysts animal is exposed to
3. More common in animals kept in confinement
4. Often related to unsanitary conditions

Symptoms

1. Bloody mucoid diarrhea
2. Often foul smelling diarrhea
3. Tail and rump are often stained with bloodstained feces
4. Straining
5. Occasional cases

Prevention

1. Sanitation
2. Coccidiostats
3. Treatment

Overload/Acidosis

- I. Cause – due to a number of nutritional, behavioral, and/or management factors
- II. Symptoms – vary according to severity
 1. Characteristic diarrhea (scours)
 2. Depression
 3. Uncoordination, staggering
 4. May appear to be blind
 5. May lead to bloat due to rumen stasis
 6. Abdominal pain may be apparent
 7. Respiratory and other diseases are common sequelae
- III. Treatment
 1. Rumen buffer
 2. Electrolyte and fluids
 3. Antihistamines
 4. Anti-fungal agent
 5. Antibiotics

Bloat – There are 2 types of bloat – GAS and FROTHY

- I. Gas Bloat – inability to eructate gas (burp)

- II. Frothy Bloat – This is also due to excess accumulation of gas, but it is in the form of tiny bubbles or froth
 - 1. Symptoms – distension; possible respiratory distress
 - 2. Treatment – relieve gas from rumen with buffer; reduce the stability of the bubbles in order to cause them to break

Enterotoxemia

- I. Cause
 - 1. Clostridium perfringens
 - 2. Bacteria normally present in the small intestine in very small numbers
 - 3. Normally is not a problem
 - 4. If fermented grain is available within the small intestine, the bacteria may be able to rapidly grow and produce a very lethal toxin
- II. Symptoms – usually sudden death
- III. Treatment - prevention

When to Breed that Heifer...

(Based on information found online and in several cattle how-to books.)

It is recommended that a virgin heifer NEVER be bred before 14-1/2 months of age....nor should she be having a calf at the age of 2 years.

If a heifer is well developed and well cared for, you might consider breeding at 15-16 months of age. Given the gestation period of 9-1/2 months, that would make her 24-1/2 months – 25-1/2 months old when she calves...still pretty young for the task at hand.

For this heifer to be ready to be bred, she should be as big as possible when bred. If she is a bit thin, or still a bit small at 15-16 months old, give her some more time. Perhaps she will be better fit for the job at 18 months. Even at 18 months, she will still be growing her own bones and body. Optimally, she should have reached at least 70% of her projected mature weight before she is bred – exposed to the bull OR artificially inseminated.

Be aware that Dexter Cattle can start becoming sexually able to reproduce as young as 7-8 months old. This is true of both bulls and heifers. Just because they can breed this young is no reason to allow this to happen. Be proactive! Separate those youngsters when they are weaned so there are no “accidents.” Plan for a boys’ weaning field and a girls’ weaning field...with good fences between them.

Allowing your animals to breed too young might give you a head start on productivity, but at what cost? Your heifer will never reach her potential growth if she is trying to grow a calf while trying to reach maturity herself. Her growth will be inhibited, and her lifetime productivity shortened as a result. Giving her time to mature will also give her a better chance at learning to be a good mother to her calves. Heifers who calve too young have a greater tendency to be poor mothers.

Another fallacy is that “bulls will not breed their own daughters!” Unfortunately, bulls do not have that guideline built into their systems. If a heifer is in season, the bull will breed her. He isn’t as discriminatory as some people seem to think.

When is the best time for calving? The answer to this is simple – whenever your pastures will be the most lush and forage readily available is the best time for your cows/heifers to calve. When there is not a struggle for nutrition, the new mothers will have a much better chance at giving their calves all the nourishment they need while not losing their body mass trying to succeed at motherhood.

Remember to keep those groceries coming for pregnant and lactating cows! Healthy cows make healthy babies.

This also applies to those animals that are grass-fed only. Grass fed beef only works if the animals are getting enough to eat. If the grass is sparse, give supplemental feedings. There are many other nutritious feeds that may be given which still meet the standards for grass-fed beef.

Check with your local extension agent for some of these.



What you should know about Dexter Cattle. Judge's Dexter Handbook

Thank you for agreeing to judge our Dexter Show!

It is not uncommon for very well accomplished Judges to never have had the opportunity to judge, or even see, a Dexter Cow or Bull. They are a rarer breed and just now, in the past several years more and more shows are adding Dexters to their venue due to the Dexter Breeds increasing popularity and numbers. We have written up this brief description of the Dexter Cow and the Dexter Bull so that you may familiarize yourself with the breed prior to the show date.

The following guidelines for the Dexter bull and cow are meant as a **guide** to Judges and represent the ADCA consensus as to desired characteristics. These guidelines are not to interfere with the Judges ordinary way of judging cattle, but simply meant to be an aid to familiarize the Judge(s) with the Dexter Breed. The Dexter is both a milk-producing and a beef-making breed but most often judged under the Beef Cattle categories.

Judging Using Breed Guidelines

The Ideal Dexter

Dexters come in two body types, defined as long- and short-legged, because the cannon bones differ in length by about 1 ½ inches. The “long-leg” is a small regular-cow proportional animal; the “short-leg” is a slightly smaller, heavier-set version a bit longer than it is tall. Both types produce similar amounts of meat and milk.

Long Legged and Short Legged Dexters are of equal merit.

Description of the Dexter Bull

Color - Solid black, red or dun (brown), the three colors being of **equal merit**. A little white on the organs of generation is permissible and are of equal merit to those bearing no white. **Excess white extending in front of the navel, or elsewhere on the animal is a show ring deduction.**

Head - Broad forehead, tapering gracefully toward the muzzle which should be broad with wide, distended nostrils. Strong lower jaw with the jaws meeting properly. Eyes should be bright and prominent.

Neck - Well set into the shoulders which, when viewed in front, should be wide.

Horns - These should be moderately thick, springing well from the head, with an inward and slightly upward curve. Removal of horns is allowed without penalization. There are some polled Dexters also. **Horned, Dehorned and Polled are all of equal merit.**

Body - Well-proportioned regarding height to length. Shoulders of medium thickness, full and well filled in behind which, when viewed from the front, show thickness through the heart, the breast coming well forward, the chest with a wide floor resulting in ample width between the legs. Hips wide; quarters thick and deep and well sprung, wide across the loins. Legs short to moderate but not excessively long, and well placed under the body; forelegs straight, wide apart and squarely placed; hind legs nearly perpendicular from hock to pastern when viewed from the side, and straight and wide apart when viewed from the rear. Feet short, well rounded with deep heel, level sole and toes properly spaced. Tail well set and level with the back.

Skin - Skin should be soft and mellow, and handle well; hair fine, plentiful and silky on younger bulls and coarser mature bulls.

***Weight** - Bulls at three years old and over should not exceed 1,000 lbs. live weight. **Weight well over this amount in a bull should be a show ring deduction.**

***Height** - Bulls should not exceed more than 44 inches in height nor stand less than 38 inches at the shoulder at three years of age. **Height over 44 or shorter than 38 should be a show ring deduction.**

*** Often, height and weight measurements are not taken upon entry so it is to the judge's discretion on whether the animal in question falls above or below the guidelines. If a decision is so close that an actual measurement of the animal would determine it's placing, a measuring device will be available for this use, if requested by the judge, supplied by the Association.**

Description for the Dexter Cow

Color - Solid black, red or dun (brown), the three colors being of **equal merit**. White on the udder and underline to the point of umbilicus is permissible. A few white hairs in the tassel of the tail is permissible. Animals that fall within the above guidelines are of equal merit to those bearing no white. **Excess white extending in front of the navel, or elsewhere on the animal is a show ring deduction.**

Head - Broad forehead, tapering gracefully toward the muzzle which should be broad with wide, distended nostrils. Strong lower jaw with the jaws meeting properly. Eyes should be bright and prominent.

Neck - Well set into the shoulders, not too thick or too short.

Horns - These should be moderately thick, springing well from the head, with an inward and slightly upward curve. Removal of horns is allowed without penalization. There are some polled Dexters also. **Horned, Dehorned and Polled are all of equal merit.**

Body - Well-proportioned regarding height to length. Shoulders of medium thickness, full and well filled in behind which, when viewed from the front, show thickness through the heart, the breast coming well forward, the chest with a wide floor resulting in ample width between the legs. Hips wide; quarters thick and deep and well sprung, wide across the loins. A straight underline with udder firmly attached front and rear with strong center support. Udder and teats should be of moderate size with the teats of equal size squarely placed on an udder with clearly defined halving. Legs short to moderate but not excessively long, and well placed under the

body; forelegs straight, wide apart and squarely placed; hind legs nearly perpendicular from hocks to pastern when viewed from the side, and straight and wide apart when viewed from the rear. Feet short, well rounded with deep heel, level sole and toes properly spaced. Tail well set and level with the back.

Skin - Skin should be soft and mellow, and handle well; hair fine, plentiful and silky.

***Weight** - Cows at three years old and over should not exceed 750 lbs. live weight. **Weight well over this amount in a cow should be a show ring deduction.**

***Height** - Mature cows should not exceed 42 inches in height nor stand less than 36 inches in height at the shoulder. . **Height over 42 or shorter than 36 in a mature cow should be a show ring deduction.**

*** Often, height and weight measurements are not taken upon entry so it is to the judge's discretion on whether the animal in question falls above or below the guidelines. If a decision is so close that an actual measurement of the animal would determine it's placing, a measuring device will be available for this use, if requested by the judge, supplied by the Association.**

Show Ring Standards

Common standards apply in the show ring as any other cattle show. If an animal shows aggression and is unmanageable or escapes from the handler 2x that animal is to be ejected from the show ring for safety concerns. The 2x rule is at the discretion of the Judge and the animal may be ejected after the 1st occurrence of bad behavior should the Judge feel it is necessary to keep the handler and the other exhibitors safe.

Dexter Bulls over 12 months old, MUST have a nose ring (either permanent or removable) and must have a lead attached to the ring while in the show ring. Bulls that do not follow this rule should be turned away at the in gate by the gate keeper– but upon failure to do that, the animal should be dismissed from the ring, immediately upon recognition that it is in violation of this rule at which point the bull is disqualified and may not return to the class line up.

Grooming Standards

Grooming is left up to the discretion of the owner as long as they abide by the items that are prohibited. - see below

Prohibited Grooming Items

1. Painting or polishing of horns or hooves with colored polish
2. Artificial coat coloring

3. Growth implants
4. Drugs to alter the disposition of the animal
5. Use of adhesives, waxes or mousse.

Dress Code Standards

The following will be required and enforced in the show ring for anyone presenting cattle:

1. Collared/buttoned shirts with sleeves (length of the sleeves is determined by the season/weather)
2. Long pants (jeans or slacks) that are dark and don't have tears or holes.
3. Boots or fully enclosed heavy footwear must be worn for safety reasons.
4. Long hair must be tucked in a hat or tied back, also for safety reasons.

Optional: Belt, western hats, gloves

Optional (but strongly encouraged!) The use of show sticks and combs

Prohibited items: Baseball caps, T-shirts or crop top shirts that leave the midriff skin showing, sandals or canvas shoes (for safety reasons), overalls or baggy, low riding pants that drag on the ground (again, for safety reasons).

Attached for your interest is more information on the Dexter Breed.

Dexters Have Wide Appeal

In recent years there has been a worldwide surge of interest in Dexter cattle. Dexters meet many requirements. Because of their size and number, they appeal to the miniature/novelty and rare gene protection enthusiasts. Dexter are also the perfect old-fashioned family cow. Pound for pound, Dexters cost less to get to the table, economically turning forage into rich milk and quality, lean meat. No other bovine can satisfy such a diverse market.

Dexters Do Well In All Climates

Dexters are a hardy breed. They perform well in a variety of climates. You will find these easy-care little cows being raised successfully from Alaska to Florida, and all the States and (Canadian) Provinces in between. They are used commercially in England and South Africa, and are also popular in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

In general, these small cattle have a friendly character and low maintenance costs, as well as cost-effective, high-quality production of both meat and milk in manageable quantities. These qualities have caught the attention of many part-time and serious farmers.

Easy Care Dexters Make Farming Fun

Dexters are listed with the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, which classifies them as a minor breed. Because only purebreds are accepted for registration in the American Dexter Cattle Association, the purity of the breed is maintained and the gene pool is kept intact. Owning a Dexter is like owning a little piece of history.

Dexters can be trained as oxen. This is a popular hobby along the eastern seaboard in both the United States and Canada, and Dexter oxen are proven crowd-pleasers everywhere.

Dexters still perform well in their original role: the family cow. Once the Dexter cow has been trained to milk, she can be easily handled by even the most timid.

Dexters Cost Half as Much to Keep

You can expect a Dexter to consume about half of what you would feed an Angus or Hereford under the same conditions. This equates to roughly half an acre of good green grass per animal, or 12 to 15 pounds of hay and a little grain per day, in temperate climates.

The temperament of Dexter bulls is generally very good. However, for those who prefer to use artificial insemination, there is a large selection of readily-available imported and domestic semen. Dexter bulls are excellent for crossing with first-calf heifers of the larger, big-boned breeds. You will lower calving weights, reduce calving problems, yet still have good-size carcasses.

Dexters Are Easy Calvers

Dexters are known for their ease of calving. The use of calf pullers is virtually unknown. Calves weigh about 45 pounds at birth, and by seven months when they are weaned, weigh between 350 and 500 pounds. Both sexes will continue to grow until five or six years of age.

Rib Eye Exceeds Standard USDA Correlation

Research done at California State University, Chico, showed that the Dexter rib eye was 15% larger than the standard USDA rib eye vs. carcass weight correlation would expect it to be.

Dexters are a small-boned breed which marble well without excess cover fat. They produce tender meat with excellent flavor.

Grain-fed Dexters will yield carcasses of 250 pounds at 12 months, and 475 to 500 pounds at 24 months, or at least 60% of live weight. These results can be obtained by supplemental feeding of only five to seven pounds of grain per day for two to three months. Grass-fed animals yield a carcass of about 55% of live weight.

Dexters Yield Easily-Digested Milk

Dexter cows produce about 1 ½ to 2 gallons of 4% butterfat milk per day, over a full 305 days lactation, when fed for production. Some exceptional cows will put out up to five gallons per day at the height of lactation. When producing just for the calf, the cow's milk production will adjust down to the calf's needs. The fat globules in Dexter milk are very small, which makes the milk more easily digested.

For more information on the Dexter Breed go to www.dextercattle.org which is the American Dexter Cattle Association Website.

Expectations.

How to meet them, greet them and surpass them.

Well, here you are. Your navigational system has gotten you to the show grounds safely and you see the cattle barn just ahead. You practiced at home, you have the feed and equipment you need to make it through the weekend on the trailer as well as your best show stock waiting to prove themselves in the show ring., so now what happens.

First Things First.,

As you pull up to most cattle shows you can expect to be greeted by 2 sets of people. One will be the one to verify you are at the right place and have the proper credentials to enter (parking pass, tickets, etc) the other may be a veterinarian or veterinary staff or show staff to verify that you have your health papers (issued by your veterinarian for transport out of your state) and that your cattle listed on the health papers, are the actual cattle that are on and now impatiently stomping and rocking your trailer., and that they are., you guessed it., healthy.

Some veterinarians will want to get on board your trailer and check tattoos or ear tags and expect for you and your cattle to cooperate with such requests. Others will want you to take your cattle off, one by one as they eyeball the general health of the animals., still others go over your animals with a fine tooth comb, listen to their lungs, carefully inspect tattoos, health papers and anything else they can find.

This is all part of the show world. So grin and bear it. Yes, you and your cattle are tired and want to settle in and get the stalls set up the folding chairs unfolded, find the restrooms, the snack bar and your hotel., but this is one of those times where you get more flies with sugar than you do vinegar- so be kind, cooperative and light spirited with the folks checking your cattle., without their okay., you've done all this for nothing and may be back on the road again towards home in a flash!

Just remember, no one wants their cows to get sick because some snotty nosed, wart laden, scour covered animal got in under the radar., so just like the Highway Patrol who writes you a ticket., remember it is for the safety of yourself (your cows) and others around you., and just one of those things., so be prepared, be gracious and you will be sitting back in your chair admiring your stall set up, sipping a cold drink before too long.

Secondly.,

If there is a line waiting for vet checks, then it would be a good time to make sure you are parked out of the way of others incase the line starts moving or send in a co-pilot to check to see where you are to set up your cow. Most shows will have sturdy panels – typically steel, to tie your cattle to. Remember halters and neck ropes. It is best to tie the halter lead rope to the cows left and the neck tie to the right,

forming a sort of cross tie in the hopes of keeping your cow reasonable straight ahead so that she doesn't soil her neighbor. This is much easier said than done and is a hazard of the show barn, so just because you and your neighbor both crosstie in this manner, it is no guarantee that your cow won't be wearing your neighboring cows dinner from the night before..,

Okay, your cows are checked in by the vet, they are tied properly in their designated spots.., what's next?

A Lot of Set Up and Go.

What you (and others) should know about your stall space.

What's Your Sign? Make yourself a farm sign with at the very least, your farm name and location. If competing in an all breed show – make sure the sign says “Dexters or Dexter Cattle” somewhere on it. Some folks have a vinyl banner made that easily rolls up and is easily packed for shows, others have elaborate wooden or metal signs professionally made and others make their own sign on posterboard.., all are acceptable and welcome in the show barn.

Each Cow Has Their Own Identity. Here is something that you can have fun with or just stick to the facts. At the very least each cow should have their own sign with their name (registered name OR barn name), their age (actual DOB or general age), and if an all breed show.., their breed and at shows that allow it, whether the animal is offered for sale*. You can also add pedigree, awards, baby pictures, artwork, your farm name.., whatever you would like. Some folks use wipe off boards so that they can change their show string, some have signs made of metal, plastic or wood, and others print the information on cardstock and put in a page protector for hanging. One fun thing, especially if children are showing the cow, is to have them create the sign with crayons, markers or the computer .., just make sure that they know what should be on the sign as far as vital information and then let them create.

Good Fences make Good Neighbors. Sometimes your mature bull will be right next to a virgin heifer (in standing heat of course).., so it is important that you prepare for this by bringing some sort of divider, homemade or bought, to keep your bull honest or to keep your heifer from overly teasing your neighbors bull. If you have no divider and find yourself in this scenario, ask the show staff to switch your stall space if possible or lend you a divider. If you have brought more cattle sometimes it is easy enough to flank each side of the bull with bred cows or steers which defuses the whole situation.

Cleanliness is Next to..,

Keep your stall area clean and uncluttered. It is not a playground for children and should be kept clear of objects that may scare passing cows which could inadvertently injure their handlers. Keeping manure up and bedding clean not only makes your display professional looking, but keeps your cows looking their best. Remember that many people bring high powered fans and blowers to shows so loose

curtains, poorly hung signs, empty feed bags, plastic grocery bags or trash bags., can all become very frightening to cows exhibiting in their first show.

Give a Man a Fish., Teach a Man to Fish

Remember that you and everyone under the big tent have the same interest., cattle. If someone asks you for help, help them if you can and explain how and why you do something all the better., every show is a learning experience for everyone, not just the children. Show venues that are open to the public (like the AGM) are great places to teach others about Dexter Cattle. Be prepared to meet and greet visitors with information on how great our breed is.

Hay, is that My Feed?

Keep your hay and feed neatly stacked (or in your trailer!) so that it not only has a neat appearance, but so that hungry cows on a loose leadline don't dive in for the kill. Another cows spit on your cows hay may not be a big deal for you., but it may be a big deal for your Bessie, who you do not want to go on a starvation diet before show day!

Show Day / Sale Day.

Everyone involved in the show and/or the sale will be preparing their cattle for each prior to the event. Ask before you touch and if you have a question, try and keep it brief so the handler can get back to work. Luckily most sales allow a sale preview period. During this time, the handlers should have the cattle in show ring condition and be prepared to talk about their cow, their operation, the bull the cow is bred to etc. This pre-sale preview is to help sellers promote their cattle to potential buyers and is designed so that a large group of buyers is at each cow for a number of minutes, allowing the seller to do their discussion on each of their sale cows once rather than being tied up the whole morning trying to entertain a multitude of buyers back to back. This makes is more informative and uniform for each potential buyer and easier on a seller trying to get several animals ready for the sales ring.

Look What I Won.

Well show day has ended and you wonder if you should or shouldn't display all your winnings. That is an individual choice for each exhibitor to make., but here are some suggestions if you decide to display them:

1. Hang them tight., remember the blowing fans and blowers will still be used and will blow away your ribbons and banners if they are not secured tightly.
2. Hang them high., it is amazing how long Bessie's tongue actually is when she really, really wants to taste something!
3. Having a pile of ribbons sitting on an unmanned table may be too much temptation for a young child, or young cow passing by.

4. While it would be unimaginable that a fellow Dexter exhibitor would take or damage your prizes, remember that this show is to promote Dexter Cattle and their breeders and is open to the public.

My bags are packed, I'm ready to go.

Check what you will need when you are ready to pack up and go. Some shows make you get a signed release from the show office, while others want you to clean your stall space of all bedding. Always remove all of your trash, all of your signage, plastic ties, feed, hay and personal belongings. There is usually a set time that you are allowed to leave a show and most if not all times, if you leave prior to that time all monetary winnings are forfeited. So be clear on release times and expect a run for the door once that time comes., so just be prepared to be patient. If release time is 5pm., you are not going to be on the road by 5:10. Remember if you buy cattle you will need health papers to take it home and the best and easiest time (since the vet will be there) to get health papers for your new purchases is directly after the sale.

There is your basic primer for MOST cattle shows on what to expect. Of course there are some fairs or shows that divert from these basics but it has been our experience that most of the things listed here ring true for 90% of cattle shows whether they are tiny local shows or large national ones. The AGM and other National shows are a great time to meet, talk to and learn from folks who have the same interests as you and raise cattle in all regions of the country.

(Submitted by Sally Coad)

Getting Ready, Get Set, SHOW!

Showing Cattle is fun for all ages but getting started is sometimes a scary proposition that many dread and worry about which makes it stressful for human and bovine alike. That first step into the show ring does take preparation and planning, but it is nothing to worry about – it is something to look forward to. Here are some very basic things that should be done in preparation of your first show;

1. Know your cow. This may seem like a no brainer – but knowing what sets your cow off, what relaxes her and how to get her to do what YOU want her too., without her knowing it sets you ahead of the game.
2. As weather permits, bathe your cow and see how she looks. Is her coat sun bleached or winter dried? Does she still have her calf coat? These things will help you determine whether she needs some intense hair conditioning, whether her coat looks show ring beautiful or if she needs a body clip.
3. You should practice, practice, practice. 5 minutes a day is all it takes to familiarize yourself and your cow to walking, stopping, being set up and standing still. Take advantage of strangers coming to your farm by having them walk completely around your cow as you hold her in a standing position. You would be surprised how many pocket friendly cows do not want someone they don't know standing behind them and admiring their hind legs and udder.
4. Plan your equipment and use it at home. It is wonderful to have a nice shiny brand new show halter but use it several times before show day. A lot of folks buy show halters at the show grounds, which is fine, but still practice several times before ring time. A chain under the chin is something the cow needs to get used to and even the chain on popular control halters are a bit different than the ones on show halters., so again., practice. Other equipment that you should not be without is a show stick (which positions the feet of the cow and is used to relax her in the show ring), a scotch comb and holder (more on this equipment in "Showmanship 101"), and something to attach your exhibitor number to your body – either a clip or harness made for this specific purpose or a couple of large safety pins.
5. Tie training. Find a sheltered space at your farm that you can tie her for long periods of time safely. The show grounds should not be the first place your cow has ever been tied and left. And don't forget to tie her short enough that she won't get her legs tangled up, but long enough for her to lay down. Also invest in a neck rope. For about \$5 it is extra insurance should Bessy become Houdini and get out of her halter. Neck ropes are mandatory at most shows (in addition to the halter), including the AGM.

Well that is the minimum you need to do before show day. There can always be more. Using a grooming chute, clipping, trimming, blow drying, hair training, feet trimming are things that can be utilized., and some of it will be covered under "Grooming To Win".

(Submitted by Sally Coad)

Grooming To Win

Many people who have never shown before think that winning is all in the grooming. While it is important to have your cow look the best she can be, she will be judged on her conformation and against what that particular judge feels the “perfect” cow looks like. Having the cow clean without distracting shavings or muck stains on her coat allows the judge to concentrate on the body and movement of the cow. I am including this piece on grooming certainly not as an expert, but I have been asked many times, what we do to our cows before the showing, so it is for information only on what WE do. It is not necessarily the right way or the best way., it is simply “our” way.

Most healthy cows have a shiny coat and a healthy luster. There are products that can be used to enhance that shine and luster depending on the desired effect and the time you have to spend on the cow.

For morning shows most of the time we will shampoo the cow the night before, dry her if she has a thick coat and after she is dry spray some detangler such as Showsheen, Vetrolin Shine or other similar product to try to keep as much dirt out of her coat overnight as possible. We leave enough time in the morning to spot wash if need be, but usually a brushing (or blow with the blower is quicker) to get the loose dust and shavings off her coat, re-showsheel if needed., and that is it.

Weeks before the show (as much as 6-8 weeks) we decide if we are going to clip. If it is an early Spring or late Fall class we almost always, will clip the cows head and neck and tail. This is a standard among cattle shows and would be deemed the minimal amount of show prep in an AOB or ORB class at an open or junior show. Especially when the cow has a winter shag of a coat going on, we want the judge to be able to see the features of a cows feminine face and neck. In most cattle shows that heifers or cows are shown adhesives and dyes are never allowed. The only class of animal that these items may be allowed on are show steers. If it is a late Spring or Summer show and the cow is old enough to have shed her long hair and instead has a sleek summer appearance, often we do not clip at all. It will really be a personal decision and may be different for each cow you plan on bringing to the show.

If you choose to clip the head and neck, we feel it is important to do it about 1 or 2 weeks before the show so that it looks more natural and lines made while clipping can grow in a bit. It is important to have a clean animal and sharp clipper blades. This will make the job look better.

Usually the face /head is clipped closer than the neck and is blended in at the jaw. The neck is then blended into the shoulder and brisket so that it does not look like a harsh line. All of this can be accomplished the day before the show., but it is easier on everyone if it is done well prior. If the decision to body clip is made., usually due to an unruly thick, sun bleached or winter dried coat then you simply clip the entire body the same length. This should be done 4-8 weeks prior to show day to get growth. But keep in mind poor Bessie will probably be turned back out to withstand the weather conditions after getting home from the show so base some of your decision on her health and welfare after the show and not just her appearance in the show ring!

We clip the outside edges of the ears, though many , if not most, leave heifer and cow ears completely natural and fluffy.

The most important equipment to me in grooming a cow for a show class would include a scotch comb, a soft brush, a shining conditioning spray and a paper towel (to wipe eyes, noses and mouths – in that order). Because we usually bring MANY cows to show., we also have a grooming chute to keep the cow still so that it takes the least amount of time to get her clean, a blow dryer to blow dirt out rather than having to brush- in addition to drying after bathing. These things are not needed, they simply cut your show day grooming time in half and are worth the investment if you plan on doing a lot of showing with a large number of animals.

Instructions on how to clip are often included in new clippers if you have the luxury of being able to get a new pair., otherwise you can search the internet on “clipping beef cows for the show ring” many extension services through your local state University may have websites that help youth get cattle ready for showing. Fads do change from year to year., if you find a site that they “ball” a heifers tail like a Christmas ornament., you have found an outdated site., also keep in mind, dairy cows are clipped differently (and shown differently) than beef cattle and it is always beef cattle grooming standards that we go by when we groom our Dexters for the show ring.

The best lessons learned on grooming show cattle can be found at a show. Attend any beef cattle show in your area and watch the animals being groomed for the show ring.

Ask questions after or well before (day before for instance) the show.

And remember:

A perfectly groomed, perfectly clipped, professionally handled cow or bull will not win over a reasonably clean cow or bull who has better conformation and a better way of moving. ***

*****Except in a Showmanship class.** In Showmanship the class is judged on the way a handler presents the animal. **It is judged on the person at the end of the lead rope** (aka handler) and how the handler shows the animal off to the judge. A dirty, poorly groomed cow reflects on the handler. In Showmanship a dirty cow with perfect conformation and a handler who does not look at the judge nor knows what their cow eats will probably place well below a spotless cow with conformation flaws whose handler actually “knows” the cow.

(Submitted by Sally Coad)

There's No Place Like Home.

Nothing will drive that statement home more than your dear cow refusing to drink for days because the show site's city water in a bucket is nothing like her pure mountain stream that she is used to.

People, not in the know, claim that show cattle are pampered and that it is bad to spoil them like show cattle are treated.., here are some facts that you need to be aware of..,

A show cow must be adaptable to change. Different "air", different environment, different water, different lighting, different routine. Most of us bring our cows in from pasture and load them up on the trailer and bring them to shows.

Some of the things to get your animal (and yourself) prepared for "whatever the showgrounds may bring" takes some planning.

1. **Get your cow used to drinking from a bucket that is brought to her.**

- While teaching your cow to tie keep water away from her. This is safer so that she does not get a foot hung up in a bucket, but will also encourage her to drink from a bucket when offered.

2. **Get your cow used to the taste of Gatorade or Kool-Aid flavored water (this will mask the chlorine found in some city water).** This takes a couple of weeks to accomplish sometimes- offer it as a treat.., and if it is not accepted, a week or so before the show, add a small amount to their ONLY drinking source. They will get them used to the flavor.., do not make it very strong flavored, just enough to mask any differences in the water. This way, when you pack for the show, pack her favorite flavors and IF she refuses to drink the water at the show, mix her drink mix and let her drink.

3. **Buy some square bales of hay – enough to bring with you to the show AND enough to feed her the week before show time.** Many folks rely on their pastures to feed their Dexters, or round bales and do not take into account that those are hard feed sources to bring with you on the road until the day or two before they leave for a show. It is important to get the cow used to any feed changes that will occur at least a week before she is expected to do her best in the show ring.

4. **Bring whatever feed dish she is used to eating from.** Or buy a nice fresh clean one a few days before you leave and use it at home. Sometimes new plastics have new smells.., and there will be enough new smells at the show without tempting Bessy to turn her nose up at her feed.

Packing for a show with a cow is very similar to packing for a child. Routine and familiarity is the best way to prevent chaos and unpredictable results.

(Submitted by Sally Coad)

Showmanship 101

There is more to showmanship than being able to drag your dear Bessie into the show ring without a struggle. Showmanship skills are an important part of showing cows for several reasons and should not be taken lightly. Below are basic Showmanship skills and what to expect when showing Dexter Cattle in a Beef Cattle or Dexter Cattle venue. At the end of this article we will discuss some additional Showmanship skills you need to know to show (and place well) in Showmanship classes.

Equipment

Proper Dress (Long, clean, untoned, western style pants or jeans, collared and sleeved shirt, belt and boots. Little to no jewelry, long hair tied back or under a western style hat)

Exhibitor Number and holder (Exhibitor numbers are handed out at the show, generally each cow you are showing will be issued a different number. You will need a way to wear the number, either a clip or harness made specifically for this purpose or large safety pins to attach the numbers)

Show Stick (the proper length showstick will come just below your chin., if a child it can come up to their nose or eyes depending on age to allow for growth!)

Scotch Comb and Holder (this is a metal or plastic comb bought at show supply stores that is worn on the right side of the exhibitor just above or just to the right of the back right pocket of their jeans. The holder is more secure than putting the comb in the back pocket and the holder attaches to the exhibitors belt and is generally made of a leather or a leather like material)

Show Halter (there are different styles of show halters, generally a Dexter will fit into a XS until they are yearlings, S as late yearlings, M beyond. L usually will fit mature Dexter Bulls. It is best to buy halters locally (at a Tractor Supply for instance) or at the show grounds where you can try on for fit.

Into the Ring You Go

With showstick in your left hand (with your hand placed just below the actual handle of the stick and carrying it straight up and down with the point down and about a foot off the ground) and show halter in your right (preferably with cow installed!) you enter the ring- walking straight in and in a clockwise direction. There are a couple of "right" ways to hold the show halter, generally you will hold the chain or the leather where the chain connects – the head of the cow should be at a natural height or slightly higher as you enter the ring and start walking clockwise (the cow should be between you and the center of the ring – usually where the judge is standing).

Your eyes should be on the judge, your cows eyes should be straight ahead. There should be little or no slack in the lead between your hand and the cows chin., her head should remain slightly elevated and her pace should be even, controlled and covering ground.

The judge (or ringmaster) will usually pull everyone in and line up side by side facing a long side of the arena.

This will be the judges first chance at seeing your cow stand still. He/She will generally walk behind the cows as you hold her in a square or near square (front feet should be parallel to each other and the hind feet should be parallel to each other.., so that IF you were to look at the cow from the side it should look like it only has 1 front leg and 1 hind leg). You will stand there until the judge is done looking at each and every cow.

Often you will then be motioned to pull forward and turn left (counter clockwise) and either expected to go down the center line or the diagonal line of the show ring. The judge will usually be positioned at the far end so that he/she can examine your cows gait from the front or will be off center so that he/she can examine the gait then the side of the cow as she passes. It is important to keep your eyes on the judge at all times and realize that sometimes the cow will rush past the judge nervously and be prepared for this bound in energy level.

Often you will then continue clockwise around the ring until everyone is out of the center and set up so the judge can see your cows profile. When lining up nose to tail (as opposed to side by side) you should try and have your cow stand "profile". Where the front feet are parallel or near parallel to each other and the hind feet are slightly staggered so that the inside leg (towards the judge – the right hind) is slightly further back than the outside leg. This allows a more natural stance for the cow and allows the judge to observe the udder more easily if it is developed. Once your cow is set in this position, get your eyes back to the judge. Often the judge will come ask you questions about your cow (it's age for example) or may test your knowledge (especially in showmanship classes).

Often this is the next to last phase of the class and takes some time. The judge will then start pointing at exhibitors who are then expected to go line up side by side usually in approximately the same part of the ring they did in the beginning of the class, but usually also, the ringmaster will guide you to where you should be going. Once you get there, square up your cow, and watch the judge. As the line of cows standing profile, head to tail gets depleted it is important for those behind cows being pulled, to move up and fill in the gaps, re-set their cow into profile and wait to be called. Once everyone is pulled from the head to tail positions and everyone is now side by side, often the judge will inspect the cows again, possibly reposition them, and head off to announce the placings.

Some pointers to remember -

-While your cow is standing still, use the showstick to gently scratch the area on there belly closest to the ground between the brisket and the navel. This relaxes most cows but if when practicing at home, your cow does not like this, she will not like it in the show ring either. If she does not like it, do not do it, but hold your show stick still and out of the way and off of the ground.

-The reason you have a scotch comb is that IF at any point while in the show ring another cow or especially the judge, touches your cow, you are expected by the judge to take the comb out, comb

briefly 2 or 3 brief swipes against the hair growth and replace in the holder (or your pocket).
REGARDLESS of whether the hair is out of place or not., this is sort of a showmanship test!

-Try not to let your cow touch another cow in the ring. If it is completely unavoidable, make sure you apologize to the other handler immediately and after the class outside the ring.

-Never follow too closely. This is the most common mistake in the show ring. Yes, you must keep your eyes on the judge BUT you also must know where the cow in front of you is and when it is stopped. You do NOT want your heifer or worse your bull, to get too close and attempt to mount the animal in front of you. Again, if it happens, apologize immediately and after the class outside the ring. If you are on the wrong end of this encounter., understand it will be you someday getting too close to the cow in front of you and react in a good sportsmanship type manner. As a rule, always allow one cow's length between you and the cow in front of you and at the very least two bull's length between you and the bull in front of you. Steer classes follow the same rules as cows.

-If you do not hear or understand the judge., ask him to repeat it. He or the ringmaster will usually do so far more gladly than having you ignore what he has asked you to do.

-Always congratulate the winner of the class. And if YOU are the winner, always congratulate the second place winner.

-If you are the first or second place winner of a class, you will probably be called back to show in the Championship round for that division. Usually the youngest winners (animal not exhibitor) will enter the ring first followed progressively by older cows and the format of the class is usually the same as the class you won. Generally the first place winners will be doing the class and the second place winners will be lined up in a corner or right outside the ring (this will be announced at the ring gate) It often takes longer for the judge to pick the actual winner since he is choosing amongst those he already placed first. When the Champion is pulled to the center of the ring, the second place winner of that animal's class is to take its place in the nose to tail line. The ringmaster will likely help you recognize if it is you that should be moving to fill in the spot.

SHOWMANSHIP CLASSES

Okay, you have done your homework, worked on your Breeding management at the farm and feel confident your Bessie has the conformation, movement and udder attachments to take the class and maybe even the Championship., but are YOU ready for the Showmanship Class?

Showmanship classes are judged on how the person at the end of the show halter (aka handler) presents the cow to the judge. It is not a "fluff" class., it is stiff competition. This class is not based entirely on your breeding program and the cows it produces., it is all based on YOU. Are you up for the challenge?

- Make sure your animal is CLEAN. This is the only case I can think of where a clean, poorly conformed animal will beat a perfectly conformed dirty animal. Remember, the animal is a reflection of the preparation YOU did before the class., and the class is judging YOU.
- Know your animal. The judge may ask the age, the breeding, what she likes to eat, what you feel her conformational flaws are, what you feel her assets are.
- Know the breed. The judge may ask breed specific questions on Dexters. What are they good for? Where did they come from? Why Dexters over conventional breeds?
- Know the species. The judge may ask bovine specific questions. No lie, one Showmanship class the judge actually asked the exhibitors to NAME all of the chambers of the cows stomachs! That is extreme! But you never know. More often questions such as when do you breed a heifer, how long is gestation, or will point at a body part and ask you to identify it, etc.
- Handle your cow. If she misbehaves you WILL be judged on how you handle it. So if you were ever to practice show ring Yoga., here is the time! Do NOT ever., that should all be capitalized DO NOT EVER lose your temper in the show ring., in the showmanship ring especially.
- Always look at the judge and have a “look at my cow – she is the best” demeanor about you in the Showmanship arena. Never block the judges view of your special Bessie., remember she is the most super duper cow in the world., why would you stand in front of her when the judge is trying to look at her?
- Shhhhh. Never, ever talk in the show ring to another exhibitor. Unless you are briefly apologizing to them for something you have allowed your cow to do. It shows lack of respect to the judge to talk in “his” show ring.

That is really it. Sometimes stuff happens, equipment will fail, you will trip, the cow will get loose, the cow will kick or slobber all over another exhibitor, you will drop your showstick, your perfect Bessie will turn into a monster when she steps in the ring., it is ALL part of the thrill of showing. Take a deep breath, smile and move on., you have another class to prepare for.

(Submitted by Sally Coad.)