**MCJLS Standards for Steer Classification**

**BRITISH TYPE**

This group includes cattle that appear to be purebred Angus, Hereford, Polled Hereford, Red Angus, and Shorthorn.

**Angus**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a purebred Angus
* Solid Black
* Polled
* Needs to have a tight sheath that is round and perpendicular to the ground
* *Angus*-type ear set, small to moderate ear size high on the head

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Continental breed type structure (being coarse about his joints, not to be confused with big-boned cattle) and head
* Bumps where horns would be on a horned animal
* Birthmarks or white hair in the switch should be reviewed for the skin color (black skin color is acceptable; white or pink skin is a disqualification)
* *Non-Angus*-type ear set (Ear set and excessive ear size as in Continental breeds)
* Large navels and angular sheaths

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* White skin resulting in white hair above the underline or in the front of the navel (White on the navel is acceptable)
* White skin resulting in white hair on the leg, foot or tail
* Horns or scurs
* Brindle
* Diluter color pattern
* Dehorning scars
* Double muscling

**Hereford**

*Ideal Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a purebred Hereford
* Some white on the back of both ears
* Red body with white face, white underline, and white-marked legs
* Traditional feather on crest
* Horned Herefords must show evidence of being dehorned

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics* – *These* *characteristics are not necessarily desirable and in combination may be discriminating*

* Dark red color
* Red neck
* Solid red ear(s)
* Excess white on legs
* Excess white above the underline
* Eye pigment
* Black hair in tail, or ear of animal
* Freckling on the nose
* White above switch in tail
* White across rump above the twist

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Solid white ear(s)
* Questionable ear size and shape
* Straight-line white markings on legs or tail above the switch
* White above the hocks, on the outside and back side of rear legs
* Excess pigment or color around the eyes
* Red neck in combination with excess white on legs
* Line back
* Coarse joints, head, or ribs

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Solid black nose
* Diluter color pattern
* Streaking of white from the feather off the shoulder
* Brindles
* Double muscling; extreme muscle definition
* Any color pattern other than red or white (birthmarks excluded)

**Polled Hereford**

*Ideal Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a purebred Polled Hereford
* Some white on the back of both ears
* Red body with white face, white underline, and white-marked legs
* Traditional feather on crest
* Must be polled or have loose scurs.

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics – These characteristics are not necessarily desirable and in*

*combination may be discriminating*

* Dark red color
* Red neck
* Solid red ear(s)
* Excess white on legs
* Excess white above the underline
* Eye pigment
* Black hair in tail, or ear of animal
* Freckling on the nose
* White above switch in tail
* White across rump above the twist

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Solid white ear(s)
* Questionable ear size and shape
* Straight-line white markings on legs or tail above the switch
* White above the hocks, on the outside and back side of rear legs
* Excess pigment or color around the eyes
* Red neck in combination with excess white on legs
* Line back
* Coarse joints, head, or ribs

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Horn attachment to the skull
* Evidence of tampering with horns, or dehorning scars
* Solid black nose
* Diluter color pattern
* Streaking of white from the feather off the shoulder
* Brindles
* Double muscling; extreme muscle definition
* Any color pattern other than red or white (birthmarks excluded)

**Red Angus**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a Red Angus
* Solid red (shades may vary)
* Polled
* A blond, light red, or mixed switch
* Cattle may have black hair on the tail, muzzle, face, neck, and legs

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Coarse joints (not to be confused with big boned cattle)
* Solid White Switch

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Horns or scurs breaking through the skin
* White skin resulting in white hair above the underline or in front of the navel (white on navel is acceptable)
* White skin resulting in white hair on the leg
* Black pigmentation of the skin. Not to be confused with freckling on the nose or anus
* Roaning
* Dehorning scars or evidence of dehorning
* Black Noses

**Shorthorn**

*Acceptable Breed Classifications*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a purebred Shorthorn
* Solid red; solid white with red hair or red pigment on ear, muzzle, anus or tail; or any combination of red and white, with the red and white color pattern bleeding together

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Motley face or brockle face
* Orange or light red color
* Black nose pigment
* Coarse head
* Coarse joints

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Diluter color pattern, such as yellow or yellow roan
* Blacks, blue roans, or grays
* Brindle
* Solid white with no red pigment on the ears, tail, or anus
* Double muscling

**BRAHMAN TYPE**

This group is sometimes called American Breeds. Physical evidence of Brahman background is important (ear length and shape, amount of hide, hump/crest).

**American Breeds Cross**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Any color or color pattern
* Progression of importance to include *Bos indicus*-influenced head, eye, and ear (of moderate length, slightly pointed, drooping and opening down and forward); showing *Bos indicus* influenced sheath
* Crest or evidence of hump
* With adequate Bos indicus head, eye, and ear characteristics; sheath score is of less importance

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* *Bos taurus* head
* *Bos taurus* short ear
* *Bos taurus* eye
* Sheath score of 1
* Slick neck (lack of crest or evidence of hump)

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* A combination of a *Bos taurus* head, eye, and ear

**Brahman**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a half-blood Brahman
* A prominent hump beginning at the shoulder and going forward but must angle back down to the neck to create a hump – not a crest
* Any color or color pattern
* With adequate *Bos indicus* head, eye, and ear characteristics; sheath score is of less importance

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Sheath score of 1

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* A crest with an inadequate hump
* Lack of hump or presence of hump
* A combination of a Bos taurus head, eye, and ear

**Brangus**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a purebred black Brangus
* Solid black with no white above the underline or in front of the navel
* Polled
* Progression of importance to include *Bos indicus*-influence head, eye, and ear (of moderate length, slightly pointed, drooping and opening down and forward);
* With adequate *Bos indicus* head, eye, and ear characteristics; sheath score is of less importance
* Shows some evidence of a crest

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Scurs or slick spots
* Excessive, pendulous sheath
* Inadequate *Bos indicus*-influence head, eye, and ear characteristics
* Brown dilution over ribs, fore flank, twist and muzzle
* Sheath score of 1

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Horns
* Dehorning scars
* White above the underline or in front of the navel
* White on the legs, feet, or tail
* Any brindle

**Santa Gertrudis**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a half-blood Santa Gertrudis with adequate *Bos indicus* head, eye, and ear characteristics.
* Any color pattern of black, red, yellow or orange
* Moderate crest, no definite hump
* Moderate dewlap development
* Moderate length of ear, slightly drooping and opening forward
* Sheath score 2-5

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Straight, pendulous sheath
* Slight brindle color
* Sheath score of 1

*Absolute Disqualification*

* Absence of any visible Santa Gertrudis characteristics
* Absence of *Bos indicus*-influence head, eye, ear, or sheath
* Smoke, silvers, grays or tiger-stripes

**Simbrah**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a purebred Simbrah (3/8 Brahman and 5/8 Simmental)
* A sheath score of 2 or greater
* With *Bos indicus* head, eye, and ear characteristics; sheath score is of less importance
* Stocking legs
* Bald, blaze, or streak face or mottled face
* Solid black, solid red or solid dun/tan/yellow combination with white or any of the previously listed colors
* Brindle color pattern preferably with white markings

**Discriminatory Breed Characteristics**

* A sheath score of 1
* A *Bos taurus* head
* A *Bos taurus* ear
* A *Bos taurus* eye
* Solid yellow

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* A combination of a *Bos taurus* head, ear, eye, and sheath
* Roans
* Grays
* Silver
* Smut
* Diluter color pattern

**CONTINENTAL or EXOTIC TYPE**

Included here are Charolais (half-blood and higher), Limousin, Maine-Anjou (half or higher), and Simmental (purebred).

**Charolais**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a half-blood purebred Charolais
* White, yellow gray, or silver (moderate dappling allowed)
* Expression of diluter gene
* Minimal painting or spotting less than 20%
* Skunk tail, line back, baldy

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Excessive painting or spotting (over 20%)
* Double muscling
* Brindles
* Frail bone work and frail general appearance
* Light red color or orange
* Short, stubby head
* Overly refined, narrow head
* Excessive dark pigmentation (eyes, nose, ears, and anus)
* Excessive dappling

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Black, red, dark smuts
* Showing no diluter gene, unless solid white
* Excessive painting or spotting

**Limousin**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Must physically exhibit breed characteristics of a Limousin
* Solid black, red/orange, light red, charcoal black, chocolate black, orange or brockleface
* Brindle color pattern will be allowed providing it does not extend below the midrib of the body
* Bald face
* Tend to be smooth shouldered
* Head
  + Eye – Deeper socket, prominent brow, light pigment around eye on reds
  + Poll –Needs to have a wide poll
  + Ear – Tends to be smaller and rounder
  + Muzzle – Tends to be short
* Sheath - Tends to have a forward angle
* Legs/feet
  + Tend to be smooth jointed
  + Tend to be flat boned

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Coarse joints, skeleton, and head
* Course open shoulders
* Pencil sheath, hanging straight down
* Pointed poll
* Excessive crest
* White Switch

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Stocking legs
* Spotting above the underline
* Brindle below the mid-rib
* Roans
* Yellow, Blonde, Grey, Silver
* Diluter Gene
* Red Cattle with Black noses
* Monkey/Parrot mouth

**Maine Anjou**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Solid red
* Solid black
* Red and white
* Black and white
* Heavy skeletal structure

**Simmental**

*Acceptable Breed Characteristics*

* Appear to physically exhibit characteristics of a purebred Simmental
* Solid black, red, red and white, yellow and white, black and white
* Some painting or spotting above the underline
* Bald, blaze, or streak face
* Typically longer head, larger ears

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* None

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Brindle
* Roan
* Diluter color pattern
* Appears to be more than 50% of any other breed

*Discriminatory Breed Characteristics*

* Motley/Brockle face
* Excessive white above the underline

*Absolute Disqualifications*

* Brindle
* Roans
* Smut or gray, white, smoky, silver or any combination of these
* Skunk tail

**CROSS DIVISIONS**

**Black Cross Division**

* Must have a black body cavity. Defined as the area behind the top of the shoulder blade down to the point of the shoulder and above the belly line.
* White in the body cavity is only acceptable in the following instances:
  + White is a continuation of the feathering
  + White is at the fore and/or rear flanks similar to Hereford color pattern
  + White spotting not collectively larger than 9 inches (basketball size) in diameter per side (can not be all on the same side)
* Skunk tail cattle are permitted provided the white above the rectum does not exceed the amount of white spotting allowed (basketball size)
* Absent of diluter gene
* Brindle color pattern will be allowed providing it does not extend below the mid-rib of the body
* No roan cattle permitted

**Red Cross Division**

* Must have a red body cavity. Defined as the area behind the top of the shoulder blade down to the point of the shoulder and above the belly line.
* White in the body cavity is only acceptable in the following instances:
  + White is a continuation of the feathering
  + White is at the fore and/or rear flanks similar to Hereford color pattern
  + White spotting not collectively larger than 9 inches (basketball size) in diameter per side (can not be all on the same side)
* Skunk tail cattle are permitted provided the white above the rectum does not exceed the amount of white spotting allowed (basketball size)
* Absent of diluter gene
* Brindle color pattern will be allowed providing it does not extend below the mid-rib of the body
* No roan cattle permitted

**Other Cross Division**

* Steers of any coloration pattern are acceptable

**Classification Glossary**

**American breeds** – Breeds created in the United States by interbreeding existing breeds, including at least one tropically adapted breed (most often American Brahman).

**Bald face** – Appearance when white covers most of the face.

**Blaze or streak face** – A wide strip of white down the face to the muzzle.

***Bos indicus*** (zebu) – Subspecies of cattle originating in south Asia; has a prominent hump on top or in front of shoulder.

***Bos taurus*** – Subspecies of cattle; originated in west Asia but is usually called European.

Brindle. A streaking of black, brown, or white on the body of the steer (tiger stripe).

**British/English** - Cattle originating in the British Isles; Angus, Hereford, and Shorthorn are most

numerous in the United States.

**Brockle or motley face** - Red or black spotting on a white or bald face.

**Continental** - Breeds originating in Continental Europe; sometimes called European or Exotic.

**Diluter gene** – A gene that determines color. Cattle that carry both copies of the gene will appear white. Non-diluter cattle will appear black or dark red, whereas those carrying a single diluter gene will appear gray or yellow.

**Discriminatory Breed Characteristics** – Characteristics that are not reason for absolute disqualification but in combination with other discriminatory visual characteristics could lead to

disqualification.

**Horned** – Horns are solidly attached to the skull, or there is evidence of dehorning.

**Painting** - Large white markings covering a major portion of the steer.

**Pigmentation** – Dark skin coloring on the points of the steer (eyes, nose, ears, anus, tail).

**Polled** – Naturally hornless.

**Purebred** – Showing visual characteristics of a particular breed and none of any other breed.

**Scurs** – Horny tissue or rudimentary horn attached to skin but not the skull.

**Sheath score** – Scoring system from 1 to 5 based on the length of the sheath (1 = little sheath; 5 = excess sheath).

**Smut** – Dark gray color pattern.

**Spotting** – White spots on the steer.