

COLLECTING MATURE COW UDDER SCORES

Mature cow udder scores assess the structural soundness of the udder on mature females, and are measured as visual scores.

Mature cow udder score data does not need to be collected by an accredited scorer.

Recording mature cow udder scores

Mature cow udder scores are collected for 3 traits, related to udder conformation based on the visual appearance of the animal.

Each trait uses a 1-9 scoring system, where:

- A score of 5 is considered ideal.
- Scores of 4 and 6 show slight variation from ideal, but this includes most animals. Any animal scoring 4 and 6 would be acceptable in any breeding program.
- Scores of 3 and 7 show greater variation, but would be acceptable in most commercial breeding programs, however seedstock producers should be wary.
- Scores of 2 and 8 are low scoring animals and should be looked at carefully before use in commercial breeding programs.
- Scores of 1 and 9 should be considered culls.

If there is variation from teat to teat, the score that is recorded should reflect the worst teat.

Use of accredited technicians

Mature cow udder scores do not need to be collected by an accredited scorer.

When should mature cow udder scores be collected?

Mature cow udder scores for udder characteristics should be taken within 24-48 hours of calving, in association with collection of calving ease and birth weight data for the cow's progeny.



- ◇ It is important that there is some variation in the scores that are collected. Scoring all the animals in a group with the same score for a trait does not identify any differences in structure between animals, and consequently does not provide any useful information.
- ◇ Management group information should be recorded for any cows or group of cows that have been treated differently or exposed to significant non-genetic influences prior to scoring that may affect their score for a trait.
- ◇ It is important that both a consistent scoring method is used and the same person scores all animals that are being assessed in the herd for a particular group of animals.
- ◇ Scores should be recorded for the whole mob. Collecting "occasional" scores, or only collecting scores for a subset of cows is of no value.
- ◇ If the udder is damaged, structure soundness scores should not be collected. i.e. severe mastitis.



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Udder Evenness



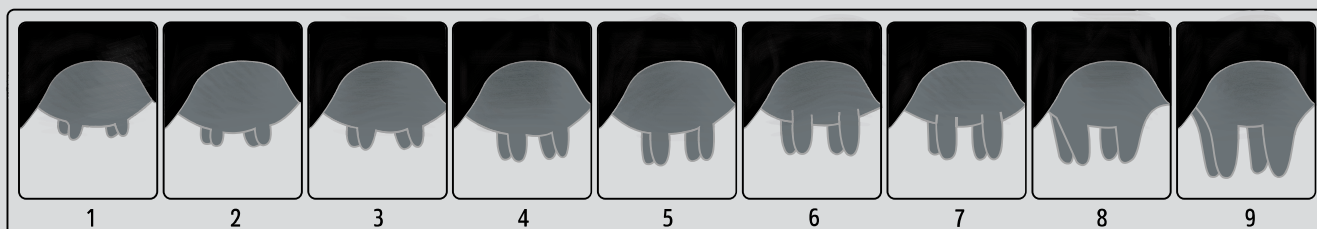
Dropped hind quarter

Good balance

Dropped fore quarter

Reference: Even distribution of the fore and hindquarter of an udder viewed from both sides

Teat Size & Shape



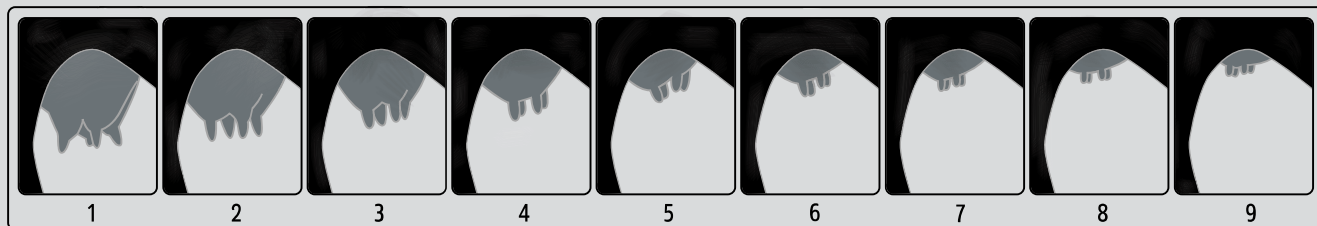
Very small button teats

Thin, good

Very large / bulbous / carrot

Reference: Size and shape of four main teats.

Udder Suspension



Very loose

Intermediate attachment

Very tight

Reference - Depth of the udder relative to the hock

