



JUDGING

Market Lamb Terminology

no. 1.623

by S.E. Myers ¹

Quick Facts...

Market lamb judging involves making decisions based on both visual observation and handling quality.

The priorities for judging market lambs are: degree of muscling, degree of finish (trimness), growth (performance), structural correctness, and balance.

If you are uncertain about the exact meaning of a term or phrase, ask your coach, parent, 4-H leader, volunteer or Colorado State University Cooperative Extension agent.

Market lamb judging involves making decisions based on both visual observation and handling quality. These decisions are essentially an estimate of the traits that reflect carcass value. The following terminology will help youth develop their livestock vocabulary. As you look over the terms, try to picture an animal with the characteristics described by the terminology. When you have an understanding of these terms, you will be able to completely describe all of the important points of a class of market lambs. If you are uncertain about the exact meaning of a term or phrase, ask your coach, parent, 4-H leader, volunteer or Colorado State University Cooperative Extension agent.

Priorities for Judging Market Lambs

- Degree of Muscling
- Degree of Finish (Trimness)
- Growth (Performance)
- Structural Correctness
- Balance

Muscling Terminology

Advantages

Heavier muscled
More muscular (forearm, top, leg)
Naturally thicker
Expressively muscled
Wider based
Meatier rack
Wider (deeper, longer) loin
Fuller, squarer rump (hindsaddle)
Wraps the larger leg
More inner bulge and outside shape of leg
More total volume of leg
Deeper twist

Criticisms

Lighter muscled
Narrow topped
Shallow loined
Short hindsaddled
Narrows at his rump
Flat stifle
Narrow (shallow) leg

Finish (Trimness) Terminology

Advantages

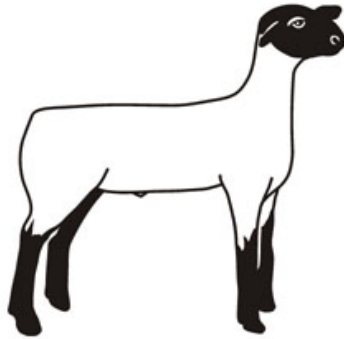
Trimmer (fresher) handling
More correctly finished
Trimmer (tighter) middled
Cleaner breast
Harder (firmer) handling
Handles the firmer leg and trimmer top
Freer of excess waste
Handles trimmer over the upper and lower rib

Criticisms

Soft handling
Heavy conditioned
Over (excessive) finish
Uneven finish
Wasty breasted
Heavy middled
Thin (under) finished
Harsh handling

Colorado State
University
Cooperative
Extension

© Colorado State University
Cooperative Extension.5/2001.
www.ext.colostate.edu



Carcass Terminology

Advantages	Criticisms
Carcass oriented	Least pounds of product
Meatier, trimmer carcass	Lower leg conf. score
Hang a shapelier, more muscular carcass	Light muscled carcass
Will have more rack, loin, and leg	Fat, low cutability carcass
Rail a carcass with less retail fat trim	
Hang a carcass with a more desirable yield grade	
Rail a higher cutability carcass	

Growth (Performance) Terminology

Advantages	Criticisms
Growthier appearing	Appeared to be pounds light
More productive appearing	Lower W.D.A. in class
Appears to have a higher W.D.A. in class	Smaller framed
Taller fronted	Low set
Larger framed	Short bodied (topped, fronted)
Longer patterned (bodied, topped, hipped)	Early maturing
Wide chested	Narrow chested
Deeper bodied (ribbed)	Shallow bodied
Bold sprung	Flat ribbed
More spring (arch) of rib	Pinched in fore rib

Structural Correctness Terminology

Advantages	Criticisms
More structurally correct	Stands close at the hocks
Stood squarer and more correct on feet and legs	Stands narrow based
More correct in the set of his rear legs	Sickle hocked
Stands wider in the rack	Excessive set to the hock
Stronger pasterns	Straight hocked
Stood sounder and stronger on his pasterns	Weak pasterns
Straighter and stronger on both front and rear legs	Toes out
Heavy boned	Buck kneed
	Light (fine) boned
	Straight shouldered

Balance Terminology

Advantages	Criticisms
More stylish (eye appealing)	Plain (unattractive)
More balance (symmetry)	Breaks behind the shoulder
Straight lined	Easy (weak) topped
Cleaner patterned	Ewe necked
Longer necked	Short fronted
Trimmer fronted	Heavy (wasty) fronted
Smoother shouldered	Coarse shouldered
Neck blends smoother into shoulder	Steep docked (rumped)
Lays neater and tighter in the shoulder	Thick (loose) hide
Stronger topped	Pelty
Leveler, squarer hip	
Thin (tight) hide	

¹S.E. Myers, Colorado State University Cooperative Extension youth livestock specialist, animal sciences.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Milan A. Rewerts, director of Cooperative Extension, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado. Cooperative Extension programs are available to all without discrimination. No endorsement of products mentioned is intended nor is criticism implied of products not mentioned.