

Grades of Stockers and Feeders Are Less Refined than for Butchers

by BOB BEST

Grades of stock and feeder cattle are not so refined as they are in slaughter cattle. This is because the animals are younger, and because they are relatively unfinished.

Thus in stockers and feeders we find only six grades, Fancy Choice, Good, Medium, Common and Inferior, as compared to the eight grades for butcher cattle.

Trading in feeder and stocker cattle is facilitated by the use of standard classes and grades whether the cattle are bought and sold through public markets, through auction markets or direct from ranch to feed lot.

The use of standard class and grade terminology enables the rancher to describe accurately the cattle he has for sale and the prospective buyer to describe accurately his requirements, thus facilitating trading on the basis of common understanding.

FURTHERMORE the use of standard classes and grades facilitates accurate price comparison and a correct interpretation of market conditions.

The standard classes and grades for feeders have been in use for several years by the Agricultural Marketing Service in reporting the principal public markets at which stockers and feeders are bought and sold.

The top grade of stockers and feeders is termed Fancy. These animals approach the ideal in conformation, finish and quality. They are large for their age—breed and type considered—have the general appearance of thrift and vitality, and show ability to gain weight and finish rapidly.

The body is compact and symmetrical. It is very wide and deep in proportion to length. The head is short and wide and the neck very short. Legs are short and set wide apart. Topline and underline, as well as the lines of the sides are approximately straight and parallel. The flesh covering over all parts of the body is mellow and of uniform thickness.

MOST COMMONLY seen in the stockyards of the nation these days is the Choice stocker. While these animals are good in conformation, finish and quality, they lack the high type of the Fancy animal. They show the general appearance of thrift and vitality and good growth for the age. The body is compact and symmetrical. They are wide and deep in proportion to length.

The top line and under line, as well as the sidelines, are nearly straight and parallel.

The head is clean-cut in appearance, the bones of the legs are of medium size or slightly large, and the joints are smooth and free from coarseness. The flesh covering over the shoulders, crops, back, loin and rump is thick, firm and of proportionately uniform thickness, giving the

CHOICE GRADE stocker and feeder steers are good in conformation and general appearance. They are large for their age, and show good breeding. The belly is wide, but

not noticeably paunchy. Choice grade cattle are now the favorite of feeders everywhere. (LF Photo)



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animal a plump and well-rounded appearance. The flesh covering over all parts of the body is mellow.

ANIMALS THAT are otherwise good, but lack size for their age are found in the Good class. The body tends to be rangy and somewhat unsymmetrical. It is slightly long in relation to width, or depth, or both. The head is slightly long in relation to its width and the neck, too, is long.

The top-line tends to drop off in the middle.

Animals of the Good grade tend to be either a little coarse or a little too refined. The bones

of the legs are either slightly coarse or too refined, and the joints show some coarseness.

The hide is either slightly thick and unpliant or it may be slightly thin and tight. The flesh covering over the shoulders, crop, back, loin and rump is moderately thick, somewhat deficient in proportionate uniformity, and may be slightly soft. The animal is somewhat angular in general appearance.

MEDIUM GRADE steers are usually only fair in conformation, finish and quality. They are frequently a little small for their age and show only a moderate degree of thrift. The body is moderately rangy and unsymmetrical.

The head is somewhat long in relation to the size of the body. (Continued on page six)

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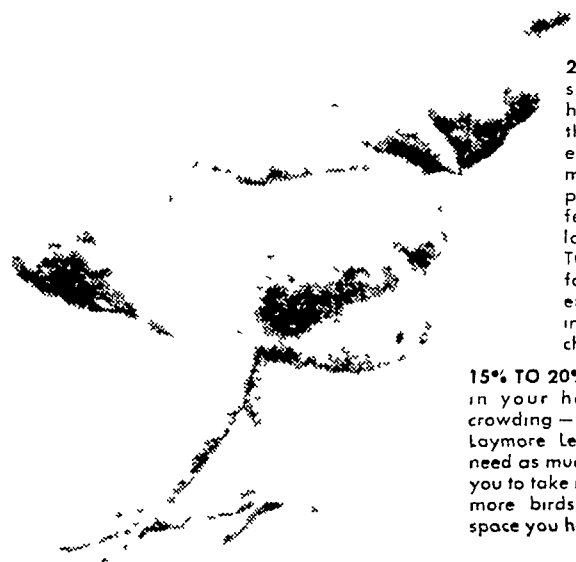
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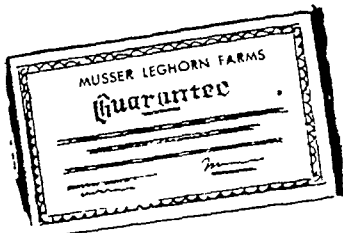
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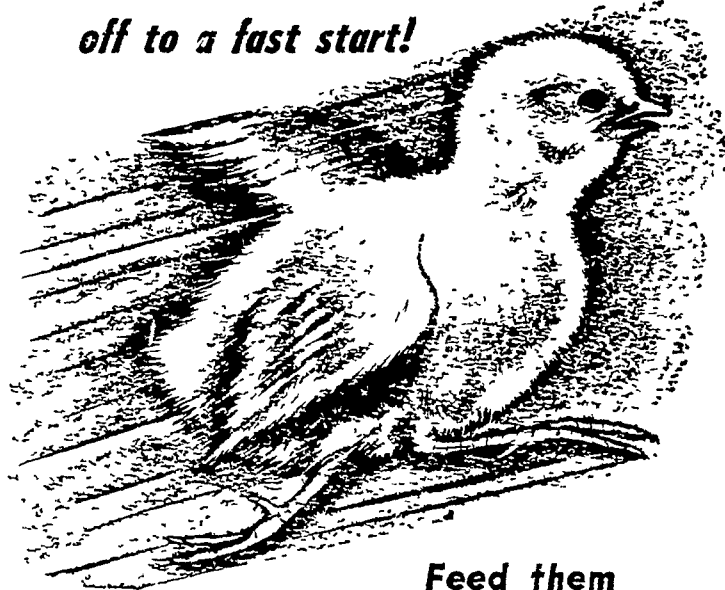
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