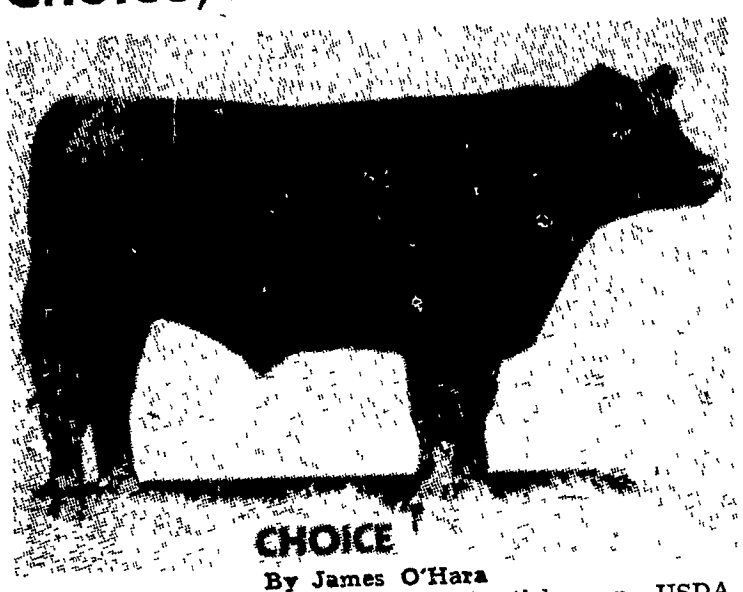
Choice; Most Common



CHOICE

By James O'Hara

This is the second of a series of articles on USDA slaughter cattle grades and their meaning to the beef producer and housewife.

Each piece of graded meat will carry part or all of the stamped shield bearing the letters USDA and the grade. The round stamp so often seen on dressed meat is the Federal meat inspection stamp.

There are eight official grades of beef. These are US DA Prime, Choice, Good, Standard, Commercial, Utility, Canner and Cutttr. The latter two are rarely found in retail stores, being used in various sausages and processed meat goods.

Prime discussed in this series last week, is usually bought by hotels, resorts nad restaurants, and is not found in quantity in stores. Choice and Good are most prominent in the retail trade.

Choice is of high quality, but usually has less fat than Prime. More Choice is produced than any other grade in the slaughter steer area and is usually available on markets the year round; whereas the availability of Prime fluctuates on the market throughout the year.

Choice roasts and steaks from the loin and rib are tender and juicy, and other cuts, such as those from the round or chuck, are more suitable for brasing and pot roasting.

Qualifications for Choice grading of live animals are:

Cattle possessing the minimum qualifications for Choice grade may differ considerably in appearance because of the many possible combinations of varying degrees of excellence of the grade factors.

In conformation, Choice cattle are moderately thick in natural fleshing and are moderately neat and smoothly wide over the back and loin. The shoulders and hips are moderately neat and smoothly laid in with only a slight tendency toward prominence in older cattle. There is a fullness or bulge distinctly over the crops, loin and rump.

The distribution of fat may be slightly uneven, as evidenced by ties, rolls of fat

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