

SEVEN "KEYS" TO  
COACHING A JUDGING TEAM

FOR DAIRY CATTLE

JUDGING CONTESTS

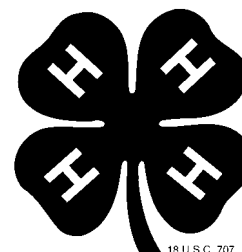
III. FOR COACHES

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UNIVERSITY OF  
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IFAS EXTENSION



# SEVEN "KEYS" TO COACHING A DAIRY JUDGING TEAM

## INTRODUCTION

Preparing for and competing in 4H dairy judging contests is one of the activities 4H provides that most benefits youth development. Members who work intensively to excel in 4H contests develop skills in decision making and oral communications. These skills give them a tremendous advantage in future endeavors, regardless of the occupation they pursue.

You, as a coach, are responsible for providing your students with the basics needed to become a successful judge. What they do with the information you provide them will ultimately determine how successful they will be.

In our years of experience teaching and coaching 4H members and teams, we've found the following "keys" to be evident for outstanding achievement in dairy judging. They are: Understanding the Basic Information, Know the Basics of Oral Reasons, Experience and Confidence, Be Rested, Concentration, Remain Relaxed and Calm, and Make Decisions Quickly and Clearly.

The basis for the "keys" described was developed by Russ Giesy and James Umphrey, who have coached many nationally winning dairy judging teams. Their use of these techniques has brought the Florida 4H dairy judging program up to the exceptional level it is today. The activities were developed and tested by Debra Summerall, a University of Florida agriculture communications major and dairy judging team member, along with James Umphrey.

By incorporating these "keys", reinforced by the activities, into your judging program, you will see an increase the success of your students. The activities are designed to give youth the practice they need to excel in dairy judging. However, they will not work unless you put forth the effort to make them work.

Good luck, coaches!

# SECTION I.

GETTING TO KNOW

THE SCORE CARD

## UNDERSTANDING THE BASIC INFORMATION

Members that win, know and understand the basics of the PDCA Dairy Judging Scorecard. It's amazing sometimes to find that some older and experienced 4H members do not know or understand important details on the PDCA Dairy Judging Scorecard. Be sure to introduce your students to the PDCA scorecard before giving them classes to judge. Make sure they know and understand the correct terms for the anatomical parts of the dairy cow along with common phrases to use in a set of reasons. This is a key to giving high scoring reasons.

*Activity:* "PARTS ARE PARTS" Pass out a copy of the PDCA scorecard to each member. Review the parts of the cow, along with descriptions of each breed of dairy cow. Test students on the parts of the cow with the blank cow in the back of the booklet.

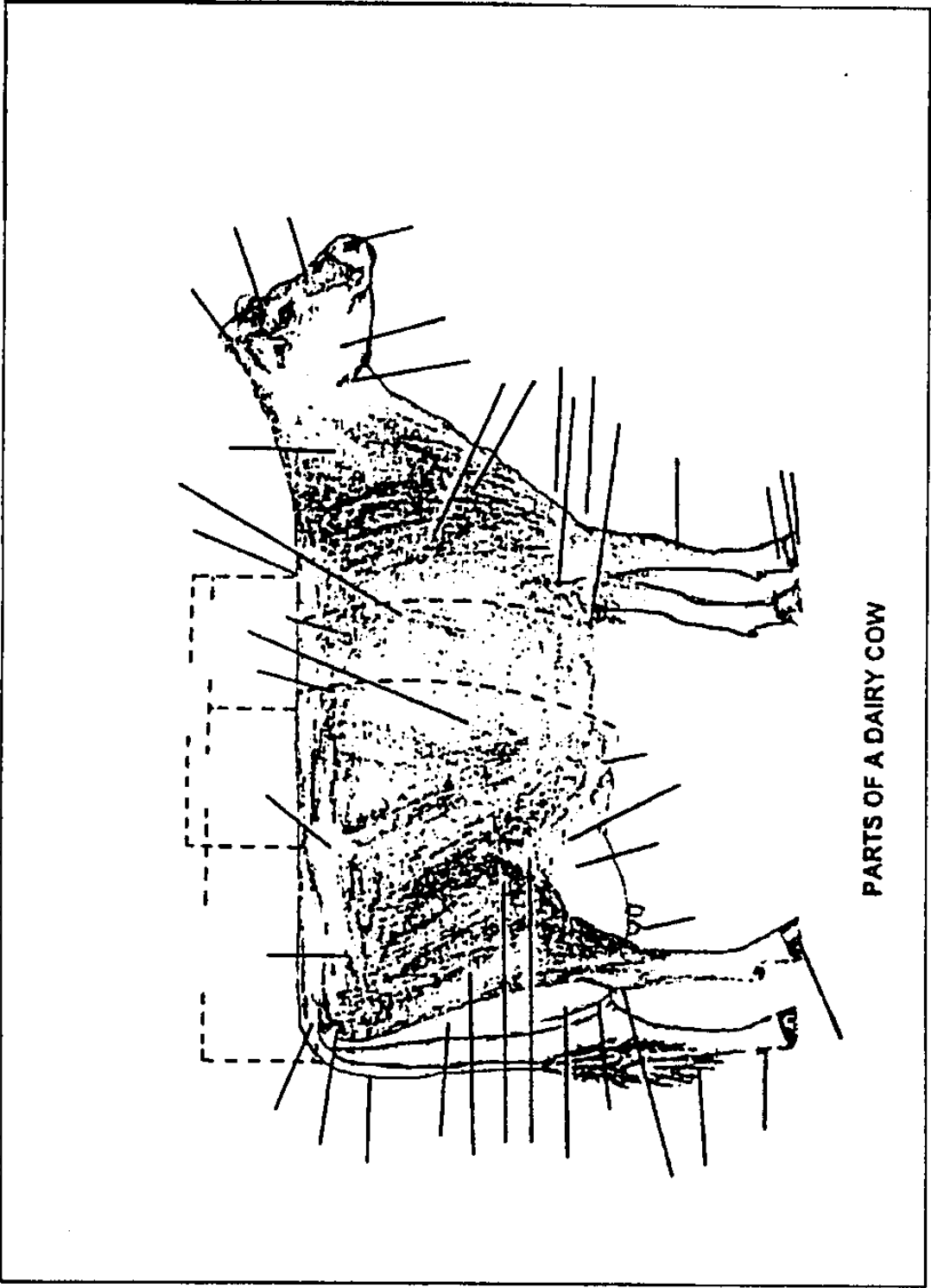
*Activity:* "THOSE CRAZY CATEGORIES" Next, discuss with the group what each category of the scorecard includes. Talk about which anatomical part is most important in each category and why. Use practical examples found at the back of this booklet. Hand out test from the back of the booklet to find out what items may need to be reviewed more.

*Activity:* "WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR?" Use the overheads found in the back of this booklet to compare desirable and undesirable characteristics. Afterwards have team members sit down and make a list of characteristics they would look for when purchasing a dairy animal. Discuss the answers each member came up with.  
ADVANCED PREPARATION: Take out pages in section labeled "TYPE OVERHEADS" and copy them onto transparencies.

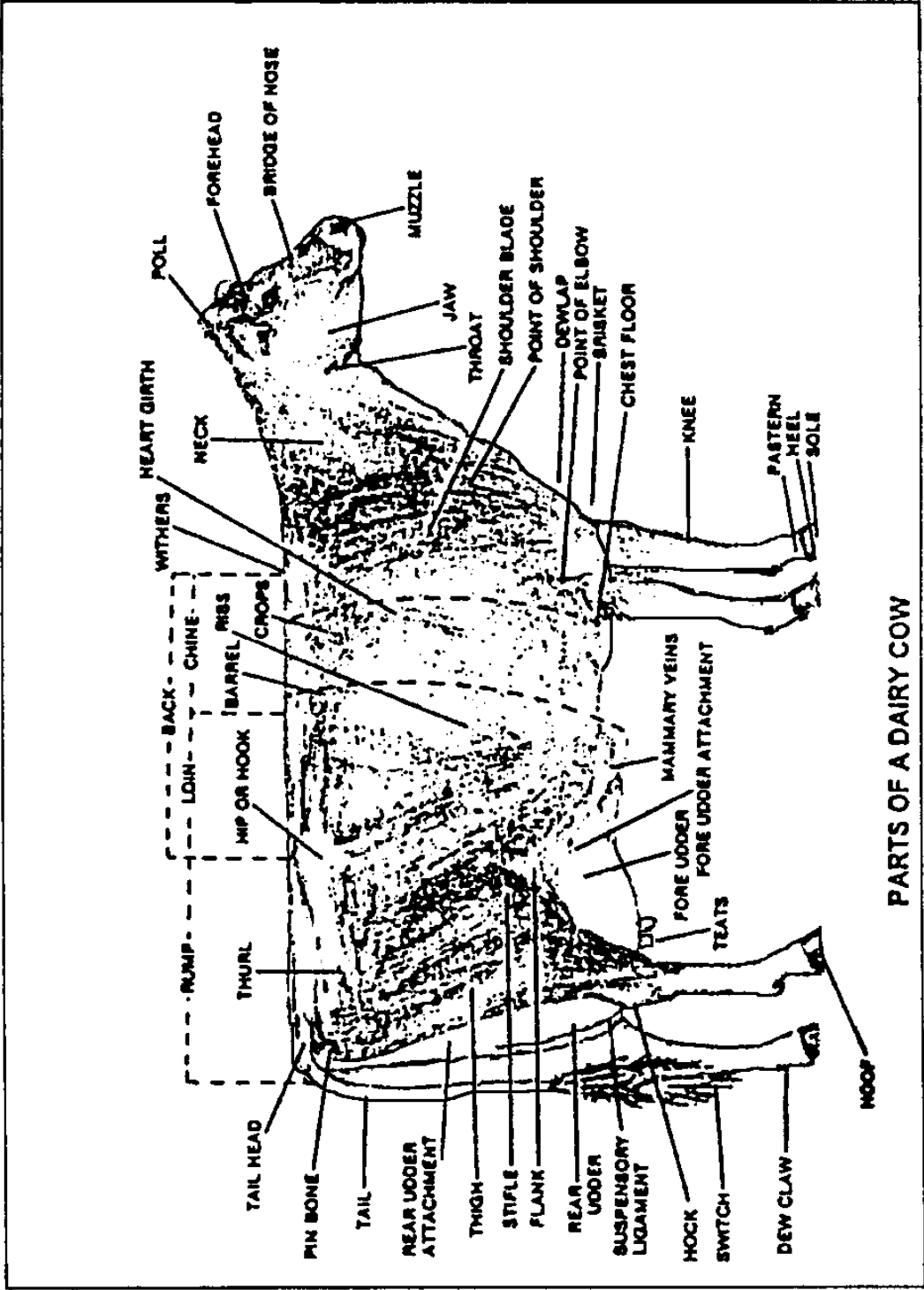
These introductory activities should familiarize youth with the scorecard, the parts of the cow and what, ideally, they are looking for when judging cattle.

*Activity:* "THE SENTENCE GAME" Review the Five Easy Steps to Preparing Effective Reasons booklet with the group. Pay special attention to the example phrases given, as these will be the foundations of a set of reasons. Play "THE SENTENCE GAME", explained in handout at end of booklet.

*Activity:* "WHAT DO I SAY?" Test groups comprehension of information learned in this section by handing out test at end of booklet. Make sure everyone understands terms and phrases.



PARTS OF A DAIRY COW



PARTS OF A DAIRY COW

# *THOSE CRAZY CATEGORIES*

## *WHY THEY' RE IMPORTANT*

### FRAME

**RUMP:** Important in ease of delivery. If pin bones are higher or lower than hip bones, the cow has to push the calf up from the uterus, through the cervix and down the birth canal. If the hip and pin bones are level, she only has to push straight out. Further, the wider the rump, the easier it is to deliver a large calf.

### DAIRY CHARACTER/ DAIRY FORM

**RIBS:** The openness of rib is most important because it is a true indicator of how "dairy" an animal is. Dairy cows who are late in lactation carry excess flesh. Without evaluating the openness and sweep of her rib, rather than how sharp and angular she is, a dairy judge may mistake her for not being dairy and place her toward the bottom of a class. Common misconception: If an animal is sharp and clean through out, she must be dairy.

### BODY CAPACITY

**BARREL:** This receives primary consideration because it is the easiest place to evaluate depth of heart, spring of rib and length of rib.

### FEET AND LEGS

**FEET:** Feet are most important because the angle of the foot and depth of the heel determine how long an animal can be productive. As long as her feet are in good shape, she can walk to the feed trough to eat and make milk, as well as walk to the milking parlor to make the farmer money. The instant she stops making the farmer money is the instant she leaves the farm.

## UDDER/MAMMARY SYSTEM

**UDDER DEPTH:** This is most important because it best predicts how much milk and animal will yield. If an udder is too shallow, the animal probably is not milking enough to pay for her feed. If an udder is too deep for the animal's age, she will most likely be culled soon because of the problems associated with deep udders (mastitis).

## *THOSE CRAZY CATEGORIES*

1. Name the five major divisions of the PDCA scorecard.

2. What is the most important item each division?

3. How many points are allotted to each division?

# THE SENTENCE GAME

To play: Divide students into groups of two. Hand out a scorecard and a list of phrases to each group. One student will hold both sheets and ask the other student the questions listed below. Next the student being questioned has to answer the question and give a phrase for the anatomical part they just named. When the student completes a category, they must give a sentence that encompasses every item in the category.

After one student completes the whole scorecard, the team must switch places. The question giver becomes the answer giver and visa versa.

## Questions:

How many points are allotted to the \_\_\_\_\_ category?

What is the most important thing in the \_\_\_\_\_ category?

Give a phrase for that part.

What is the next important thing in the \_\_\_\_\_ category?

ETC.

Below are some phrases used in oral reasons. They are grouped by categories and can be used in combination with each other or alone. Students should try to use their own phrases, but if you have a new group of students, you may have them memorize these.

FRAME - 15 points

**Rump:** she is longer in her rump  
she is more level from hooks (hips) to pins  
she is wider in the rump  
she has a more desirable slope from hooks to pins

**Stature:** she is a more upstanding individual  
she is taller at the point of withers  
she is longer from end to end

**Front End:** she is smoother blending throughout the shoulder  
she is tighter knit in the elbow

**Back:** she is straighter across the topline  
she is stronger across the topline  
she shows more strength in the loin

DAIRY CHARACTER/DAIRY FORM - 20 points

**Ribs:** she shows more openness and sweep to her rib

**Cleanliness:** she is longer, leaner in the neck, sharper over the  
withers and more prominent about her hooks and pins  
she is flatter, cleaner in the thigh

BODY CAPACITY - 10 points (length\*width\*depth)

**Length:** she is longer from fore to rear rib

**Width:** she is wider on the chest floor

**Depth:** she is deeper in the heart  
she is deeper in the barrel  
she is deeper in both fore and rear rib

FEET AND LEGS - 15 points

Feet: she is deeper in the heel  
she is steeper in the foot angle

Legs: she shows less set to the hock  
she has a more desirable set to her hock  
she is shorter, stronger in the pastern  
she shows more width between the hocks when viewed from  
the rear

UDDER - 40 points

Udder depth: she has a more youthful udder that is held higher  
above the hock and closer to the body wall  
she exhibits a more capacious udder

Teat placement: she has her teats paced more squarely beneath  
her

Rear udder: she is wider in her rear udder attachment  
she is higher in her rear udder attachment  
she is fuller in her rear udder

Udder cleft: she exhibits a stronger medial suspensory ligament  
she is more clearly defined in her udder cleft

Fore udder: she is longer in her fore udder attachment  
she is smoother, tighter in the fore udder

Teats: she has more desirable teat size and shape

Udder balance: she shows more balance and symmetry to her udder

## WHAT DO I SAY?

1. Write a phrase describing an animal with an advantage in mammary system.
2. Write a phrase describing an advantage in feet and legs.
3. Write a sentence describing an animal who excelled in frame, dairy form, and body capacity, but lacked dairy character.
4. What is a phrase for body capacity?
5. If number 3 cow was sharper, more angular, stronger in the medial suspensory ligament, wider in the rear udder attachment, but 2 was taller, longer, more open in her ribbing, more youthful in her udder depth and steeper in her foot angle, which animal would you place first?
6. Write a set of abbreviated notes for the pair above.
7. Write a set of reasons from your notes for the pair above.

SECTION II.

GETTING TO KNOW

REASON BASICS

## KNOW THE BASICS OF ORAL REASONS

Superior oral reasons scores are a major opportunity for dairy judging students to place well in contests. Top scores are a function of preparation (what is presented) plus presentation (how well it is presented).

This scoresheet was developed to provide feedback in greater detail to student judges. It should enhance understanding of areas that the student does well, but also, what areas need further work, thus speeding improvement.

To use this worksheet, place a score from 0-5 in each box. This format assumes that reasons scores are equally weighted in each area and are not directly affected by placing.

There are ten categories which are looked at when scoring oral reasons. Below is a breakdown of each category and a description of what it entails.

### PREPARATION

Format: Format refers to an appropriate structure of reasons and use of time. Reasons should take 2:00 to 2:10 minutes, we deduct 1 point for each 5 seconds long or short. Reasons should be formatted with:

1. an introduction of 1-2 sentences,
2. discussion of 3 pairs, top, middle and bottom, each discussion should raise about 3 issues pro, 1 con (grant),
3. a summary of 2 sentences, one sentence may indicate why the last cow finished last, and the other, a restatement of the placing.

Comparative: Reasons are comparative, not descriptive. In scoring, subtract a point (up to five) for each occasion that a descriptive term or phrase is used. An exception is allowed in both the introductory or summary paragraphs.

Terminology: Terms used should be appropriate. An example of good terminology is the term mammary, while "bag" is poor terminology. Superior terminology is shown by use of terms such as "medial suspensory ligament." A point is deducted for each use of the term "better."

Accuracy: The issues discussed are correct.

Logic: The points raised in a discussion of a pair should be raised in an order which develops the strongest and most logical argument. The most important point of difference should be articulated first, etc. As a scorer, deduct a point for each occurrence that points are raised differently than my perception of the most logical discussion.

## PRESENTATION

Poise: The student uses a confident yet friendly manner of presentation.

Body Language: The student uses an assertive style and position, neither aggressive nor passive.

Smooth: This relates to continuity of presentation, deduct a point for each break.

Voice manipulation: Variation in tone is used to stress important words or issues, avoid a monotone delivery.

Persuasive: Overall, the student uses a convincing argument and style of presentation. Deduct a point when a student mixes numbers.

The presentation for written reasons is self explanatory.

The following page contains a copy of the oral and written reasons scoresheets. Study them with these descriptions, and use it at every judging practice.

*Activity*: "MEET THE SHEET" Introduce your students to the scoresheet. (HINT: You may want to make a transparency out of the scorecard copy) Make sure they understand what you, as a judge, are looking for when scoring reasons. If possible obtain audio or video tapes of people giving reasons. Show or listen to them at a judging practice, making notes on what each person did well or could improve on. Pass out scoresheets and let each team member score the person giving reasons.

*Activity*: "HOW AM I DOING?" Use the scoresheets at your own judging practices. After each set, discuss with each team member what they did great on and how they could improve. Keep old scoresheets to show students their progress.

WORKSHEET FOR USE IN SCORING ORAL REASONS  
 Russ Giesy, University of Florida Extension

Place a score of 1-5 in each box, 5=great, 3=average, 1=not so hot.

Name										
Time										
<b>WHAT YOU SAY (PREPARATION)</b>										
Format										
Comparative										
Terminology										
Accuracy of Argument										
Logical discussion										
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>										
<b>HOW YOU SAY IT (PRESENTATION)</b>										
Poise										
Body language										
Smoothness										
Voice										
Persuasiveness										
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>										
<b>TOTAL</b>										

Preparation

Format = appropriate structure of reasons and use of time  
 Comparative = cows are compared, not described  
 Terminology = appropriate words and terms are used  
 Accuracy = points raised are accurate  
 Logical discussion = points are raised in most effective manner

Presentation

Poised = confident and friendly manner  
 Body language = assertive (not passive or aggressive)  
 Smoothness = continuity of presentation  
 Voice = pleasing tone and pitch, lack of monotone, forceful  
 Persuasive = convincing

WORKSHEET FOR USE IN SCORING WRITTEN REASONS

Russ Giesy, University of Florida Extension

Place a score of 1-5 in each box, 5=great, 3=average, 1=not so hot.

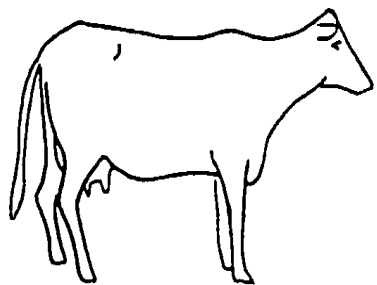
Name										
Time										
<b>WHAT YOU SAY (PREPARATION)</b>										
Format										
Comparative										
Terminology										
Accuracy of Argument										
Logical discussion										
SUBTOTAL										
<b>HOW YOU SAY IT (PRESENTATION)</b>										
Neat + legible										
Spelling										
Grammar										
Sentences										
Persuasiveness										
SUBTOTAL										
<b>TOTAL</b>										

Preparation

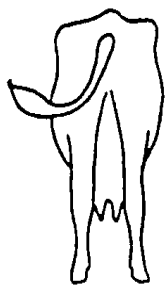
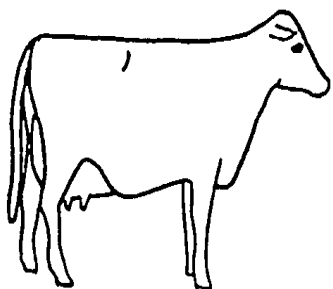
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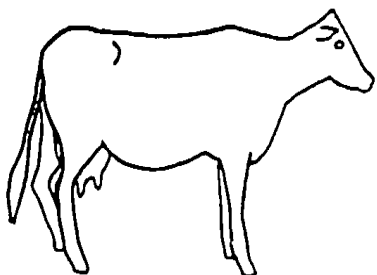
Neat and legible  
 Spelling  
 Grammar  
 Sentences  
 Persuasive



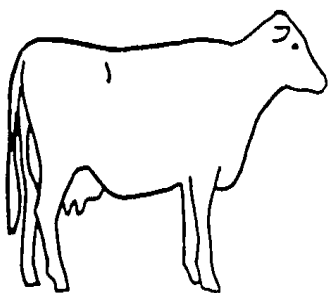
A



B



C



D

# SECTION III.

"KEYS" FOR

STRONG COMPETITION

## EXPERIENCE AND CONFIDENCE

People that win the big contests don't win on luck, they are well prepared, experienced and confident. These traits reflect years of hard work and practice which make personal strengths out of weaknesses. It is our opinion that an individual's weaknesses will be exposed in a major contest. Therefore, it is important to provide your students with ample opportunities to practice judging dairy cattle and to give reasons.

*Activity:* As a beginning activity, make copies of the sample class of milking cows located in the back of this booklet. Pass them out to the group and give them 15 minutes to place the class. Begin a discussion on each animal. What are the strong points? What are the weak points? Come up with a group decision on how the class should be placed. If they are right, discuss why the class was placed that way. What made one cow better than another, and so on. If they are wrong, discuss how they should have been placed and why. Finally, have group prepare a set of reasons for this class.

*Activity:* Arrange farm visits in your area. Putting together a couple of classes each month is a great way to familiarize your students with judging. If your students have no experience with dairy cattle, you may decide to start your dairy judging program going over slides of cattle with both desirable and undesirable traits. This will give the students a chance to develop in their mind what to look for when judging a class.

Practices should include discussions of each class. This is the best way to get total involvement, as well as make sure each member is seeing the animals correctly. The best way to accomplish this is to assign each member a number that corresponds with each cow. Have all members place the class, making notes on the good points and bad point of their assigned animal. Each person should discuss their animal out loud in front of the group. This also builds self esteem and communication skills.

Team members should try to give at least one set of reasons following the judging workout to gain experience in this area.

### *BE RESTED*

Preparation for a major contest is demanding. The day of the contest is long and hectic. A 4H member's ability to perform can be affected by inadequate rest the night before the contest. Encourage your students to get plenty of rest the night before a contest. Lack of sleep causes attention spans to decrease significantly.

*Activity:* Distribute copies of the Pre-Contest Check List located in the back of this booklet. Go over each item, stressing the importance of getting enough rest.

### *CONCENTRATION*

Concentration is one of the most important factors in a dairy judging competition and the hardest to keep. The contest is usually held in a busy and noisy arena with other activities going on. The ability to use time wisely and stay focused on the task at hand is an important skill.

*Activity:* To practice keeping concentration in noisy situations, try judging slides with music playing in the background. This forces students to tune out disruptive noises and concentrate on the job at hand.

## *REMAIN RELAXED AND CALM*

Winners are able to remain relaxed and calm throughout the day-long event. This permits them to remain able to concentrate and make decisions to the best of their ability. Unfortunately, this is a skill which cannot be taught. It has been found, however, that the more confident (practiced) a contestant is, the more relaxed he/she will be in a contest.

*Activity:* When practicing with your advanced teams, you may try adding extra stress to the day by starting early in the morning, judging large quantities of classes, and ending late. The purpose of this activity is to create stressful situations during practice so that contests seem like just another day of practice, possibly even easier. It is not recommended you try this with your beginning groups.

## ***PRE- CONTEST CHECK LIST***

- \_\_\_\_\_ ARRANGE TRANSPORTATION
- \_\_\_\_\_ LAY OUT JUDGING NOTEBOOK
- \_\_\_\_\_ LAY OUT TWO PENS/PENCILS
- \_\_\_\_\_ HAVE CLEAN, APPROPRIATE  
CLOTHES READY
- \_\_\_\_\_ SET ALARM BEFORE GOING TO SLEEP
- \_\_\_\_\_ GO TO BED EARLY TO GET PLENTY  
OF REST
- \_\_\_\_\_ WAKE UP ON TIME
- \_\_\_\_\_ GET A SHOWER TO REFRESH YOU
- \_\_\_\_\_ EAT A GOOD BREAKFAST

## MAKE DECISIONS QUICKLY AND CLEARLY

The top judges can use all the traits listed in numbers 1 through 5 above to help them make decisions quickly, accurately and clearly. Decisions made in this manner help these 4H members produce more effective and convincing oral reasons.

*Activity:* Format practice sessions the same as a contest. Allow 12-15 minutes for placing the class only, and 20 minutes for reasons classes. This trains members to think quickly and use their time efficiently.

The following is a breakdown of how you should encourage your members to use the 20 minutes given for reasons classes.

Placing:	3-5 mi n.
Note taking:	3-5 mi n.
Review notes for Accuracy/Memorize the cows:	3-5 mi n.

Use remaining time to go through notes 2-3 times, attempting to memorize cows and major points you need to discuss.

## SUMMARY

We believe that all members with dairy projects should participate in dairy judging contests. Preparing for and competing in contests tremendously benefits youth development.

Coaches who work intensively helping their students excel in contests provide their students with skills in decision making and oral communications. These skills give them a tremendous advantage in future endeavors, regardless of the occupation they pursue. Many past students are still grateful today to dairy judging coaches who encouraged them in their youth.

Outstanding achievement in a major judging contest results in a tremendous feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment. This enables members to develop maturity, self confidence and self esteem. Isn't that what it's all about?

# TYPE OVERHEADS

Name						
Time						
<b>WHAT YOU SAY (PREPARATION)</b>						
Format						
Comparative						
Terminology						
Accuracy of Argument						
Logical discussion						
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>						
<b>HOW YOU SAY IT (PRESENTATION)</b>						
Poise						
Body language						
Smoothness						
Voice						
Persuasiveness						
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>						
<b>TOTAL</b>						



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