

# FEEDER FINANCE SCHEME

## SCOPE

It's a contract farming arrangement, where the farmer builds their feedlot (kraal) with the plan of feeding 15 head and above. The company will provide feed at zero interest. The farmer shall feed his cattle as an individual or as a group and when they are ready for slaughter they slaughter their cattle at M.C Meats Abattoir, the company shall deduct the cost of stock feed and Induction cost which is pegged at \$5 per head.

They are five distinct factors that affect feedlot profitability

1. The buying price of the cattle.
2. Selling price of the finished cattle.
3. Cost of feed
4. Cattle genetics – (Breed)
5. Feedlot management

## FEEDLOT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The basic principle of the feedlot is to increase the amount of meat each animal produces as quickly as possible, if animals are confined and fed they would put on weight more quickly. So, successful feedlotting must have many attributes discussed underneath.

### SITING

The site must allow easy access for trucks, both supplying feed and those loading cattle.

It should have a slight slope to guarantee good pen drainage, preferably it should have trees within so that they provide shade for the animals.

The site must be near adequate water supply. Where affordable farmers can construct zinc roofed shade.

### CATTLE HANDLING FACILITIES

Cattle handling facilities are used to confine cattle safely and efficiently for close observation and to perform the tagging, branding and dipping process. Well planned facilities allow cattle to flow smoothly and provide handlers convenient access to them. Four important aspects on cattle handling facilities are 1. Holding Pen 2. Race 3. Head crush 4. Loading Ramp.

Where resources are scarce, community infrastructure such as loading ramps can be used in communal lands

## THE ANIMALS TO BE FED

The basic idea of feeding cattle is to realise the full value of an animal that is moving the animal from one grade up. We have two main groups of animals as per how we classify them as a company being;

**HIGH GRADES** – target slaughter grade - Supers – We only take steers that are zero to 4 tooth that weigh +300 kgs.

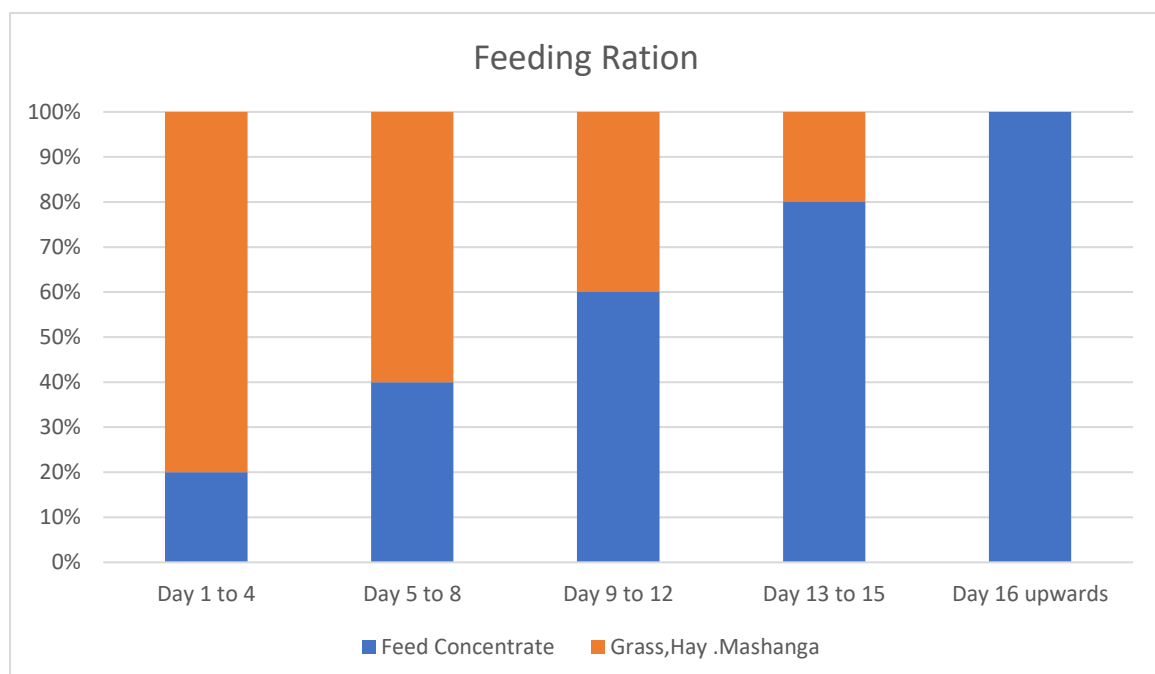
**LOW GRADES** - target slaughter grade – Choice /Commercials – All thin framed animals that is cows, oxen and bulls

## WATER

Animals must always have access to clean drinking water. This will increase feed intake. Feed troughs must be placed far as far away from water troughs as possible. Water troughs must be cleaned two times a week.

## FEED

Allow 20 cm to 30 cm feeding space per head of cattle. Cattle must have concentrates diet introduced gradually. A gradual introduction allows the rumen microbes to adjust to a grain diet thereby minimising the incidence of acidosis and laminitis. The following feeding program is a satisfactory method of bringing cattle on to a concentrates diet.



Adequate feed must be maintained all times when they are on full feed. Feed interruptions of longer than 24 hours should be avoided. Do not feed in excessive quantities each day, as the feed may become stale. Try to judge the amount fed so that a little is left each day. This ensures the cattle are not without feed.

### **INDUCTION PROCESS**

Induction is the management process when livestock arrive at a feedlot and are introduced to an intensive feeding process. Cattle arriving at the feedlot are usually tired and uncomfortable in their new surroundings. It is important to provide clean water and fresh hay or even dry matter (mashanga) immediately upon arrival of the animals. On feeding, the idea is to start cattle on a roughage diet and slowly introduce them to concentrates so that their stomach gets used to feed.

Upon entry to the feedlot, livestock will be weighed. In a pen we should maintain animals that are of almost of similar weight. Cows should be separated from bulls as they would affect their feeding when they come on heat, induced by the good nutrition from the feed. Animals that are constantly fighting should also be separated.

Cattle should be observed daily for –

Signs of disease on the onset

Feed problems (for example shy feeders)

Failure to adapt to diet

Bad doers – often it pays to remove these animals.

### **Contract**

Before inducting cattle into the feedlot, the company representative must read and explain in full the contract. The farmer or the representative of the group and the guarantor must sign the contract

### **Weighing**

We weigh the animal before inducting them in the feedlot, we do so in order to follow weight gained after each month to monitor the progress.

### **Tagging**

Since these animals will be under a contract the company representative, we shall tag the animals on contract, this would help to monitor individual weight gains.

### **Branding**

The animals shall also be branded a company brand to signify the co-ownership of the animals.

### Deworming

On induction we vaccinate against internal and external parasites. Where animals are visibly lousy or tricky or are from ticky areas. Internal parasites have the greatest impact on rate of weight gain, therefore deworming before they are on feed will give them best returns. We vaccinate them with Bimectin which is an effective medication against the internal worm parasites including lungworms as well as cattle grubs and sucking lice. Injections are made with clean equipment and sharp needles.

### Dipping

A pour on dip also referred to as deadline shall be administered. this will control ticks, flies and mites.

### **FIRST INSPECTION**

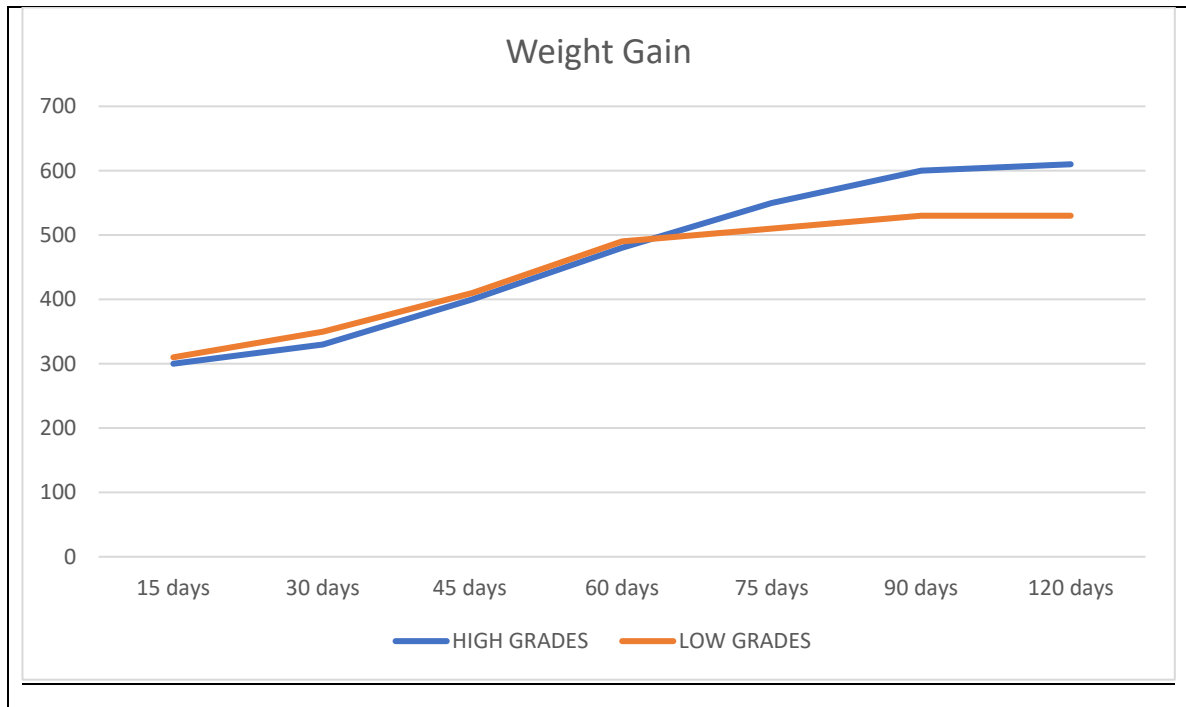
On inspections the company representative shall look at

1. The feedlot – that is feeding troughs, water troughs and site cleanliness. Feed troughs should be cleaned regularly attendants should make sure all feed should be dry, not moist. Manual turning of feed, breaking lumps and checking of foreign material is encouraged.

2.It is important to observe the cattle closely as the they are feeding. If there are signs of digestive problems. Severely affected animals should be taken to a separate area, fed roughage only in form of grass or dry maize stalks.

3. Most common diseases that should be checked regularly are Acidosis -this occurs when animals are introduced to concentrates too quickly or changed from one diet to the other .in this situation the rumen does not have time to adapt and excessive lactic acid is produced. Extreme acidosis results in laminitis and even death. Sodium Bicarbonate can be fed, however the best way to manage acidosis is to confine the animal to high roughage diet and gradually introduce concentrates. Feedlot bloat is too common in feedlots, it is a form of indigestion marked by accumulation of gas in the rumen .in feedlots it is mainly caused by acidosis. Lameness and foot rot are also common where there is poor drainage in pens and around water troughs.

## SECOND INSPECTION



HIGH GRADES - STEERS TO GRADE AS SUPERS + 300 KGS

LOW GRADES - COWS, BULLS, OXEN

The above graph illustrates generalised normal weight gains of feedlot cattle. For the first two weeks weight gains are very low since animals are getting used to the feed. That graph should go upwards as number of days of animals in feedlot progress. We would want to slaughter our animals when the graph levels off or when the growth rate slows down, at this point we will be feeding the animals but the animal has reached full potential so feeding would be simply wasting stock feed which comes at a cost.

On second inspection we weigh to check weight gain per animal we check if our cattle are following the trends of the above graph. We also check on non and poor feeders, recommend either to slaughter or use other remedies.

Check feed and water troughs, if the attendants are keeping the supply constant and clean.

Check general health of animals. Cattle must be gaining weight right until the day they are slaughtered. Cattle must have consistent daily nutrition throughout the feeding process and must not be allowed to temporarily lose weight any time in the month or more before they are slaughtered, otherwise they will have insufficient fat. If cattle run out of feed, they begin tapping

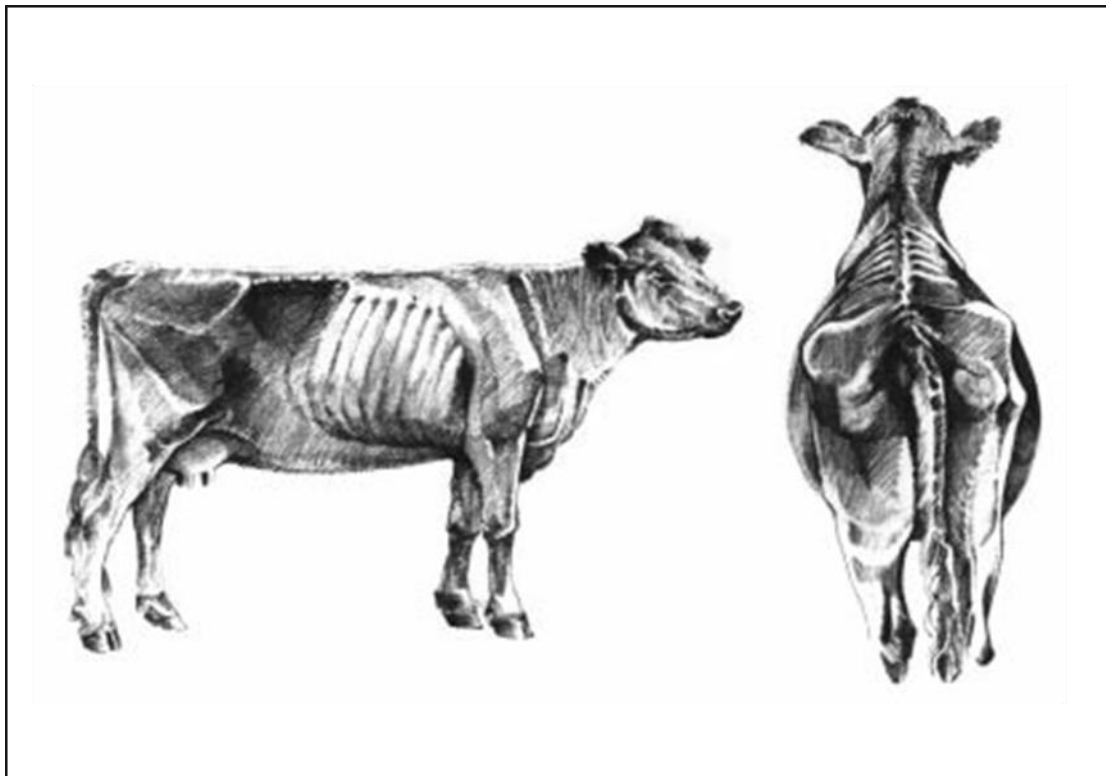
their body fat reserves (even just a little bit) to make up for calorie shortfalls in their feed. It can take up to week or more to refill those crucial fat reserves if weight gains temporarily stall or reverse.

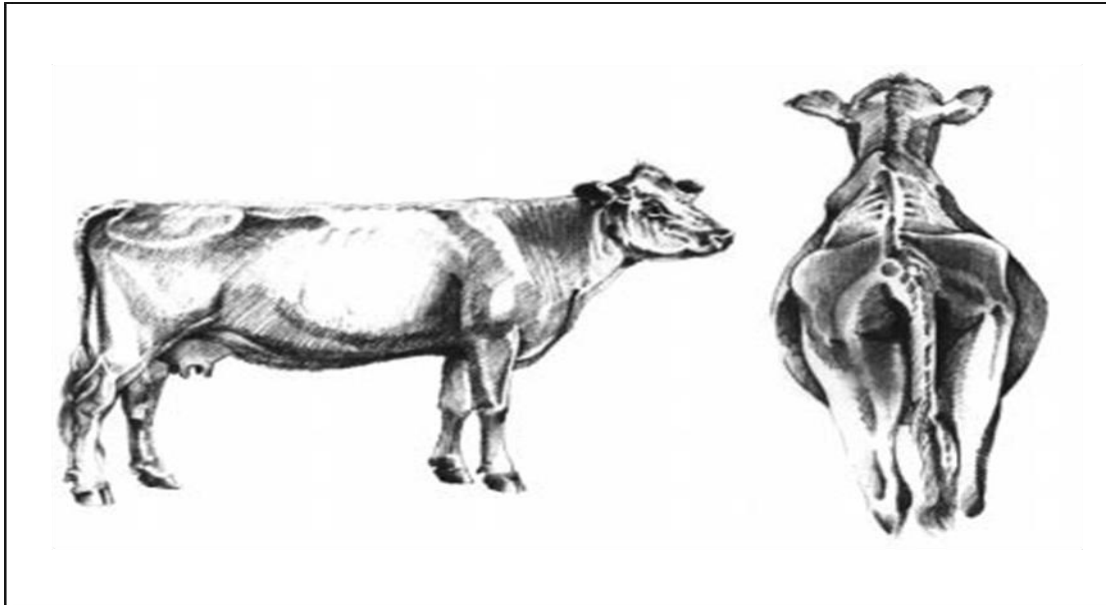
### **THIRD INSPECTION**

Check if animals are ready for slaughter. Beef cattle are considered finished and ready for slaughter when they have sufficient fat in their meat to make their beef tender and tasteful. Finishing cattle is all about fat.

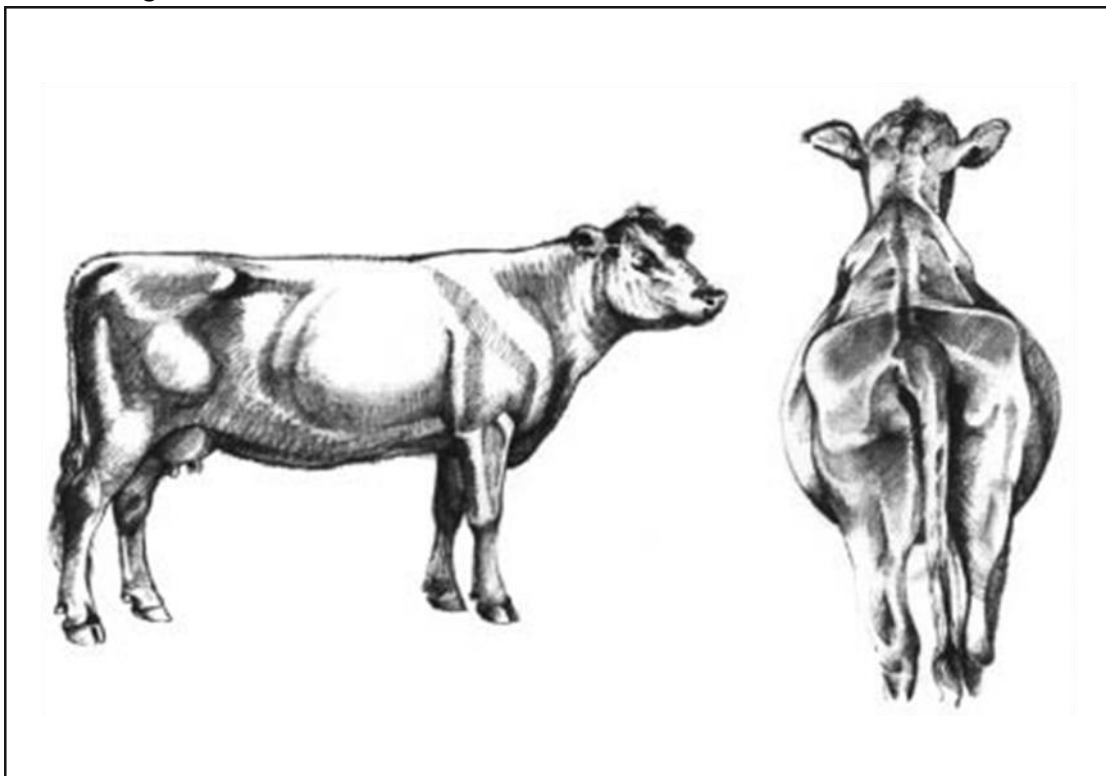
The best way to evaluate the readiness of cattle is to use Body Condition Scoring .

Body Condition 1. Very thin, no fat on ribs or brisket, and some muscle still visible. Backbone easily visible

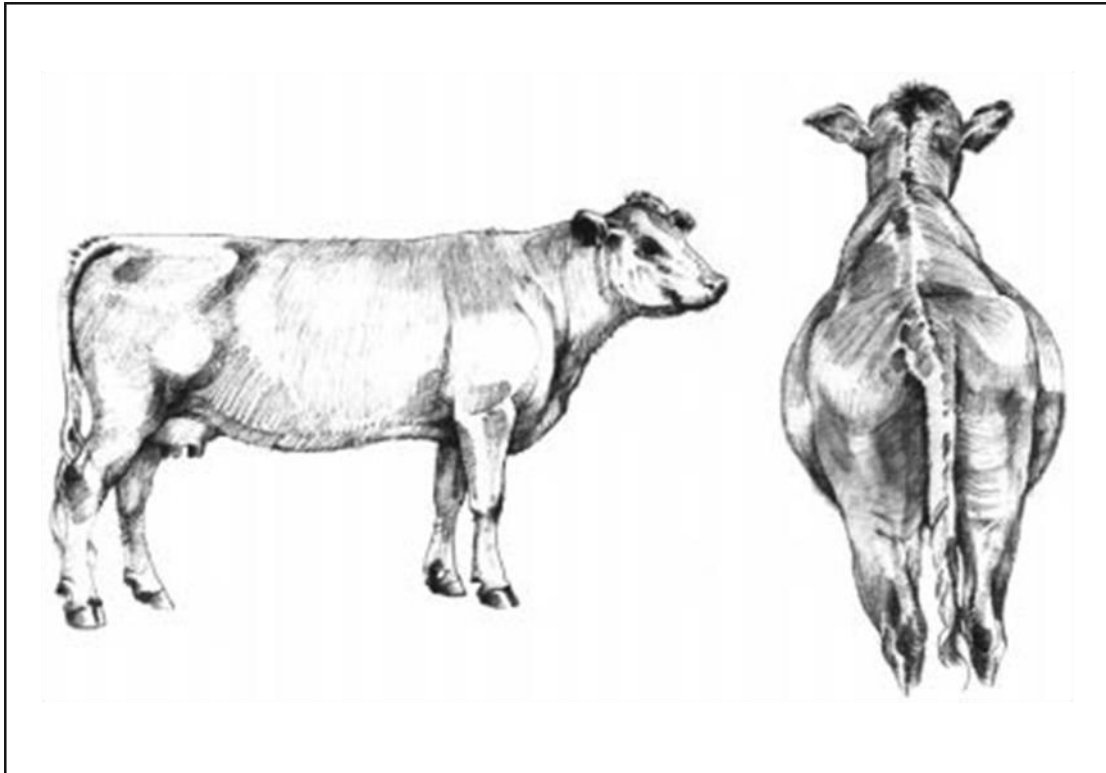




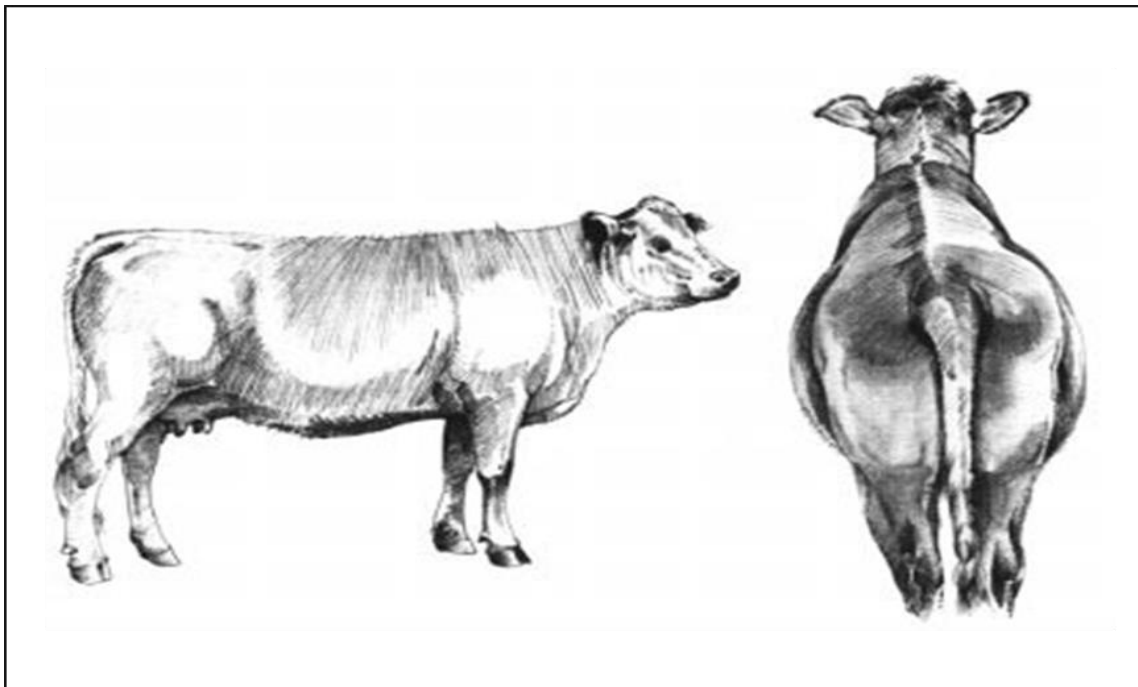
Body Condition Score 2: Thin, with ribs easily visible, but shoulders and hindquarters still showing fair muscling. Backbone visible



Body Condition Score 3: Moderate to thin .Last two ribs can not be seen unless animal has been shrunk .Little evidence of fat brisket ,over ribs or around trailhead.



Body Condition 4: Good smooth appearance throughout. Some fat deposits in brisket and over tailed ribs.



Body Condition 5, Very good flesh, brisket full. Fat cover is thick and spongy, and patchiness is likely. Ribs very smooth.