

*Waikato King Country Boys and
Girls Agricultural Activities*



Calf Judges & Stewards Hand Book



These guidelines for Calf Judges and
Stewards were compiled for the
Waikato King Country Girls and Boys
Agricultural Group August 2007



JUDGES HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION:

Thank you for agreeing to offer your services as a Calf Judge. Calf Judges are all volunteers that enjoy the opportunity to be involved with children and their animals, and being part of a movement that is unique to New Zealand and its Rural Education Heritage.

Essential to being a good judge is to be organised, observant, and have a willingness to listen and learn, as well as having good interaction skills with children and their animals. It is recommended that prospective Judges read the Calf section of the Boys & Girls Agricultural Projects ring binder, (the yellow folder) which is obtainable from your local School. All information is also available on the Waikato's World website www.waikatosworld.co.nz This will give you an insight into what is expected from the children and their calves. Also you must attend a Judges Demonstration Day organised each year at various venues which your Co-ordinator will advise as to where and when these are held.

At first you will be an Assistant or Associate Judge and will do all your judging alongside a Senior Judge. When you have judged for sometime and your Senior Judges consider you have the confidence and capabilities to be a Senior Judge you will be promoted. As a Senior Judge you will then be able to judge on your own and teach future Associates.

Once a Senior Judge you will have attained a good knowledge of all facets on how Agricultural days are structured and organised. Some Judges may have previously been Ring Stewards at School Agricultural days which would be helpful in giving them an understanding in ring craft and how the day is organised.

JUDGES INFORMATION AND ETIQUETTE:

As a Judge you will need to have a clean white coat, a notebook, a pen, (a pencil is better if it's a wet day). Also useful to have in your pocket, is a damp cloth in a plastic bag to wipe your hands. Some schools laminate the name cards so if this happens you will need a felt marker (Vivid) A clean, tidy appearance is essential so as to set a high standard as an example to

the way we wish to have the animals and children presented to us as Judges.

Remember sun block and a hat if it's a hot and sunny day or a raincoat if a wet day that won't be noisy or flap if it's windy, as this will spook and frighten calves. You will not have a free hand to hold an umbrella.

If you as a Judge or Associate Judge are asked to judge calves at a School or Group Day it is a wise idea to contact your co-ordinator or the school where you are to judge on the day before to confirm their starting time. On arrival always check with the Head Steward or organiser as to what their particular judging requirements are, as there is sometimes a bit of variation between Groups and Schools in different areas or regions. Individual Schools can run their Agricultural Day however they like, but Group Days and Show Days usually remain with the same format each year.

You will be advised on where your judging assignments are by your Groups Co-ordinator. Always allow plenty of time to travel to the venue as it is not a good look to have the Judges arriving late.

Upon arrival at the School or venue introduce yourself to the Head Steward or Judge and they will then assign you to a ring. Some Schools provide morning tea and lunch which is an ideal opportunity to meet the other Judges and Stewards assigned for the day.

Always display a positive attitude and make the day as enjoyable as possible for everyone and by doing this you are fostering the Agricultural Day activities so that future generations can enjoy the life skills gained and retain fond memories of calf club.

PLEASE TURN ALL CELLPHONES OFF.

A Senior Judge will address the kitchen helpers (PTA or BOT usually) and give a speech of thanks followed by applause from the Judges and Stewards, who then disperse to their rings ready to commence judging. Associates should introduce themselves to the Senior Judge they are judging with for the day. On arriving at your assigned ring, walk the ring to make sure that the layout and pegs are all correct. If they are not, contact your organiser or steward and ask if they could be placed correctly before you begin. Before judging, introduce yourselves to the children, wish them well and try to make them feel relaxed and promote the fact that above all they are there to enjoy their day with their calf.

Always line up your placegetters in the same way facing the crowd (left to right) for each section. While your Ring Steward is taking their details down on paper it gives the Judge the opportunity to speak to each placegetter and offer ways they can improve, or reasons for their placement.

A nice gesture is to invite a Sponsor or parent from the crowd to present the ribbons. When tying on the ribbons it is a good idea to tuck the ends under the halter behind the head as this will stop the calf chewing the ribbon, which is devastating to a child. Some calves do not like the ribbon at all, so it can be tied onto the child or placed in their hand. After tying on the ribbon, shake their hands and ask the first placegetter to lead out with the others following. Get your Ring Steward to take the 1st and 2nd placegetters to the Championship ring. It is a nice gesture after tying on the ribbons for the Judges, Associates and Ring Steward to clap as this also encourages the onlookers to do the same.

RING INFORMATION AND ETIQUETTE:

SAFETY FIRST: Never allow a child to enter the ring with their fingers through the metal ring on some halters or the lead wrapped around their hand or dragging on the ground because if the calf takes fright and bolts they will drag the child along the ground.

Judges should consult with their Ring Steward before judging commences on how they wish to have each calf started as each competitor needs to be offered the same opportunity so as to make it a fair competition. Also the Judge, Associate and Ring Steward need to discuss what action is to be taken should a calf stop and refuses to move, or stops to relieve itself, it must be the same for every entry. Some like to let the child try to move it on, while others like to assist to keep the entries flowing and not hold up other calves, particularly in their leading class. If you have say 5 entries in the ring and only 4 placing's to receive ribbons, **NEVER** send a child out on their own, either line them up and when you get to them shake their hand or ask your Ring Steward if there is any chance of a fourth equal ribbon (most Schools print extras)

If at any time your judgement is challenged by a parent or bystander don't panic or become confrontational, give your reasons confidently for placements and walk away. This situation is very rare.

LEADING INFORMATION:

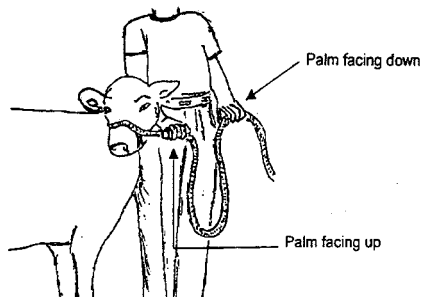
Should the weather be extremely wet and cold pupils may wish to leave the cover on their calf for **LEADING** only. This decision is to be made by the judge on the day but every participant must be given the same choice. Before competitions commence, Judges should enquire that all children are familiar with what is required in the Leading competition and should walk the ring to demonstrate if necessary. It is permissible for a left handed child to lead in the clockwise direction. (Instruct them to lead last) Each competitor will be numbered by the Ring Steward as they enter the ring. The Judge then writes this number in his/her notebook and records any comments or points beside the entrants number **after**, both child a calf have left the judging ring.

Whilst leading a calf the child must **NEVER** release the right hand from the lead as this is the control hand and is like the steering wheel in a car, you must never take your hand off. Should a calf take fright and bolt (can happen especially to juniors), **DON'T PANIC**, remain calm. Console the child, never run after the calf as this causes them to run faster, there will be plenty of bystanders to quietly surround and catch the calf.

While the children are waiting to enter the ring for judging, make sure your Ring Steward is keeping a close eye on them for calves bunting and riding each other, as well as making sure the ring exit is not congested with children waiting to enter the ring beside yours. After all the calves have been judged for Leading and the 1st and 2nd placegetters are sent to the Championship ring, the Ring Steward should remove the Leading pegs so as to be ready for judging Rearing and Type. The Leading ring size should be 18mtrs x 18mtrs, but at some Schools there is insufficient room so may need to be smaller. There are 3 pegs, the first to go around, the second to stop at and the third to do a pigtail around. These pegs need to be all the same height. Some Schools use a low stop peg however this is not recommended as this can be dangerous, especially small children with large calves who can easily trip on them.

JUDGING LEADING:

For the records, always record the number of entries as this may be the only chance you are able to have final participation numbers. All calf halter and lead types are acceptable. A child must hold correctly the lead with the right hand, palm up, next to the calf's head. The distance from the head is approximately 10-20cm. An easy way to know this distance is



for the child to make a hand span with the thumb on the calf's face and the leading hand starts where the little finger finishes on the lead. Doing it this way, the smaller the child, the closer the hand is to the head, as they are not quite as strong as a big child they will have more control over their calf. The calf lead should not drag on the ground, the loop between the hands and the end of the lead must not hang lower than the child's knees. If the lead is too long it must **NOT** be wound around the hand but folded in the hand. Right hand, palm up, left hand, palm down.

Holding the lead the correct distance from the head, the child and calf move forward with the child walking beside the calf's shoulder **BUT NEVER** forward of the ears, holding their head up and walking together as a team until the first peg where they turn left around the peg without touching the ring rope, peg or stopping. The next peg is the stop peg which is located about half way along the back straight which is where they must make a definite stop and count slowly to three before moving with a smooth start towards the pigtail peg and completing this turn in a clockwise direction.

The child and calf need to negotiate around this without touching the peg or ring rope, however Judges need to be aware that as the child is on the outside of the calf they have further to walk so need to be walk faster than the calf. After completing the pig tail turn they continue to lead towards the exit making sure they don't get ahead of the calf.

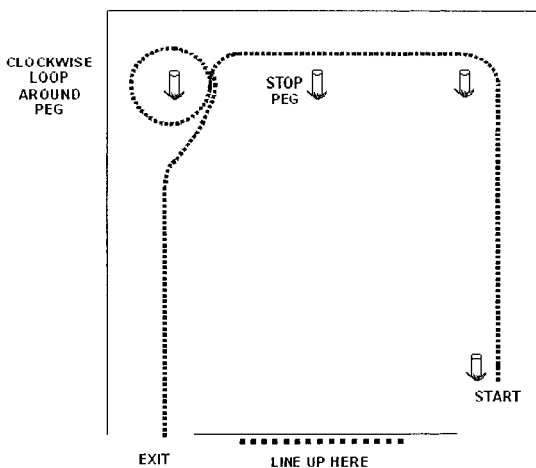
Bearing in mind a perfect lead is rare, fault points are noted for such things as jerking the lead, bumping the calf, elbowing the calf around the pegs, jiggling the hand as the calf is led. Both child and calf should lead as a team in a relaxed and flowing movement which is achieved with practice which is often a fair indication of how much time the child has spent with

their calf. A good leader usually has a real bond with their calf and can control it almost to perfection. Smacking a calf with the lead is something not encouraged and is a reason for more fault points as it is preferable to try to start the calf with a firm pull on the lead. It is up to the child to be aware that if their calf is going to slow it may sit or lie down so they need to try to keep a better pace. A good rule is no body contact between the calf and leader at all during their lead.

The child should lead with confidence, good posture, looking ahead and display a positive movement throughout. Judges need to move about the ring so as to watch each section of the lead carefully, usually three different positions, one for each peg. During the lead keep observing the child and calf at all times whilst they are in the ring leaving your notes until they have completed the lead.

Should a calf sit or lie down during the lead allow the child sufficient time to try and stand the calf themselves, if this happens the **right hand must not let go of the lead**. If they are unable to do this then you may give them your assistance. Also watch your timing when judging each section and if you are finishing your judging after all the other rings you may need to go faster so as not to hold up the Championship Ring. Likewise, if you finish too quick slowdown bearing in mind some rings may have more calves, so be flexible.

THE LEADING RING



REARING:

The Leading pegs should have been removed before the children and their calves enter the ring and walk in a clockwise direction so they can be viewed by the Judges from the centre of the ring. Once all entries are in the ring ask your Ring Steward to keep an eye on them to avoid children and calves bunching up and the calves bunting and riding each other.

This event focuses on the cleanliness of the calf, the rapport, understanding and knowledge that the child has on the calf's rearing and traits relating to animal husbandry.

It's a good idea to select a child with a bright jumper or hat to start your judging as this avoids mistakenly judging the same child's calf twice. If there are two judges, start one at each end and then confer after you have seen all entries, or if a very large ring after every six or so calves however if you have a new Associate it is a good idea to have them judge with you.

The easiest way to judge rearing is to start from the nose and work your way all over the calf to the tail, as you do this interact with the child with your questions. Do spend the same amount of time with **EVERY** child, even if you know by the condition of the calf it will not be a ribbon winner. On a wet muddy day gumboots are fine, but on a nice day these look untidy and often are very dirty, halters and leads also need to be clean. Judging encompasses the overall presentation of a healthy well groomed, blooming calf led by a child who is also clean and tidy.

Any old dirt or manure found on the calf that has dried is penalised, but fresh is not, usually it's found under the belly, between the hooves and on the underside of the tail. Excessive loose hair, cover or halter rub marks are also penalised. Check under the mouth for old dry milk or meal or any dry sleepy dust around the eyes. Ear tags are permitted but must be clean on both sides as well as no dirty knees or tail and no bald patches.

The calf's ears must be clean inside, but not to the extreme down past the wrinkles as cleaning this far down can do harm and cause the calves ears to hang down, this job needs adult supervision. Judges look for a well groomed calf with minimal loose hair, soft skin and coat that is shiny and clean as well as the general bloom of the animal.

Calves must be free of any parasites eg; lice or ticks. If a Judge does find live lice or ticks **NEVER** shame the child by bringing this to their attention,

but when the child leaves the ring later keep an eye out for the parents and wait for a chance to have a word in private, explaining that the calf should be treated immediately as not only is it bad for the calves general wellbeing but unfair to all the other competitors. Parasite control is a job for the farmer or parents and should not be done by children. Some may have bald patches where the child has over groomed them or they may have had lice earlier in their lives. Treated lice eggs should not be penalised.

Calves should not be overweight; a fat calf will have very wide shoulders and rump and often rolls of fat under the neck whereas an under fed calf will be displaying all the ribs which is not desirable either. A Judge will gain an indication of the bond between the child and calf after asking the child questions of their knowledge relating to their calf's rearing and feeding. You must bear in mind the child's age, as a junior child does need a certain amount of adult help, **but not the adult** doing the whole calf project.

It is a good idea for Judges to keep in mind a list of questions. (refer to last page). No oiling or clipping of the calf's hair is permitted. If a Judge suspects any of these, do not make a scene in front of the child or spectators. Only if you are sure, mark the calf down in **your mind** and place lower down the order if at all. When going over the calf's skin and checking for loose hairs **NEVER** use your hands to brush the calf from the tummy up to the back line as this actually pulls the hair out and is most upsetting to the child who has just brushed it all down nicely before entering the ring to be judged. Judges should **always consider** the different birth dates of the calves and not be swayed by size. Judge each calf accordingly to its age and size. Big is not always best, often a smaller calf that is younger is harder to present as the child has had to work hard in less time to achieve the same result.

DAIRY TYPE:

There is **no tolerance** for judges in the Boys and Girls calf competitions who have a breed preference. Once all entries have entered the ring and commenced walking in a clockwise direction it is a good idea to view them walking before selecting a starting child and calf to judge individually. Ask each child and calf to walk a few steps towards you so as you can view the placement of the legs and width of brisket. Then start at the head, making sure the calf doesn't have an overshot or undershot jaw. The eyes

should be alert and wide apart, have a good wide muzzle bearing in mind different breeds have slightly longer or wider heads however the general conformation is the same. A long strong neck neatly fitting into the shoulder, displaying no signs of being pinched or U necked. The brisket should be wide and strong for good heart room. Ribs should spread wide towards the lower belly so as to have capacity for grass to be converted to milk when the calf has matured into a cow. The body should have **DEPTH PLUS LENGTH & CAPACITY**.

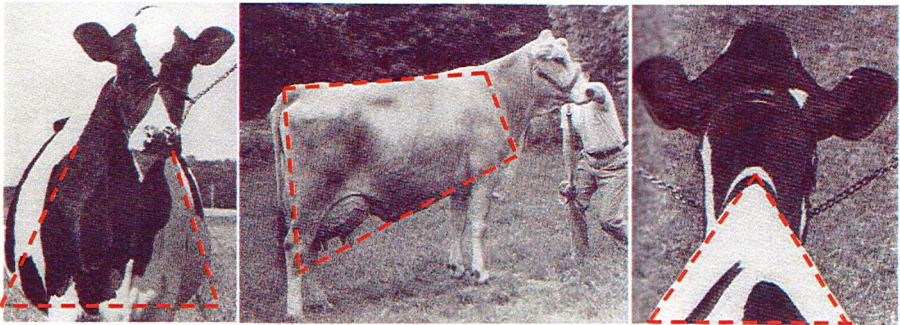
The skin should be flexible, fine and soft and the top the backline must be straight. The tail should fit neatly between the pin bones and the hip and pin bones should be level and not drooped. There should only be four teats evenly placed if a calf has extra teats and these should be removed in the first few weeks of their life by the farmer.

Judges should then ask each competitor and calf to walk a few steps away from them so as to check the calves' hocks are not rubbing or crossing as they walk as this is where their future udder will be formed. The back legs should also be viewed from the side and should not be sickle shape but strong and straight and up on their feet not foundering.

The calf should be well balanced overall and display a dairy character. If necessary before making your final decision in Type, ask all calves and children to walk following each other around the inside of the ring whilst keeping a nice gap between calves. This is an excellent way to get an overall opinion on their walk and conformation. (This can also be done before you judge individual calves).

Always bear in mind this is usually the last section held for the day and children and calves are getting tired, so your Ring Steward needs to keep an eye on the children and calves and should keep them from bunching up and sitting down. Judges need to be vigilant about the time as many farmers need to get their animals and families home in time for the afternoon milking.

P.S. A good guide is to look at the calf and imagine three wedges. These are explained in the diagrams below.



BEEF TYPE:

This is very similar to Dairy Type but allowances need to be considered due to the end result being for the production of meat. The calf must still have strong legs, alert, strong head with no undershot or weak jaw, a straight back and good legs and hooves to carry their larger body mass. The shoulders are naturally wider than dairy calves but should still display smoothness, the rump will be larger and show a good depth of muscle as this is where most of the cuts of meat are sourced. A beef calf must still display a good spring of rib allowing for capacity to grow, always remember, length of animal, equates to heavier body weight which is important for beef animals. A Judge should not confuse larger early born calves as necessarily the best type as later born calves can show excellent beef characteristics. The skin and coat should bloom with health and their coats are generally shorter, more dense and often fluffy when very young. A male calf should display masculine characteristics whereas the female calf should display feminine characteristics.

CHAMPIONSHIP RING:

The first placegetters from each ring compete against each other in the championship ring. After you select the winner and **BEFORE** you select the reserve champion from the others you must call in the calf that was placed 2nd to your winner. The reason for this is that the two best calves may have been in the same ring. The 2nd is only judged against all the others **NOT** your champion to get reserve champion.

RING STEWARDS:

You will need a clean white coat, a pen, (a pencil is better if it's a wet day) Also useful is a damp cloth in a plastic bag kept in your pocket so as to wipe your hands. Some schools laminate their name cards, if this happens you will need a felt marker pen to number the entries. (Vivid)

Ring Stewards have a very important responsibility on Agriculture Day and are important to a smooth running day. Often these volunteers are parents or senior pupils and some have no idea what is required of them, so Judges and the organisers of the day need to thoroughly brief them prior to the event. Their job is to note down the results and make sure of safety and assist the Judges. As well as making sure it is fair to the calves and children whilst leading and in particular that no children or adults are moving near the rings with pushchairs or swinging on the side ropes as this can be very detrimental to the child's leading chances.

Ring Stewards need to ensure the children are ready to enter the ring when required and keep an eye on the exits making sure that they stay clear at all times. Number each child as they enter the ring and keep a tally on the number entering the ring for leading as this is often the only chance the organisers have to get the correct number of entries competing. Announce the entrant's number to the judge in a loud clear voice.

After prize giving take your 1st and 2nd placegetters to the Champion Ring and at the completion of the Championships return to your ring and remove the leading pegs and muster the children ready for the next event. Should the Ring Steward know any of the bystanders personally do not get chatting to people and forget your responsibilities to the children and judges. They also need to ask any adults to refrain from grooming or cleaning the children's animals. This is a competition of child effort and although some assistance in cleaning off any muck resulting from transporting the calf is acceptable adults working on the animal thereafter is **NOT PERMITTED** at all on the day.

If they do not refrain from this ask the organiser to announce it over the loud speaker before the start. Ring Stewards need to keep watch for calves fighting, riding or bunting one another and if this happens they need to separate them. If you are assigned a Ribbon Runner, as Ring Steward you must make sure that you have the ribbons available when the Judge requires them. At the end of competitions a help to dismantle the rings is much appreciated.

Ribbon runners and Ring Stewards MUST NEVER enter the ring unless invited by the JUDGE.

SOME CALF QUESTIONS JUDGES MAY ASK CHILDREN:

Remember some children are naturally shy so it is a good idea to gain their confidence first by asking them about school, sports or their favourite TV show.

What is your calf's name and why did you give it that name?

What date was your calf born?

What breed is your calf?

How much milk do you feed your calf each day?

What else besides milk do you give your calf?

Where do you keep your calf at night and during the day?

How did you teach your calf to lead?

Can you name some of the parts of your calf's body?

Why do calves have a wet nose?

Does your calf have any top teeth?

What are some diseases that calves can get and how do you treat them?

Why does your calf have an ear tag?

What is an animal Doctor called?

How does a cow know which is their own calf?

How old was your calf when it started to eat grass?

Can you tell me three different breeds of cows?

What do you call a calf when it is a year old?

What is a girl calf called?