

**LIVE ANIMAL SPECIFICATION
AMERICAN HEREFORD ASSOCIATION'S
SPECIFICATION FOR CHARACTERISTICS OF CATTLE ELIGIBLE FOR THE
AMERICAN HEREFORD ASSOCIATION CERTIFIED HEREFORD BEEF PROGRAM
DECEMBER 2003**

I. SCOPE

This specification is for use by representatives of the American Hereford Association (AHA) and its designates to assure that cattle presented for Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) program certification by the Meat Grading and Certification Branch (MGCB) of USDA meet the live animal requirements of the CHB program. The purpose of this specification is to define visual indicators of cattle that are at least 50% Hereford and 100% English breed type to the exclusion of dairy, continental, and bos indicus genetic type cattle.

II. REQUIREMENTS

(a) Phenotype

- Cattle offered for AHA qualification must have a predominately (51%) white face. Cattle must exhibit white markings over the jaw, forehead and muzzle. Cattle must have white markings on all three locations or they are unacceptable.
- Cattle must exhibit some or all of the traditional markings of a Hereford or Hereford/English crossbred animal such as white on the face and neck. White markings on any part of the hip, shoulder or side of the body such as spots, stripes, or belts are not acceptable.
- Cattle offered for qualification other than solid red, solid black, or roan with a predominately white face, such as yellow, gray, brown, brindle, or smoke are ineligible.
- Steers and heifers presented for AHA qualification must be of beef type breeding. Animals must express some evidence of muscle bulge. Although not limited to, this bulge is best observed in the large muscles of the round.
- An animal expressing dairy type breeding (dairy-type head, prominent "hook" bones, large "barrel-like" body, etc.) typically has muscles in the round which are semi-flat to concave or "dished" in appearance. Such animals are not acceptable.
- Cattle offered for qualification shall not have an excessive hump on the withers (protruding above the top line), excessively long ears (ears that project downward from the head) or an elongated head indicative of bos indicus genetics. The hump on the withers should not be confused with a crest on the neck, which is normal for many thick muscled cattle, particularly males.
- To qualify, cattle may be either horned or polled. Bulls, bullocks, or cows are not acceptable.

(b) Genotype

In lieu of the aforementioned phenotypic requirements regarding color and traditional Hereford markings, qualification can be based upon a signed affidavit provided by the cattle breeder that verifies the cattle are at least genetically $\frac{1}{2}$ Hereford breeding and 100% British bred (Angus, Red Angus, Shorthorn, Hereford, or South Devon). All genotype cattle must be the direct offspring of a registered Hereford bull or cow. This affidavit must be submitted to a representative of the AHA prior to feedlot qualification. Cattle qualifying by genotype documentation must be presented for slaughter as a unique lot separated from all phenotype qualified cattle and non-qualifying cattle and designated as "Genotype" cattle on the kill sheet. Genotype qualified cattle may not change ownership after they have been assigned an official AHA lot number and have been approved for slaughter.

CHB Harvest Monitoring Procedures

At the time of slaughter the approved personnel shall determine those animals that meet the CHB Live Animal Specifications and identify the carcasses of those animals with a “C” stamp. With regard to cattle that are genetically identified, the identity of the qualifying lot must be maintained until the “C” stamp is applied to the carcass.

USDA Meat Grading and Certification Branch representatives shall conduct unannounced, random checks of the AHA approved personnel to monitor compliance with these procedures. AHA approved personnel shall be designated with a program specified helmet sticker. MGCB agents shall observe the work of the approved plant employee for a period of two to five minutes. During that period defects shall be recorded for any animal which is identified with a “C” stamp, but which fails to meet one or more of the specified requirements.

Frequency of observations shall be determined according to the rate of slaughter during a designated work shift as shown in Table 1. Any observations shown in Table II as defects shall be recorded during each monitoring period.

TABLE I. MONITORING FREQUENCY

Slaughter Rate Number of cattle/shift	Frequency <u>1</u> / Number of monitoring periods <u>2</u> /
Up to 500	2
501 – 1,000	4
1,001 – 1,500	6
1,501 – 2,000	8
Over 2,000	10

1/ The MGCB agent shall randomly determine the times of actual observation before the beginning of the slaughter shift.

2/ The MGCB agent shall observe the work of the approved plant employee for a period of not less than 2 nor more than 5 minutes.

TABLE II. LIVE ANIMAL AND CARCASS DEFECTS

Defect Categories		Defects
Major	Minor	
101		30 percent or less of the face is white
	201	31 percent to 50 percent of the face is white
102		Cattle with 50 percent white face are other than solid red, solid black, or roan
	202	Cattle with 50 percent white face are light red and do not show additional Hereford markings
103		Cattle with markings on the hip, shoulder, or side of the body including spots, stripes, or belts.
104		Presence of two or more of the following bos indicus indicators: excessive hump, excessive ears, or bos indicus head
	204	Presence of one of the following bos indicus indicators: excessive hump, excessive ears, or bos indicus head
105		Animal qualified which has predominant dairy characteristics
	205	Animal qualified which has noticeable, but not predominant, dairy characteristics
106		Non-approved plant employees performing live animal identification
	206	Unidentified approved plant employee performing live animal identification
107		Carcass in cooler with CHB roll that does not have a "C" stamp or a USDA "Accepted as Specified" stamp over the "grade schedule" marking
	207	"C" stamp not placed on approved area of carcass
108		Identity of genetically qualified cattle is not maintained up to the point at which the "C" stamp is applied to the carcass
109		Carcass of a bull, bullock, or cow identified with "C" stamp

Defects 101, 201, 102, and 202 apply to cattle that are not genotype qualified. As long as no defects are observed under program monitoring the designated frequency of monitoring shall continue. However, observation of any major defect, two minor defects within a week, or three minor defects within four weeks, shall immediately result in accelerated monitoring. Under accelerated monitoring the frequency of monitoring shall be doubled. If no defects are observed during two weeks of accelerated monitoring, the plant shall revert to the normal monitoring level. If any major defect or two minor defects are observed under accelerated monitoring the identification program shall be placed under 100% MGCB supervision for four weeks. After four weeks of 100% supervision, the program will revert to accelerated monitoring before going to normal monitoring.