CALIFORNIA BEEF CATTLE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION (CBCIA)

CARCASS OF MERIT PROGRAM
Update 2020

The CBCIA Carcass of Merit Program has been updated to reflect evolving industry standards and premiums for cattle production. CBCIA Carcass of Merit and Gold Seal criteria can be utilized with traditional carcass data and ultrasound results. The following provides the specific details for the Carcass of Merit and Gold Seal criteria, the Ultrasound Technology criteria, and the Instructions for CBCIA Carcass Certificates.

Carcass of Merit and Gold Seal Criteria:

In order to qualify for Carcass of Merit, a carcass must meet these criteria:

Hot Carcass Weight (lbs)	600-1000
USDA Quality Grade	Low Choice or higher
USDA Yield Grade	Below 4.0 (3.99 or below)

Gold Seal carcasses must meet these criteria:

Hot Carcass Weight (lbs)	650-900
USDA Quality Grade	Average Choice or higher
USDA Yield Grade	Below 3.0 (2.99 or below)

Note: The Carcass of Merit and Gold Seal criteria were reviewed and approved on December 4, 2019, and previous revisions took place in November 2011.

The Ultrasound Technology Criteria:

Developed and proposed by Jim Oltjen and Dan Drake, Cooperative Extension, UC Davis

Adopted by California Beef Cattle Improvement Association on June 25, 2009 and amended on November 28, 2011

A. The inclusion of ultrasound does not in any manner effect the continuing program of USDA carcass grading information and certificates.

B. Carcass contests that elect to use ultrasound technology should do so following the guidelines below.

   1. Ultrasound data is collected and processed by CUP certified technicians near the time live weight is obtained.
   2. Required ultrasound data includes (no other ultrasound data or technician provided data is used):
      a. Fat thickness in inches at the 12th rib
      b. Ribeye area in square inches
      c. Intra-muscular fat percentage at the 12th rib (ultrasound IMF or uIMF)
   3. A live weight is recorded at the time of ultrasound data collection

4. Quality grades are assigned based on the following table of ultrasound IMF, unless the Ultrasound Technician provides a more appropriate conversion specific for their ultrasound conversion.

Marbling Grade	Marbling Abbreviation	Numerical marbling score	Quality Grade	Actual Percent Intramuscular Fat[1] %IMF	Alternative Scoring System[1]
Abundant +	AB+	10.67 – 10.99			1567 - 1590
Abundant	AB	10.33			1533
Abundant -	AB-	10	Prime+	>12.21	1500
Moderately abundant +	MAB+	9.67			1467
Moderately abundant	MAB+	9.33			1433
Moderately abundant -	MAB-	9	Prime	10.33 – 12.21	1400
Slightly abundant +	SLAB+	8.67			1367
Slightly abundant	SLAB	8.33			1333
Slightly abundant -	SLAB-	8	Prime-	8.56 – 10.32	1300
Moderate +	MD+	7.67			1267
Moderate	MD	7.33			1233
Moderate -	MD-	7	Choice+	6.89 – 8.55	1200
Modest +	MT+	6.67			1167
Modest	MT	6.33			1133
Modest -	MT-	6	Choice	5.34 – 6.88	1100
Small +	SM+	5.67			1067
Small	SM	5.33			1033
Small -	SM-	5	Choice-	3.91 – 5.33	1000
Slight +	SL+	4.5	Select+		967
Slight	SL	4.25			933
Slight -	SL-	4	Select-	2.59 – 3.90	900
Traces +	TR+	3.67			867
Traces	TR	3.33			833
Traces -	TR-	3	Standard+	1.38 – 2.58	800
Practically devoid +	PD+	2.67			767
Practically devoid	PD	2.33			733
Practically devoid -	PD-	2	Standard-	0.28 – 1.37	700
Devoid +	D+	1.67			
Devoid	D	1.33			
Devoid -	D-	1	Utility	na	na

5. Carcass weight is calculated using this equation:
   a) Hot carcass weight = 0.587 x liveweight + 70 x fat thickness + 10.6 x ribeye area – 141

6. Yield grade is calculated the same as using the USDA grading system (see below) with the KPH fat set at 2.1 percent, fat thickness, ribeye area from ultrasound measurements and carcass weight from equation 5a above .
    1. Yield Grade = 2.50 + (2.5 x fat thickness, inches) + (.20 x percent KPH) + (.0038 x hot carcass weight, pounds)- (.32 x ribeye area, square inches)
7. Carcass values determined using the above process are used in the same manner and for the same certificates as the USDA obtained carcass values.

How to Rank a Carcass Show:

First, separate carcasses into Gold Seal, then Carcass of Merit, then others. All Gold Seal carcasses rank ahead of Carcass of Merit and others; then all Carcass of Merit rank above others.

In each group, separate into Prime, Choice+, Choice and Choice - together, Select, Standard. All Prime rank ahead of others, then Choice + above others below, then the Choice and Choice – above those below, etc. In each quality grade group rank from smallest to largest yield grade.

Carcass of Merit and Gold Seal Certificate Instructions:

CBCIA carcass certificates are now available as a .PDF file for you to print on your computer or as a word document to be used with mail merge feature. It is your choice of type of paper for the certificates. The table in each certificate sample includes a place for the steer data to be entered. Certificates can be acquired online at https://calcattlemen.org/portfolio-items/cbcia/

CBCIA Contact Representatives:

Amanda McKeith, Fresno State (559)278-4331 amckeith@csufresno.edu
Tracy Schohr, UC Cooperative Extension (916) 716-2643 tkschohr@ucanr.edu
Jim Oltjen, UC Cooperative Extension (530)752-0175) jwoltjen@ucdavis.edu