

Raising and Marketing Dexter Beef

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Introduction

- Beef Terminology
- Dexter Carcass Composition
- Local Market Opportunities
- Cost & Pricing Considerations
- Herd Performance Assessment

Beef Terminology

- **Hanging Weight = Hot Carcass Weight**
 - Hanging weight includes the weight of the organ meats (liver, tongue, heart, sweetbreads, kidneys) oxtail, bones, and fat
 - % Yield of Carcass = $(\text{Hanging weight} / \text{Live weight}) \times 100$
- **Hanging Weight \neq Weight of Retail Cuts**
 - Must deduct for weight of bones, internal fat, trim waste, and shrink

Beef Terminology

- 12th Rib – evaluation point for grading



Beef Terminology

- FT = Fat Thickness
- REA = Ribeye Area
- %KPH = Kidney, Pelvic, and Heart Fat
- HCW = Hot Carcass Weight = Hanging Weight
- YG = Yield Grade
- Mat = Maturity
- Marb = Marbling
- QG = Quality Grade
- ADG = Average Daily Gain

Beef Terminology

- Yield Grade – a calculated value
 - YG = 1 is best for lean – indicates maximum amount of lean, retail cuts of meat – however, not good for “dry aging” the carcass
 - YG = 2 or 3 is acceptable lean – indicates more internal and external fat – best for “dry aging” the carcass
 - YG = 4 or 5 – indicates significant cutting losses are anticipated due to excessive fat deposits

Beef Terminology

■ Quality Grades

- Prime
- Choice
- Select
- Standard
- Commercial
- Utility
- Cutter
- Canner

2002 Stillwater, Oklahoma Feed-Out Dexter Summary - 30 Steers, Grain-Finished

	AVERAGE	RANGE
In Weight	361	170 – 510
Out Weight	547	385 – 725
ADG	2.0	0.82 – 2.64
Carcass Wt.	294	191 – 379
Dressing %	53.7	41.6 – 57.8
Fat Cover	0.12	0.05 - 0.20
REA	7.47	5.8 – 9.1
Yield Grade	1.89	1.39 – 2.46

Beef Terminology

■ Dry Aging

- Carcass is hung 14 to 28 days in a refrigerated room at 34 to 38 °F
- Enzymes naturally tenderize the meat and drying intensifies flavor
- Allows carcass to release excess moisture
- Must have sufficient external fat layer to protect meat from over-drying and breaking down



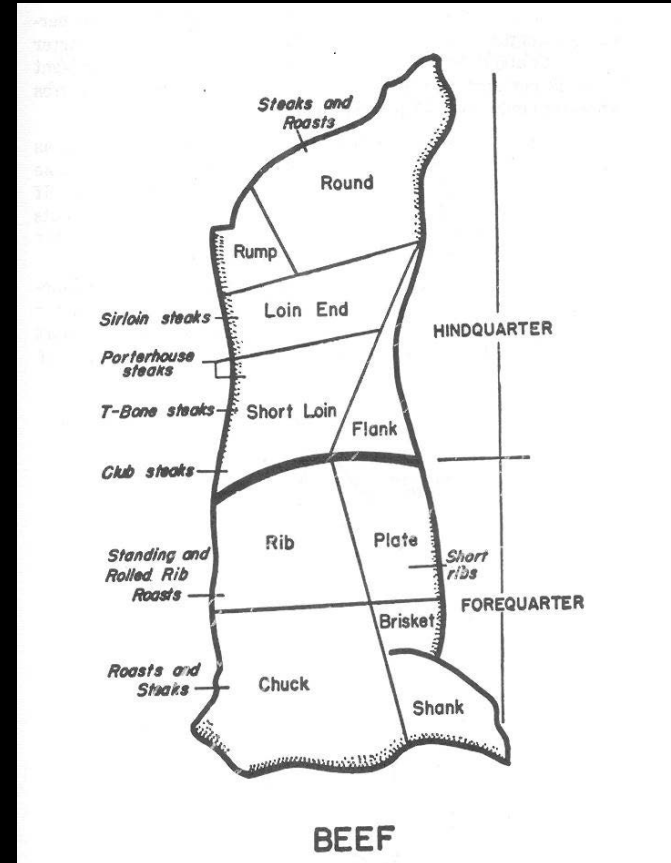
Beef Terminology

■ Primals -

- Chuck
- Rib
- Loin
- Round

■ Subprimals –

- Major bones removed
- Smaller divided portions
- Coarse Ground Meat



Raising the Best Dexter Beef

- Must maintain consistent and adequate nutrition over the animal's entire life from birth until slaughter
- “Pampered Cows, Perfect Beef” is the motto of the UK's award winning Thornhill Farm
 - Calves are weaned by their dams, normally at 10 months of age
 - All stock is fed grass and good quality hay or haylage in the winter months
 - Beef is dry aged for 21 days and is beautifully well-marbled and succulent

Grass Finished Dexter Steer



Dexter Carcass Composition

- Live Weight, LW = 880 lb (29-month old steer)
- Hanging Weight, HW = 539 lb (61.2% of LV)
 - Includes 16 lb of edible organ meats & oxtail
 - Includes bones, fat, trim, and shrink
- Total Retail Product = 298 lb (55.3% of HW)
 - Beef Chuck = 54 lb = 18.1%
 - Beef Rib = 31 lb = 10.4%
 - Beef Loin = 51 lb = 17.1%
 - Beef Round = 48 lb = 16.1%
 - 85% Lean Ground Meat = 114 lb = 38.3%

Local Market Opportunities

- Identify your market opportunities
 - Family, Friends, Neighbors
 - Specialty Retail Grocery
 - Sale Barn
 - Other

Local Market Opportunities

■ Family, Friends, Neighbors

- Great for owner/breeders that produce only 1 or 2 extra finished steers each year.
- Find out what custom processed freezer beef is sold for in your area – it's usually based on per lb "hanging weight" and does not include the custom processing charges.
- Find out what custom processing will cost – it's usually based on per lb "hanging weight" plus a separate fee to kill the animal.
- Price your beef so that it's competitive with other freezer beef in your area

Local Market Opportunities

■ Specialty Retail Grocery

- Great for owner/breeders that regularly produce 10 or more finished steers per year
- Need a good herd management and breeding plan
- Should be able to produce uniform and high quality animals in top condition on a routine schedule
- Develop a good working relationship with your custom processor
- Custom processor must have State or USDA inspector on-site during processing and cutting
- Need to register your business with the State for retail sales tax certificate

Local Market Opportunities

- Specialty Retail Grocery
 - Sell whole steers on a regular basis, dry aged 14 to 21 days, cut into sub-primals & bulk coarse ground meat
 - Establish a wholesale price, include delivery & processing in your price
 - Deliver meat fresh to the store immediately after it is cut and packaged



Local Market Opportunities

- Specialty Retail Grocery
 - Look for “Buy Local, Eat Local” campaigns
 - Prepare your marketing materials
 - Presentation Notebook
 - Price List
 - Business Cards



Local Market Opportunities

- Prepare for the interview/sales call
 - Visit the store, read their ads, look at their web site
 - Check out their beef prices, display, and facilities
 - Take photos and notes
- Contact the store manager and make an appointment
 - Prepare cooked and raw meat samples fresh on the day of the interview
 - Include photos of your cattle and ranch in the presentation notebook, information on Dexter cattle, and your retail and wholesale price lists for custom processed meat

Sale Barn

- Beef calves – Are you offering something that they are buying?
 - Black, hornless, uniform size, beef-type
- Reputation - Are you known as a producer of quality livestock in your area?
 - People buy from people they know and trust

Examples of Beef-Type



Examples of Dairy-Type



Examples of Dexter Dual Purpose-Type



Examples of Dexter Dual Purpose-Type



Sale Barn

- Mature Bulls & Cows – expect to get only about \$0.40 per lb, live weight (on a good day) for culls
- Weanling Steer Calves – 350 to 400 lb, beef-type, check local market prices/trends
 - Dehorn, vaccinate, castrate, and wean at least 14 days prior to sale day to get better prices
 - Group same-size/age calves in lots

Sale Barn

- **Bottle or Bucket Calves – 50 to 150 lb**
 - Typically bring about \$1.50 per lb live weight, check local market prices/trends
 - Make sure they've received adequate colostrum
 - Get them started on a good milk replacer and make sure the calves will take a bottle or bucket for feeding and are doing well, prior to attempting to sell them

Cost & Pricing Considerations

- What are your input costs?
 - Purchase of animals, breeding fees, purchase/storage of semen, DNA-testing, registrations, transfers, membership
 - Vet bills, vaccinations, parasite control
 - Pasture rent, hay, feed, water, mineral/supplements
 - Vehicle mileage
 - Property taxes, insurance, equipment depreciation

Cost & Pricing Considerations

- What are your input costs?
 - Custom beef processing fees
 - Advertising, promotional materials, web site
 - Computer, software, office supplies, books, copies, postage
 - Internet and telephone expenses
 - Travel, entry fees, exhibition expenses
 - Your time

Cost & Pricing Considerations

■ Pricing

- What is the local competition's pricing?
- Can you sell for less and still come out ahead?
- Can you offer more and sell for more?
- What is your break even price?
 - Expenses = Revenue
- When your projected expenses exceed your projected revenues – you must either reduce your expenses or draw from reserve funds.

Herd Performance Assessment

- If you don't measure it, then you can't manage it.
- If you can't manage it, then it will manage you.

Herd Performance Assessment

■ Basic Information Needed

- Weight of each cow – measured annually
- Weight of each calf – measured at birth, at weaning, and at slaughter
- Record of each cow's breeding history – dates on every AI-service, and every exposure period to a bull (natural service)
- Record of each cow's output – every calf and its date of birth, including abortions and still births.
- Record of each cow's calving difficulties and health concerns, and vet care, pre- and post-partum

Summary

- Know and understand beef terminology, Dexter breed specific details, and unique qualities
- Identify your local market options and develop your herd to best utilize those options
- Select breeding stock carefully and know what outcomes you are breeding for.
- Know what your costs/expenses are and what your potential revenues are.
- Assess your herd annually and make changes as needed to remain profitable and financially sound.