

# New Zealand Meat



GUIDE TO BEEF CARCASS CLASSIFICATION



# To the producers, buyers & sellers of New Zealand Meat

**The New Zealand Meat Classification Authority, a joint body of the New Zealand Meat Board and the Meat Industry Association of New Zealand, provides the classification system, described in this guide, on a voluntary basis.**

The classifications have been developed by the New Zealand Meat Board, in consultation with the Meat Industry Association of New Zealand.

New Zealand export meat is sold on a cold weight basis. For ease of understanding the term "export weight" is used in this brochure to describe cold weight. New Zealand farmers are paid on a hot weight basis. Weight ranges shown in this guide are hot weight.

The system, which is available only to licensed users, is protected by a registered trademark i.e.



Use of the system is audited by a Meat Classification Authority appointed body.

## Beef

The system classifies carcasses according to maturity, sex, fat content and muscling. Weight is relevant for payment purposes.

Types of carcasses are:

- Steer, heifer, cow, bull;
- Bobby calf

### Steer, Heifer, Cow, Bull

**Definitions:**

**Steer:** Male cattle castrated when young.

**Heifer:** Female cattle having no more than six permanent incisors.

**Cow:** Female cattle having more than six permanent incisors.

**Bull:** Entire cattle with masculine characteristics.

**Bobby calf:** Milk-fed, generally under two weeks old.

They are not classified into either classes or weight ranges.

**Selected Young Beef (SYB):** This is a voluntary carcass category.

The dentition criterion is no more than 4 permanent incisors erupted. It must be grass feed, growth promotant free and encompass carcasses between 245kg and 360kg.

**Fat Classes:** All carcasses, except bobby calves, are classified into Fat Classes (see table on next page).

**Muscling:** All adult cattle, other than M cow are classified into three muscling classes, 1, 2 and 3. Each is based on the degree of muscling of the hindquarter (see illustrations on back page).

**Standard carcass trim** is illustrated below.

## Standard Carcass Trim

**TRIMMING IS LIMITED TO:**

**COD/UDDER, TESTES OR PENIS:** ●  
(Total removal ensuring flank remains in situ).

**Fat on VENTRAL ABDOMEN** ●  
**Including precorial fat:** ●  
(Total removal ensuring no meat/muscle is exposed or removed and limited to the level of the 12th rib).

**THICK SKIRT** ●

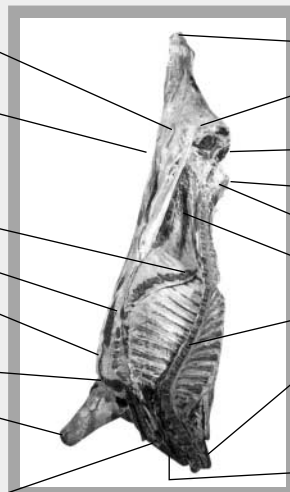
**XIPHOID CARTILAGE** ●

**Excess fat off BRISKET:** ●  
(Ensure no meat/muscle is exposed).

**INTRA-THORACIC FAT** ●

**FEET:** (Between Carpus and Metacarpus). ●

**NECK:** – extraneous matter only (that which is contaminated by blood clots ingesta etc), ensuring no unnecessary removal of muscle/meat. ●



● **FEET:** (Between the Tarsus and Metatarsus).

● **Excess fat off TOPSIDE RIM:** ●  
(Ensure no meat/muscle is exposed).

● **Fat off CHANNEL RIM:** (Total removal).

● **TAIL:** (Between Sacral and coccygeal vertebra).

● **CHANNEL FAT**

● **KIDNEY AND KIDNEY KNOBS**

● **SPINAL CORD:** Total removal (Voluntary).

● **HEAD:** (Between the Occipital bone and the 1st cervical vertebra. Ensure that no neck meat is attached to the head).

● **NECK – SEAM FAT:** (Between the muscles of the neck [within the jugular furrow]. Total removal ensuring no meat/muscle attached).

## Mandatory Carcass Category

Fat Cover Description	Steer and Heifer			Prime Cow			M Cow			
	Fat Class	Fat Depth	Weight Ranges	Fat Class	Fat Depth	Weight Ranges	Fat Class	Fat Depth	Weight Ranges	
Devoid	<b>A</b>	Nil	145-159.5kg	<b>P</b>	3-10mm	160-195kg	<b>M</b>	Under 4mm	Under 145kg	
			160-195kg						145-170kg	
			195.5-220kg						170.5-195kg	
Light, patchy	<b>L</b>	Under 3mm	220.5-245kg			195.5-220kg			195.5-220kg	
			245.5-270kg						Over 220kg	
			270.5-295kg						220.5-245kg	
			Over 295kg							
Light to medium	<b>P</b>	3-10mm	145-159.5kg	<b>T</b>	11-16mm	245.5-270kg				
			160-195kg							
			195.5-220kg							
			220.5-245kg							Over 270kg
			245.5-270kg							
Heavy	<b>T</b>	11-16mm	270.5-295kg	<b>F</b>	17mm and over	160-270kg				
			295.5-320kg							
			320.5-345kg							
			Over 345kg							270.5-295kg
Excessive	<b>F</b>	17mm and over	145-159.5kg			Over 295kg				
			160-270kg							
			270.5-295kg							
			Over 295kg							
Number of muscling classes: 3			Number of muscling classes: 3			No muscling classes				

## Mandatory Carcass Category

Fat Cover Description	Bull		
	Fat Class	Fat Depth	Weight Ranges
Devoid to light, patchy	<b>M</b>	Under 3mm	Up to 195kg
			195.5-220kg
			220.5-245kg
			245.5-270kg
			270.5-295kg
			295.5-320kg
Light or medium to excessive	<b>TM</b>	3mm and over	320.5-345kg
			Over 345kg
Number of muscling classes: 3			

## Voluntary Carcass Category

### Selected Young Beef (SYB)

Young bovine carcasses with not more than 4 permanent incisors erupted, grass fed and growth promotant free

Qualifying fat classes	Fat Depth	Weight Ranges
<b>M</b>	Under 3mm	245-360kg
<b>TM</b>	3mm and over	
Number of muscling classes: 3		

### Hot weight:

The basis on which New Zealand producers are paid. This measurement is used only within New Zealand.

### Fat thickness:

The depth of subcutaneous fat over the fourth quarter of the eye muscle at the 12th rib.

In practice company graders and auditors use it as a guide while also considering the fat content of the whole carcass.

### Cow:

Includes steer and heifer which are either: i) under 145kg; or ii) excessively yellow; - includes cow which are either i) under 160kg; or ii) excessively yellow.

### L Type:

L Type-Cow carcasses are classified as M cow.

**A** class is intended to encompass those well-muscled steer and heifer carcasses over 145kgs, which are devoid of fat.

### Selected Young Beef (SYB):

SYB is a voluntary carcass category. SYB are bovine carcasses with not more than 4 permanent incisors erupted, grass fed and growth promotant free. The SYB category encompasses carcasses between 245kg and 360kg.

# Muscling

All adult cattle, other than M cow are classified into three muscling classes, 1, 2 and 3. Each is based on the degree of muscling of the hindquarter (see illustration below).



## Class 1

- profiles convex to super convex
- excellent muscle development

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Round: Very rounded

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Rump: Very rounded

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Loin: Full

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Carcasses with any two of the three attributes qualify.



## Class 2

- profiles on the whole, straight but may vary from slightly convex to slightly concave
- good muscle development

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Round: Well developed to average development

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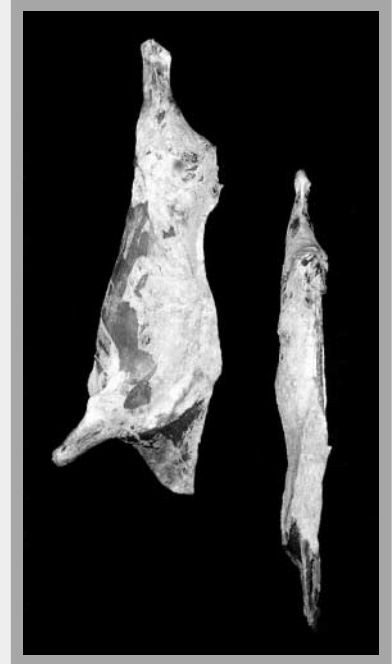
Rump: Rounded to average development

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Loin: Generally full

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Carcasses with any two of the three attributes qualify.



## Class 3

- profiles on the whole, concave

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Round: Lacking development

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Rump: Straight profile lacking development

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Loin: Average to shallow development

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