



Carcase Judging Guidelines: Pig Carcase

PROCEDURE IN JUDGING

This follows exactly the same procedure as with stockjudging – 10 minutes to look at the carcasses and 2 minutes to present your reasons to the judge.

The carcasses will be lined up and identified as A, B, X, Y. They will usually be hung in a chiller unit and you will not be allowed to touch them for health & safety reasons. You will have to wash your hands and disinfect your boots before you are allowed in.

Stand back and have a good look from a distance at the group. Get a general impression of the carcasses to judge, general appearance, type, etc. Identify if heifer, steer or bull carcasses.

When carcase judging, pointers will usually be present on the judging card that you are given. Remember that when you give your reasons make sure that you talk about each carcase in the same order, i.e. leg to head (top to bottom) and remember to compare!

The pointers on your card will be:

- Proportion of lean to fat – you want something that has lots of juicy meat and not much fat.
- Fullness of eye muscle – this is the bit that makes a pork chop. The loin will be chopped so that you can see the eye muscle. It needs to be a good pink colour and have about 5mm of fat surrounding it.
- Shape of leg – this wants to be as round as possible but ensure this is meat and not fat.
- Lightness of shoulder – the shoulder is one of the cheaper cuts so the smaller and lighter the better.
- Firmness and whiteness of fat – a little of good quality is what you want (nothing yellowy).
- Colour and texture of flesh – a carcase that looks battered and bruised will mean that the meat may too be bruised. Just make sure the pig looks like it would've been a healthy one when still standing.

What you are really looking for is something that you would want to eat. It is now the housewife that controls the market and they are usually looking for lean carcasses. Traditional butchers usually prefer fatter carcasses so it is worth finding out who your judge is to get some information on their background. If you are presented with a fat one and a very thin one just go on your gut feeling! People don't want to be paying for fat that they are going to chop off but if they are left with better meat at the end than this might just sway it!



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Points	Good	Bad
Proportion of lean to fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High – more meat than fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low – more fat than meat
Ham	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well rounded with meat not fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sloping• Round with fat not meat
Chump	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convex	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concave
Loin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long• Deep• Full	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Narrow• Short• Shallow
Eye muscle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good length• Good width• Good, strong colour (pink – dark pink)• Ideal surrounding fat cover of 5mm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small• Pale• Fat running throughout• Too much or too little surrounding fat coverage
Shoulder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large• Flat