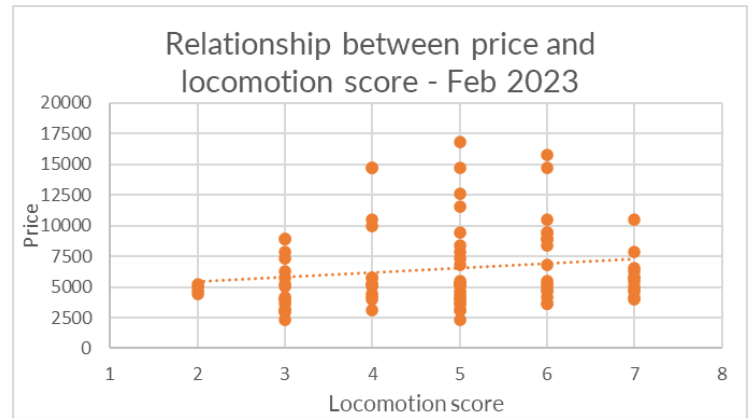


Aberdeen-Angus linear assessment implementation

What can we do to correct 'bad' locomotion?

This is a common question among many breeders. In order to make an assessment of the current situation within the breed, Meurig James has assessed the sale bulls forward for both October 2022 and February 2023 sales. These assessment scores, based on locomotion only, were compared with sale price to establish the relationship between locomotion score and price – see the graph to the right.

This analysis has shown that the biggest numbers of bulls were scored between 4 and 6 (average), with a still significant number were scored 3 or below, while a smaller number still were scored 7 or above.



There were no bulls with scores 3 or below that achieved prices above £8000, while those scored 4-6 achieved up to £17,500. It is also worth noting that those bulls scored 7 or above achieved prices topped at £11,000, but did not top the sale. It can be seen by the trend line (dotted line on the graph above) that the general trend, or relationship, between price and locomotion is positive, so that as the locomotion score increases so does the price.

Demonstrating this positive relationship between locomotion score and price has been the catalyst for the Aberdeen-Angus Cattle Society to introduce a Linear Assessment, or type classification, which aims to provide an independent assessment of cows in your herd, reviewing the strengths and weaknesses to enhance longevity, health and welfare. It provides an overall classification score for your cows, which can substantially increase their value.

Traits included in classification

Linear assessment involves the measurement of 24 individual traits on a scale of 1-9, describing the degree of the trait rather than its desirability. It is all about balance. The summary of weighting in the end total (Overall Type Classification Score) are as follows:

Scoring system used across beef breeds is:

Legs & feet- 30%

Udder- 20%

Body- 25%

Breed character- 25%

The benefits of assessment include:

- See your cows through fresh eyes
- Classifiers score twenty-four individual 'linear' traits
- Insight enables better corrective breeding decisions to be made
- Identify the top percentage of the herd on type to breed your replacements from
- Helps breed in good functional conformation and reduces unnecessary rearing costs
- Once enough records have been collected they will be included in evaluation analyses, to enable these traits to be included in genetic selection indices
- Highly graded animals can have a considerably higher value than their non-classified counterparts



THE
ABERDEEN-ANGUS
CATTLE SOCIETY

www.aberdeen-angus.co.uk T: 01738 622477



Aberdeen-Angus linear assessment implementation

Linear assessment fees

This scheme is voluntary and funded by the breeder. The costs associated with herd assessment are as follows:

		Cost Ex-VAT
1-15	Minimum Fee (per herd)	£108
16-100	Per head	£7.21
101-150	Per head	£3.61
151 +	Per head	£2.58
Bull Classification	Per head	£15.90
Special Visit	Outside regular visit inclusive of 20 hd	£210
Special Bull Visit	Where a single bull is classified	£108
Cancellation Fee	Less than 3 days' notice	£108

Booking your herd assessment

To book a herd assessment please use the online form on the website which can be accessed at: <https://www.aberdeen-angus.co.uk/linear-assessment-contact-form/>

What to expect following scoring

Scores will be uploaded to the ABRI database by your assessor and will be displayed against individual animals

Image below of Simmental individual animal display:

HerdBook No.: [REDACTED]
Sex: Female
Ear Tag (UKxxx.): [REDACTED]
Birth Date: 07/09/2010
Registration Status: Registered
By A.I.: Yes
Breeder: [REDACTED]
Current Owner: NON MEMBER

[Herd Completeness of Performance Rating:](#)



ET Donor: Yes
DNA MIP Ref No.: [REDACTED]
EBVs from AHDB: [\[View\]](#)
National Beef Evaluations: [\[13 - View\]](#)
Progeny: [\[View\]](#)
Classification Details: [\[View\]](#)
EBV Graph: [\[View\]](#)

Example calculation:

9 herd classified = 1* £108.00 + VAT
78 herd classified = 78* £7.21 + VAT
178 herd classified =
100* £7.21
50* £3.61
28* £2.58
Total = £973.74 + VAT



Aberdeen-Angus linear assessment implementation

The individual scoring will work along the following guidelines:

Beef Cattle Type Classification Guide

The precise description of each trait is well defined, and it is essential that the full range of linear scores to identify the intermediate and extremes of each trait be used. It is important to ensure you view the animal from all angles, considering the suggested reference points, to gain a rounded view of the animal's traits.



Trait	Reference Point	Score Breakdown	Reference Scale	Visual Aid
Body Traits				
Stature	Measured from the top of the spine to the ground.	1 Short 5 Intermediate 9 Tall	Breed specific scale. For example, score 1 represents 96cm for Dexter but 130cm for South Devon, and score 9 represents 120cm for Dexter but 154 for South Devon.	
Body Depth	Distance between top of spine and bottom of barrel at last rib – the deepest point, independent of stature.	1-3 Shallow 4-6 Intermediate 7-9 Deep	Optical in relation to the balance of the animal. Always look on the same side, because all cows are deeper on one side than the other.	
Chest Width	Measure from the inside surface between the top of the front legs.	1-3 Narrow 4-6 Intermediate 7-9 Wide		
Development of Hindquarters	Curve of the rear part of the cow.	1-3 Narrow (Concave) 4-6 Intermediate 7-9 Wide (Convex)		
Length from Withers to Pelvis (Hooks)	Distance between top of withers and start of the pelvis (hooks).	1-3 Short 4-6 Intermediate 7-9 Long		
Rump Width	Distance between the most posterior point of pin bones.	1-3 Narrow 4-6 Intermediate 7-9 Wide		



Aberdeen-Angus linear assessment implementation

Beef Cattle Type Classification Guide



Trait	Reference Point	Score Breakdown	Reference Scale	Visual Aid
Rump Angle	Measured as the angle of the rump structure from hooks/hips to pins.	1 High Pins (+4cm) 5 Intermediate (-4cm) 9 Extreme Slope (-12cm)		
Feet & Legs Traits				
Locomotion	When walking, the use of legs, feet, length and direction of the step.	1-3 Severe Abduction and/or Short Stride 4-6 Slight Abduction and Medium Stride 7-9 No Abduction and Long Stride	9 = Foot A and B should respectively land in the footstep of C and D when the cow moves forward.	
Foot Angle	Angle at the front of the rear hoof measured from the floor to the hairline at the right hoof.	1-3 Very low (15°) 4-6 Intermediate (45°) 7-9 Very Steep (65°)	If the Foot Angle is difficult to score, look at the angle of the hairline. In case of a significant difference between the left and the right leg, the worst/extreme side must be scored.	
Rear Leg Side View	Angle measured at the front of the hock.	1-3 Straight (160°) 4-6 Intermediate (147°) 7-9 Sickled (134°)	In case of a significant difference between the left and the right leg, the worst/extreme side must be scored.	
Rear Leg Rear View	As measured from the rear.	1-3 Severely outward pointing toe with hocks in/touching 4-6 Slight toe out with hocks slightly further apart 7 Feet point forward with hocks straight from the rear	In case of a significant difference between the left and the right leg, the worst/extreme side must be scored.	
Mammary Traits				
Udder Depth	The distance from the lowest part of the udder floor to the hock.	1 Below hock 5 Intermediate 9 Shallow	Score 2 = level with the hock equal 0 cm.	
Fore Udder Attachment	The strength of attachment of the fore udder to the abdominal wall.	1-3 Weak and loose 4-6 Intermediate acceptable 7-9 Extremely strong and tight	In cases of significant difference in the quality of udder attachment of either side, the worst side must be scored. Only to be scored if the udder is healthy.	
Teat Length	The length of the front or the rear teat.	1-3 Short 4-6 Intermediate 7-9 Long	Score 1 = 1 cm & 9 = 9cm. 1 cm per point for front teats. 0.75 cm per point for rear teats.	