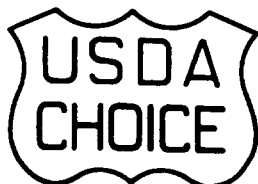
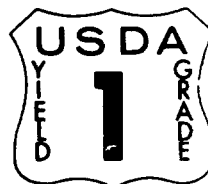




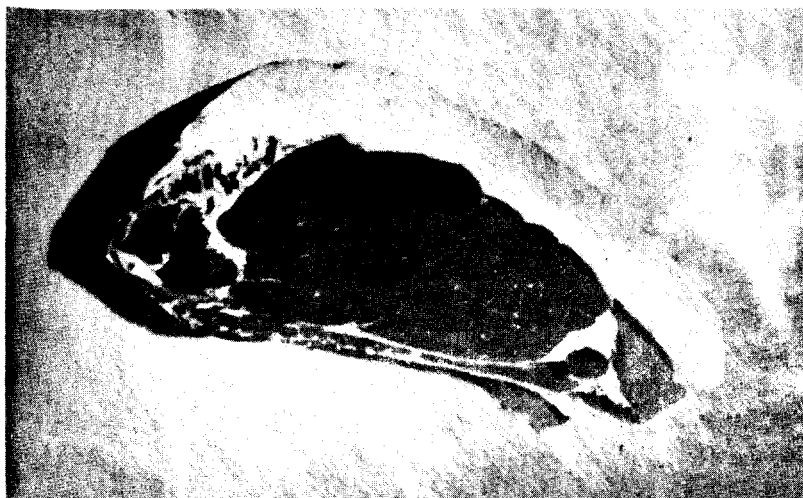
Dual Grading for Beef



QUALITY GRADE



YIELD GRADE



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DUAL GRADING FOR BEEF

Dual grading system – what is it? The dual system will provide for two separate grade identifications on beef carcasses: (1) Quality grade and (2) yield or percentage of salable meat.

QUALITY GRADE

Quality grade or federal beef grading has been in effect some 35 years. The quality may be defined as the characteristics associated with the tenderness, juiciness and flavor. Quality is expressed in terms of Prime, Choice, Good, Standard and Commercial grades.

Prime: Beef of this grade is highly acceptable and palatable. Prime grade beef is produced from young and well-fed beef-type cattle. The youth of the cattle and the careful intensive feeding which it has had combine to produce very high quality cuts of beef. Such cuts have liberal quantities of fat interspersed within the lean (marbling). These characteristics contribute greatly to the juiciness, tenderness and flavor of the meat.

Choice: This grade is preferred by most consumers because it is of high quality but usually has less fat than beef of the Prime grade. More of this grade of beef is produced than of any other grade. Choice beef is usually available the year around in substantial quantity.

Good: This grade pleases thrifty consumers who seek beef with little fat but with an acceptable degree of quality. Although cuts of this grade lack the juiciness generally associated with more marbling, their relative tenderness and high proportion of lean to fat make them the preference of many people.

Standard: Standard grade beef, like the above grades, is young, has a very thin covering of fat and appeals to consumers whose primary concern is a high proportion of lean. When properly prepared, such beef usually is relatively tender. It is mild in flavor and lacks the juiciness usually found in beef with more marbling.

Commercial: Beef that is graded Commercial is produced from older cattle and usually lacks the tenderness of the higher grades. Cuts from this grade, if properly prepared, can be made into satisfactory and economical meat dishes. Most cuts require long slow cooking with moist heat to make them tender and to develop the rich, full, beef flavor characteristic of mature beef.

Identification: Under the present federal meat grading program, the grade of a carcass is indicated by a purple, ribbon-like imprint of the grade name enclosed in a shield. This grade name is applied to all the major cuts of the carcass and appears on most retail cuts. Dual graded meat will be identified by a similar ribbon-like imprint of the quality name, and also a cutability grade stamped on each quarter of the carcass. These grades will be stamped in red. Cutability differences will be identified by six yield grades. These will be numbered from No. 1 to No. 6, with No. 1 representing the highest yield of retail cuts and No. 6 the lowest.

What factors will be used to determine the Yield grade?

USDA research has shown that cutability can be accurately predicted by considering just four basic factors:

- (1) Thickness of fat over the rib eye
- (2) Size of the rib eye
- (3) Quantity of kidney, pelvic, and heart fat
- (4) Carcass weight

Determination of cutability and quality can be made at the same time by the official grader. Obviously, as a carcass increases in exterior fatness, the more fat must be trimmed in making retail cuts. Size of the rib eye is a measure of carcass lean mass; accordingly, the more thickly muscled the carcass, the higher will be its cutability grade. All other factors remaining constant, an increase in carcass weight results in a lower cutability.

Why use the dual grading system?

USDA believes dual grading will:

- (1) Help the industry by continuing to expand the demand for high quality beef
- (2) Provide cattlemen with a larger share of the consumer's dollar spent for beef
- (3) Reduce marketing costs by encouraging increased production of meat-type cattle
- (4) Reflect more accurately current consumer preferences for less fatty beef

Dual grading promises cattle producers immediate as well as long-range benefits. Specifically, it will provide the means for the producer to be paid more nearly in line with the ultimate retail value of his product than is possible at present. It should provide the financial incentive for producing meat-type cattle and the kind of beef that consumers like.

Studies show that similar weight Choice grade carcasses may range in yield of trimmed boneless cuts from the round, loin, rib and chuck from 55.0 down to 40.0 per cent of the carcass weights.

At prevailing retail prices, each 1 per cent change in the cutability factor can make a difference of as much as \$1.25 per hundredweight in the value of a Choice grade carcass — as much as 75 cents per hundred on a liveweight basis. This means that between some 1,000-pound Choice cattle, there is an actual difference of over \$100 in retail value. While this much of a variation is definitely the exception rather than the rule, variations of \$25 to \$30 or more are not at all uncommon.

Can the dual grade be estimated in live animals?

USDA studies have demonstrated that dual grading of live cattle can be accomplished with a high degree of accuracy, permitting the new system to be applied to all normal marketing channels.

To get a meaty carcass will it be necessary to produce a different type of animal?

No, we have an important nucleus from which to start. Many cattle already carry a meaty desirable kind of carcass.

When did the dual grading system go into effect?

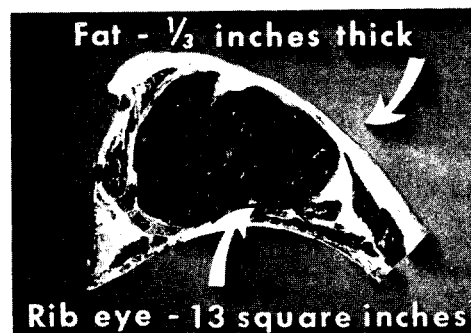
July 1, 1962. It is on a trial basis for one year, or until July 1, 1963.

Is it a compulsory system to the packers?

No, it is on a voluntary basis the same as federal grading for quality is at present. Only those who want it, use it – and they pay for the service on a fee basis.

In summary, the additional grading system should:

- (1) Increase the volume of high quality meat-type cattle.
- (2) Enable the marketing system to more nearly pay true value.
- (3) Return a greater share of the consumer dollar to the producer, through reduced waste fat that must be transported and trimmed.
- (4) Create a greater consumer demand for beef.



Here is the rib eye from the "meat-type" steer.

