

Holstein UK Classification Scheme

The present Holstein UK Classification Scheme - The Inspection of Test Daughters through L.I.F.T. (Linear Inspection for Type) - has been in place for 14 years. Progeny test companies, like ourselves, request that Holstein UK perform the inspections to provide an independent linear assessment of daughters of test bulls.

Fast Results

The objectives of the LIFT system is to produce Type Proofs for unproven sires as quickly as possible. It is the only service in the UK dairy industry designed specifically to produce reliable Type Proofs for young bulls that are undergoing progeny test in the UK.

There are currently 12 Field Officers working round the UK visiting farms to Type evaluate the daughters and contemporaries of the bulls in the Progeny Test Programme. Once on farm they score every heifer and any cows that are put forward for further inspection.



On to a good Footing

The UK was one of the first countries to introduce new traits into the classification system, including scoring locomotion, temperament, milking speed and rear teat placement. Although new to the industry these four new traits are becoming increasingly important to UK dairy farmers when selecting bulls. Locomotion is basically how correctly the heifer walks on concrete. The back feet should track straight and touch the same area of ground where the front feet leave. A heifer that walks correctly will not have any problems or discomfort, which will result in longer herd life. Locomotion has become so important it is now included in the PLI calculation.



Picston Shottle EX96 - Number 1 for locomotion

Management traits such as Milking Speed and Temperament are also very important. As national herd sizes increase, farmers do not want to milk bad tempered or slow milking cows as these have big effects on efficiency and staff motivation. These are also scored on a 1-9 linear, based on the classifier asking either the farmer direct or the herdsman, what a particular heifer is like for those traits. The result is that all UK tested bulls will now have a score for Temperament and Milking Speed.

Rear teat placement is the newest trait to be added to classification system. Do you have any cows where the rear teats are too close together, preventing the unit from staying on properly? This is one of the biggest comments we get from our customers, so Holstein UK have responded by directly scoring how close the rear teats are, which will enable selection of good udder bulls who also separate the rear teats (MOET Nansen is one of those bulls).

Rear Teat Placement

The position of the centre of the Rear Teat placement at the point of the udder as viewed from the rear:



- 1-3 Outside of quarter
- 4-7 Middle of quarter
- 8 Touching
- 9 Crossing

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So in total each animal classified is scored on 17 traits on a linear scale of 1-9. Four composites are scored with points out of 100, each featuring a number of traits. These are combined to give an overall score within the range of 50 to 100.

Classification Scoring

Classification	Score
Excellent	90
Very Good	85 - 89
Good Plus	80 - 84
Good	75 - 79
Fair	65 - 74
Poor	50 - 64

Although a final class is always given to these ranges, it simply describes how near to the breed ideal a cow is overall. The particular strengths and weaknesses of an animal can best be seen by looking at the composites or individual traits.

This is by no means the end of the story however, all data from all heifer classifications is collected and analysed by Dr Sue Brotherstone of Edinburgh University. These calculations then result in the publication of the type proofs three times a year enabling farmers to use the bulls that are most suited to their needs.

So when you receive a letter from Holstein requesting a visit to score your Cornerstone sired daughters, all this data will go into that bulls proof. Any extra questions such as milking speed and temperament will help accuracy and ensure that we continue to graduate the best sires actually.

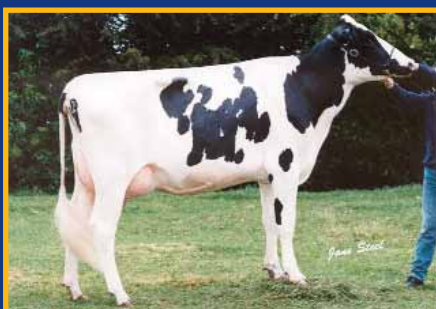
The chart below shows Melody's ability to provide improvement over the cows that he is used on. His daughters average 3.6 points higher than their dams. Not only does he offer the highest points improvement in the UK, he also sires the highest percentage of daughters that are scored higher than their dams.

Name	Dtrs Classified	% of dtrs higher than dam	Dtr avg. score	Dam avg. score	Avg. point improvement
MOET Melody	38	73.7	81.1	77.5	3.6
Riglio Juror Indro	30	70.0	81.9	79.6	2.3
Whittier-Farms Kenrik	43	62.8	80.9	78.4	2.5
Genus Janner	35	60.0	80.1	78.7	1.4

Source: Holstein UK

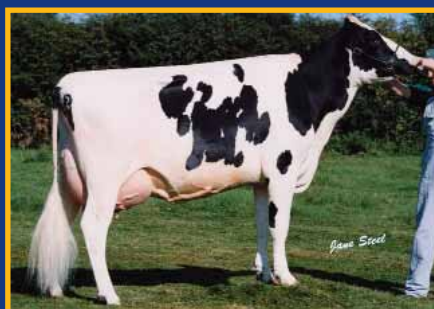
Below is an example of the development of a cow and how the classification changes.

Heifer



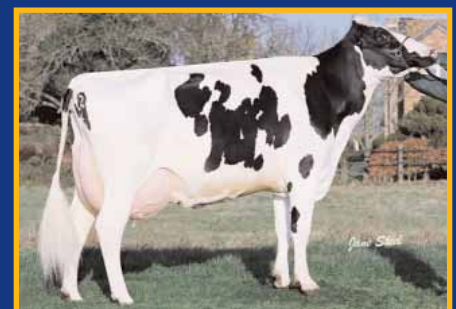
Bassingthorpe Shottle Betsy 25 VG87

Second Calver



Bassingthorpe Shottle Betsy 25 VG89

Third Calver



Bassingthorpe Shottle Betsy 25 EX92