



Grooming - Beef

Cindy Kinder, Extension Educator

Goal (learning objective)

Youth will learn about fitting their beef project for show.

Supplies

- Copies of Handout 1 - *Grooming Beef Cattle* (enough for group)
- Copies of Handout 2 - *Beef Worksheet* (enough for group)
- Copies of *Fitting for Showtime*
- Flipchart paper and markers
- Colored pencils - enough for 3, different colored pencils for each member of the group
- Show Foam
- Show Adhesive
- Light finishing oil (Final Bloom or Pink Oil)

Pre-lesson preparation

- Read/review Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Beef resource handbook, Getting Ready for the Show. (pages 9-3 through 9-12).
- Become familiar with Handout 1 – Grooming Beef Cattle

Lesson directions and outline

Ask the youth why grooming livestock is important. Discuss potential advantages and disadvantages. List the answers on the flipchart.

There are several basic products needed for the show. Have the youth list the products and equipment that can be used. Write the answers on the flipchart.

The main products that will be discussed in the activity are show foam, spray adhesive and light finishing oil.

Conducting the activity (DO)

1. Distribute Handout 1 and Handout 2 and Fitting for Showtime.
2. Provide three colored pencils (be sure all are different colors) to the group.
3. Teach to the resource materials in the Ohio Beef Resource Handbook.
4. Talk to the youth about the difference between a type of spray sheen, show foam, adhesive and a light finishing oil. Have a volunteer spray each of them so members have an opportunity to see and feel the difference.
5. Have youth color on the worksheet with one colored pencil, the areas where show foam should be applied on the animal.
6. Next, have members use a different colored pencil, coloring the worksheet where adhesive should be applied.
7. Using the third colored pencil, draw arrows on the animal the directions the hair should be combed for both the show foam and adhesive.

What did we learn? (REFLECT)

- Ask: What are two basic products used in fitting beef for show?
- Ask: What does “boned” mean, as it applies to fitting animals?
- Ask: Why is hair combed forward?
- Ask: What does show foam and adhesive feel like? Are there differences in their uses?

Why is that important? (APPLY)

- Ask: Why is it important to select the right product for the use? What are some examples of product choices you make?
- Ask: What safety considerations need to be made when fitting your animal?

Resources

Kinder, C. (2013). *Fitting for Showtime*. University of Idaho Extension. Retrieved from <http://extension.uidaho.edu/gooding/files/2013/04/6-beef-fitting.pdf>

Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Getting Ready for the Show. *Beef resource handbook* (pages 9-3 through 9-12).

Steer clipart retrieved from <http://www.showsteers.com/art%20work/>

Preparing beef cattle for exhibition at livestock shows is done by many people in many different ways. The techniques used are based on individual preference, skill, and knowledge. No matter who does it or how it is done, there are four key steps to grooming beef cattle for exhibition at livestock shows. This handout is a guideline that will describe the steps. They are as follows: **Washing, Drying, Clipping or Trimming, and Fitting.**

Step 1

Washing

Equipment needed: Soap, Brush, Insect Repellent, Conditioner, Bucket, Water Hose.

To be able to do a nice job preparing the animal for the show, it needs to be clean. The hair needs to be washed. Wet the animal thoroughly. Keep the water away from the ears of the beef. Use a type of soap that will lather well and rinse easily. Apply the soap to the hair. Use a soft brush to scrub the animal and remove excess dirt. Rinse the soap from the animal. **Leaving soap in the hair will burn the hide and cause dandruff.**

To control insects you can use a repellent. Some type of conditioner will make the hair softer and more manageable. Put a small amount of repellent and conditioner in a bucket, mix with water and pour over the animal.

Step 2

Drying

Equipment needed: Comb, Brush, Water-based Sheen, Spray Bottle, Blower.

Now the beef is clean it is time to get the hair prepared. Generously spray some type of sheen on the hair coat of the animal. This will add shine and bloom to the haircoat. Using a comb and a brush, work the hair in the direction you desire it to go to make the animal look its best. This will also work the repellent, conditioner and sheen into the hair. After the hair has been combed, use the blower to dry the hair. Make sure you blow the hair in the direction you want it because once it dries it is difficult to get it back in place. The hair should be free from cowlicks, curls, and lines; leaving a smooth hair coat when dry. The recommended technique is to start at the head and work toward the rear. Keep the comb handy; you may need to use it while you are drying. **For safety purposes, keep the blower hose away from the legs of the animal.** Proper drying is an important factor in the appearance of the animal.

Step 3

Clipping or Trimming

Equipment needed: Comb, Flathead Clippers, Sheep-head Clippers, Small Clippers, Clipper Oil, and Grooming Chute.

The animal needs to be **completely** dry when you begin clipping or the blades will dull quickly and the hair won't cut off evenly. **Use extreme care** when using the clippers because they are sharp and can injure you and the animal if used carelessly. If a chute is available, put the beef in it. This will restrain the animal safely.

When you start clipping, use the flathead clippers and start at the tail. Clip the hair in an upward motion starting near the stifle muscle and stopping before the tail head begins to round. By starting at the tail the animal will get used to the sound and feel of the clippers, helping them to relax. Clip excess hair off the sheath or navel. Using a downward motion, clip the hair off the neck starting just in front of the neck and shoulder junction, working toward the head (exact starting and ending points are determined by the conformation of the animal). Make sure you blend the hair in this area. Don't leave a distinct line. If your skill level is high, you may wish to block the neck with the sheep head clippers. Using the flathead

clippers on the neck for summer shows is recommended. This depends on the amount hair on the beef. Clip the hair upward from the brisket to the chin, one clipper width wide. Clip the hair on the head in an upward motion beginning at the cheek, just in front of the ear. Remove all of the hair off the head, leaving a little on the poll if desired. Clip the hair off of the face last. If the animal is not already upset, clipping the face will usually upset them.

The sheep head or small clippers are used next to trim excess hair off of the animal to provide a smooth, neat appearance. Before you begin using them make sure the animal's hair is combed into place. They can be used on the topline, underline, legs, or any other place to blend the excess hair, providing an attractive, balanced look. **Be very careful with sheep head clippers, they are dangerous.** They are recommended for those with a high level of clipping skill. Make sure you have clipper oil. Use it periodically to keep the clippers cool and prolong the life of the blades.

Step 4 **Fitting**

Equipment needed: Blower, Comb, Adhesive, Hair Styling Mousse (Show Foam), Final Bloom or light oil, Sheep-head and Small Clippers, Grooming Chute, after show product to remove adhesive.

When you fit the animal begin by blowing the hair. This will remove any dirt and put the hair into place if Step 1 was followed correctly. Using an adhesive, start at the bottom of the rear leg and work toward the hock, combing the hair up at an angle. Apply a small amount of adhesive to a small area at a time. Too much adhesive will cause the hair to get very sticky and unmanageable. This adds the appearance of more bone and appears to straighten the leg. The front legs can be done to the knee in this manner.

The tail head needs to have a square appearance. Apply an adhesive to the tail head to hold it into place. The tail has been groomed in various ways. The most natural way is to make sure the tail is clean and combed to remove snarls or "rats". The tail can be clipped into the shape of a teardrop or cut straight across the bottom. The tail should hang even with the hock of the beef when it is finished.

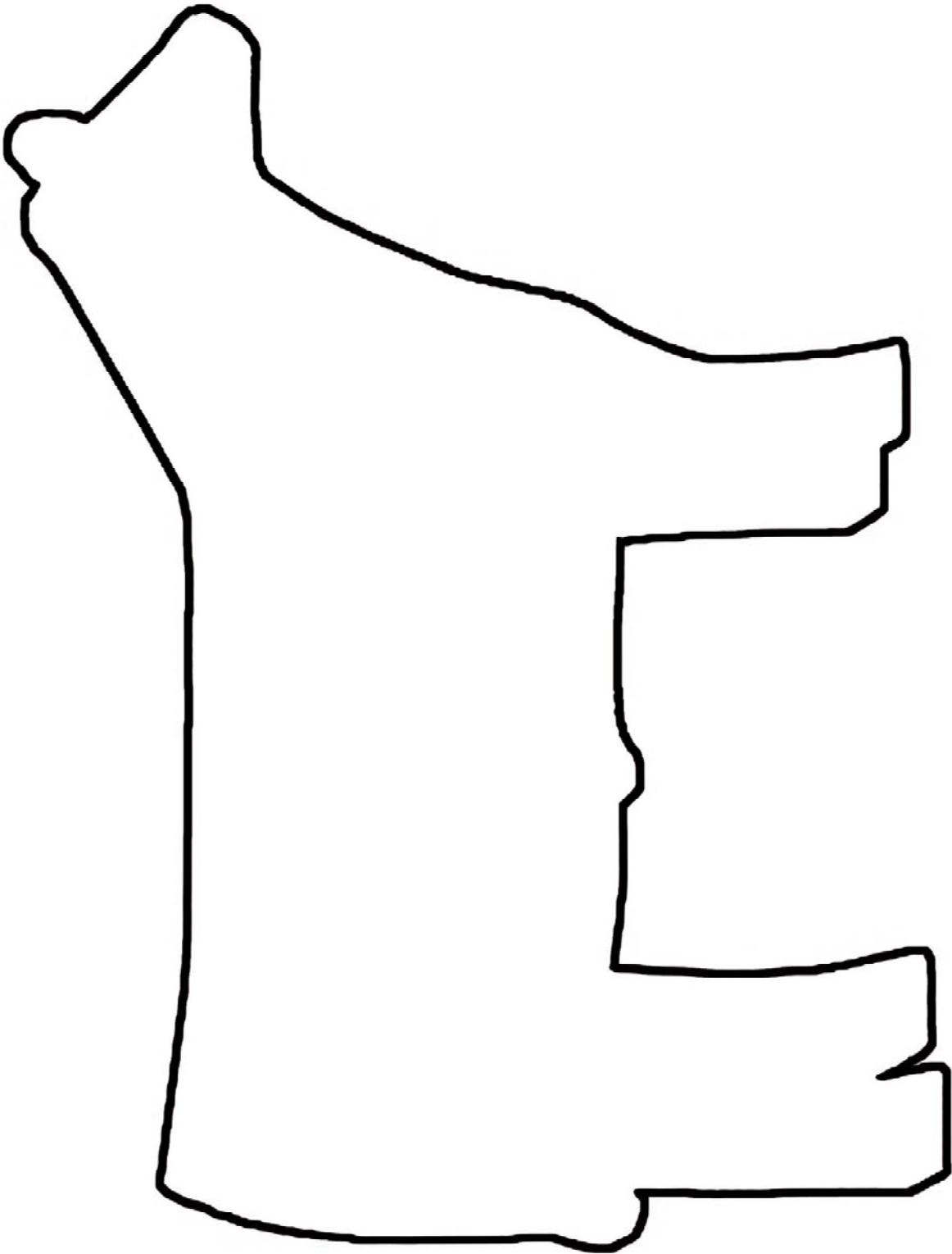
Using the sheep-head or small clippers, trim any excess hair off the legs or tail head to provide a straight, smooth appearance. Spray some type of hair styling mousse (show foam) to the hair to give it set and shine. You may wish to use a blower at this point to give the hair some more body. Prior to entering the show ring, apply final bloom or some type of light oil to provide extra gloss and shine to the hair. Be careful not to spray the areas that have adhesive because the oil will cause the adhesive to lose its holding power. When you finish showing your animal, use an after show product to remove the adhesive, then wash the animal thoroughly. This will help your animal to rest comfortably, reduce stress and keep the hair manageable.

Showing

Now the beef animal is ready to go into the show ring. Leaving the rope halter on and while still in the chute put the show halter on the beef. Slip the rope halter off and then put it on over the top of the show halter. This will allow you to tie the animal prior to going into the ring if needed. When you remove the animal from the chute, comb the hair and apply the necessary finishing touches.

Make sure your hair is combed, your clothes are clean, and don't chew gum. Have a show stick of the proper length, in your hand (this depends on exhibitor size and animal size) and a comb in your back pocket. Be courteous to the judge and fellow exhibitors, smile, and have fun.

For more information contact, Scott Nash, Regional 4-H Youth Development Educator, University of Idaho Extension, 500 Pocatello Ave., American Falls. ID 83211, 208-317-4375, snash@uidaho.edu





Fitting for Showtime

The steer is put in the fitting chute and show foam (styling mousse) is applied to the whole side and back. The foam is brushed into the hair in a forward motion. The show foam gives body to the haircoat. Brushing forward helps the steer look smoother and longer

(Photo: Applying show foam)

Next the legs of the steer are “boned”. Spray adhesive is applied to the hair on the legs to help the hair stand up and give the appearance of more bone as well as potentially make the legs look straighter. The adhesive is sprayed on the on the leg hairs and then are combed on an angle forward and up. Start at the hoof line and moved up to the hock on the rear legs and the knee on the front leg. The legs are on all sides. Long hairs can be trimmed.

(Photo: Front leg)



(Photo: Rear legs)

(Photo: Topline)

At the top line the hair is brushed forward and depending if the animal's topline is not straight adhesive can be applied to the hair so the back looks level or straight. The clippers can be used to trim the glued hair so it does not look so obvious.

At the tail head adhesive is applied to make hair stand up and out. The tail head needs to be square so the hip appears level. The clippers can be used to trim the long hair.

(Photo: Clipping tail head hair)

