

Body Condition Scoring



Ag 240



Beef Cattle

Body condition Score (BCS)

- A practical method for assessing the effectiveness of existing feeding programs
- Want replacement heifers to be 65% of mature weight at breeding



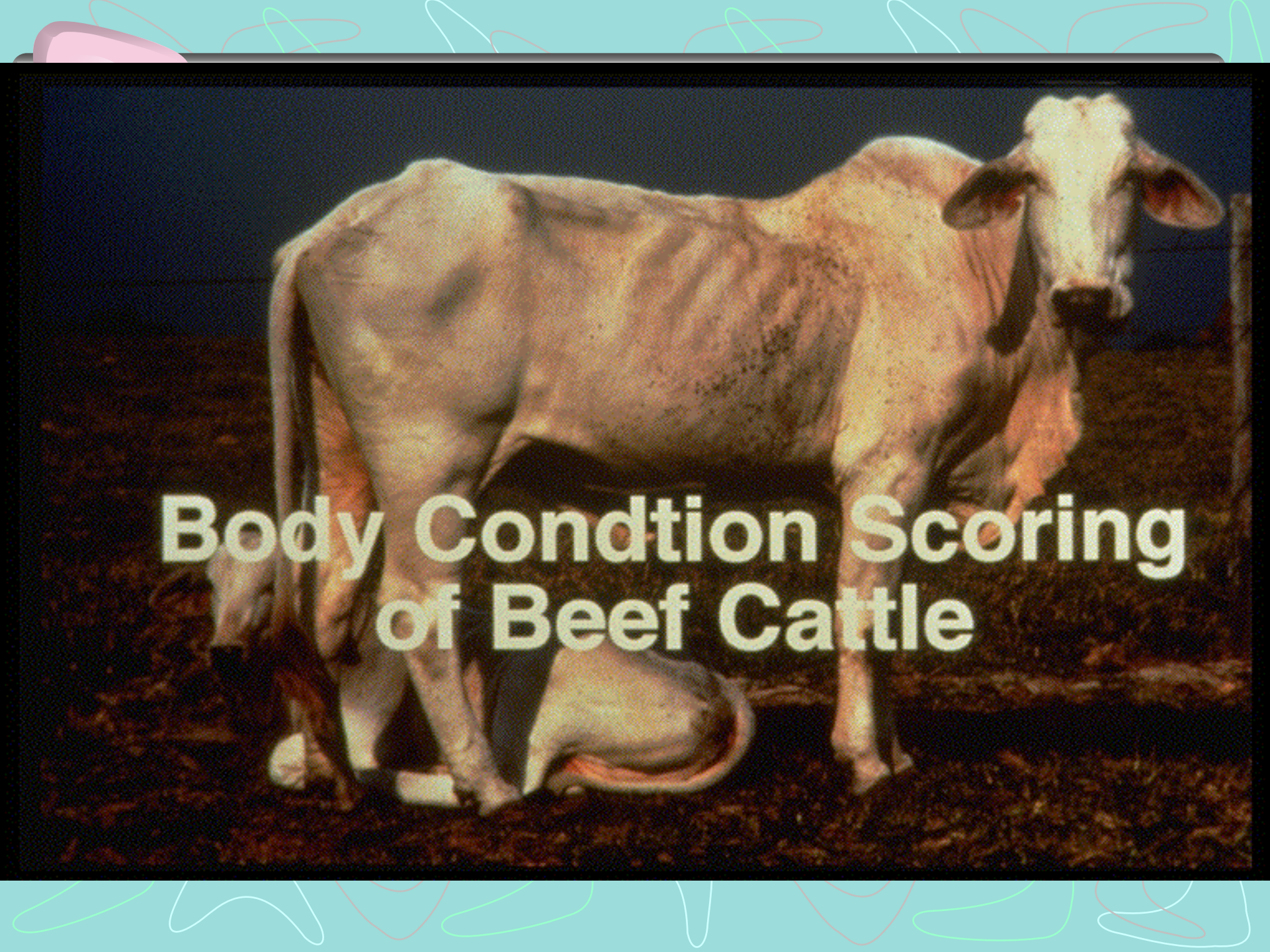
BCS

- Scale is 1 to 9 (emaciated to obese)
- Determined by observation and touch and should be recorded twice per year
 - Calving
 - Pregnancy checking in the fall

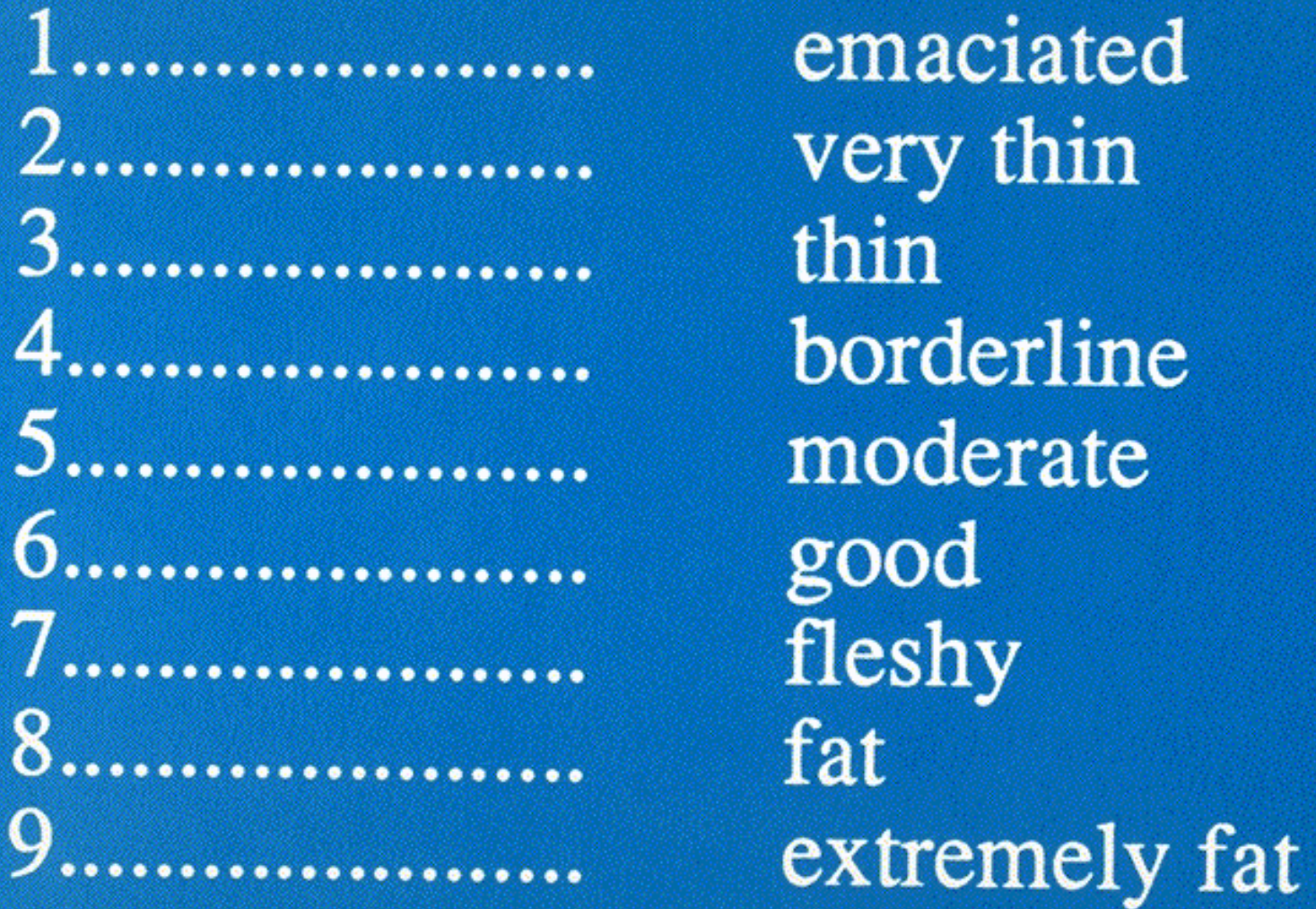


Ideal BCS:

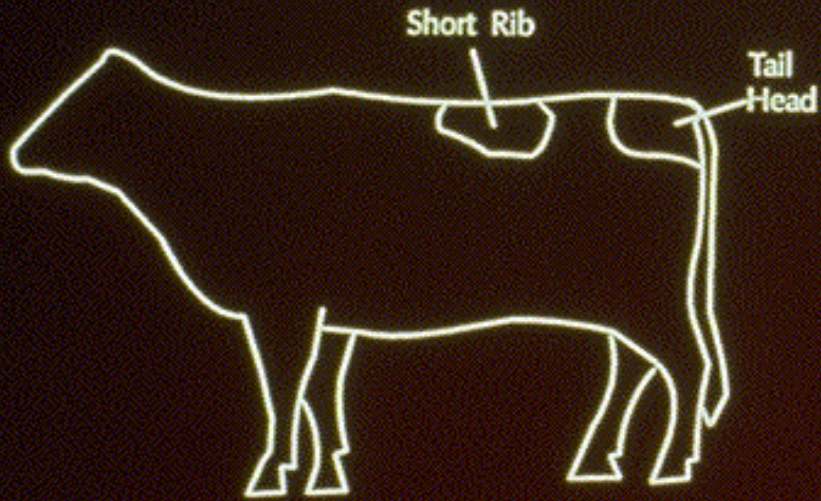
- 1st calf heifers 5.5 - 6 at calving
- Mature cows 5- 6 at calving



Body Condition Scoring of Beef Cattle



1.....	emaciated
2.....	very thin
3.....	thin
4.....	borderline
5.....	moderate
6.....	good
7.....	fleshy
8.....	fat
9.....	extremely fat



**HIGHER
SCORE**



**FATTER
COW**

A photograph of a cow, likely a Friesian, with a black and white coat. The cow is standing in a field of dry grass. The image is used as a diagram to label different parts of the cow's body. The labels are in white, bold, sans-serif font. The labels are: Tail Head (top left), Back (top right), Ribs (middle right), Rump (middle left), Flank (bottom left), and Brisket (bottom right).

Tail Head

Back

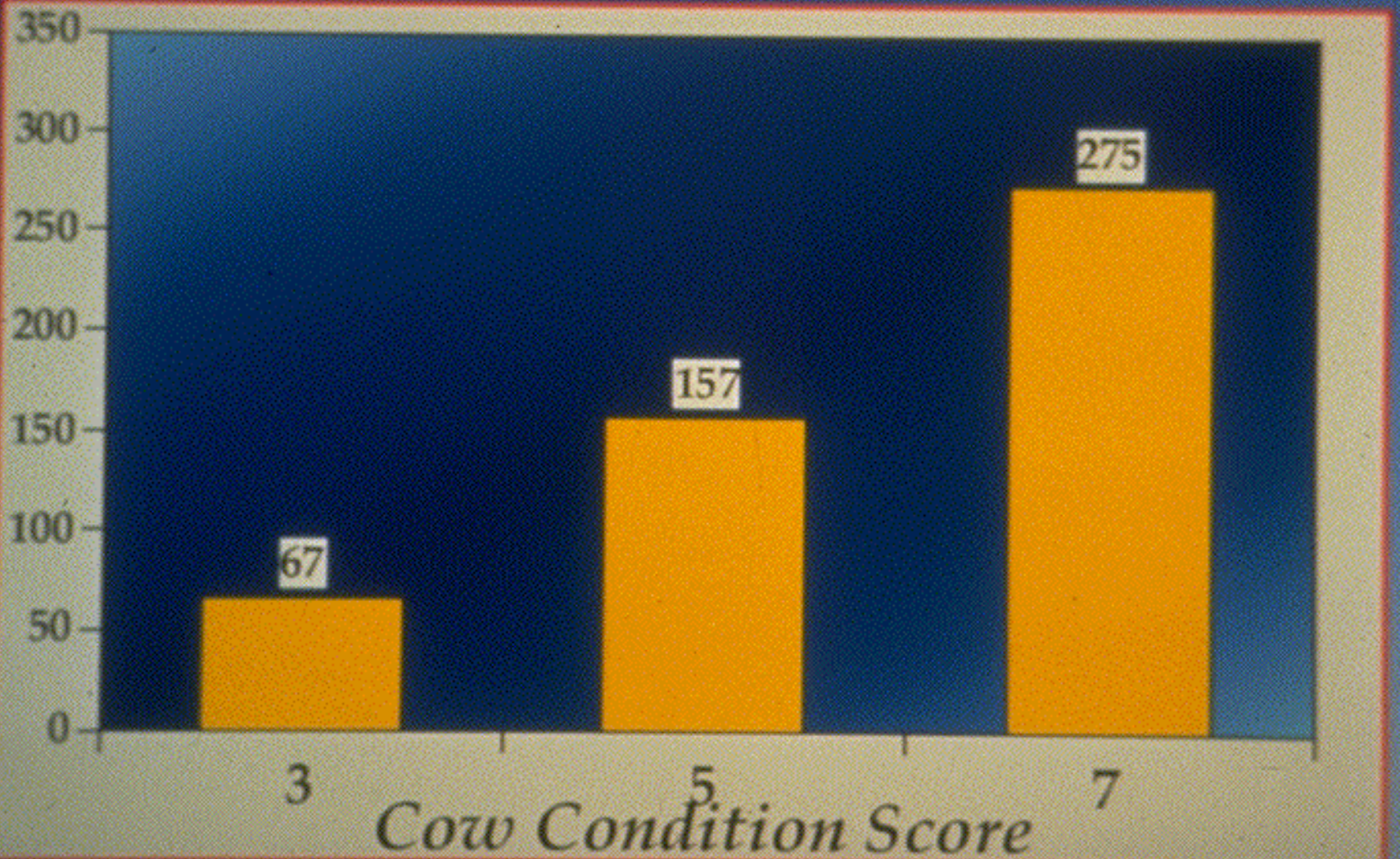
Ribs

Rump

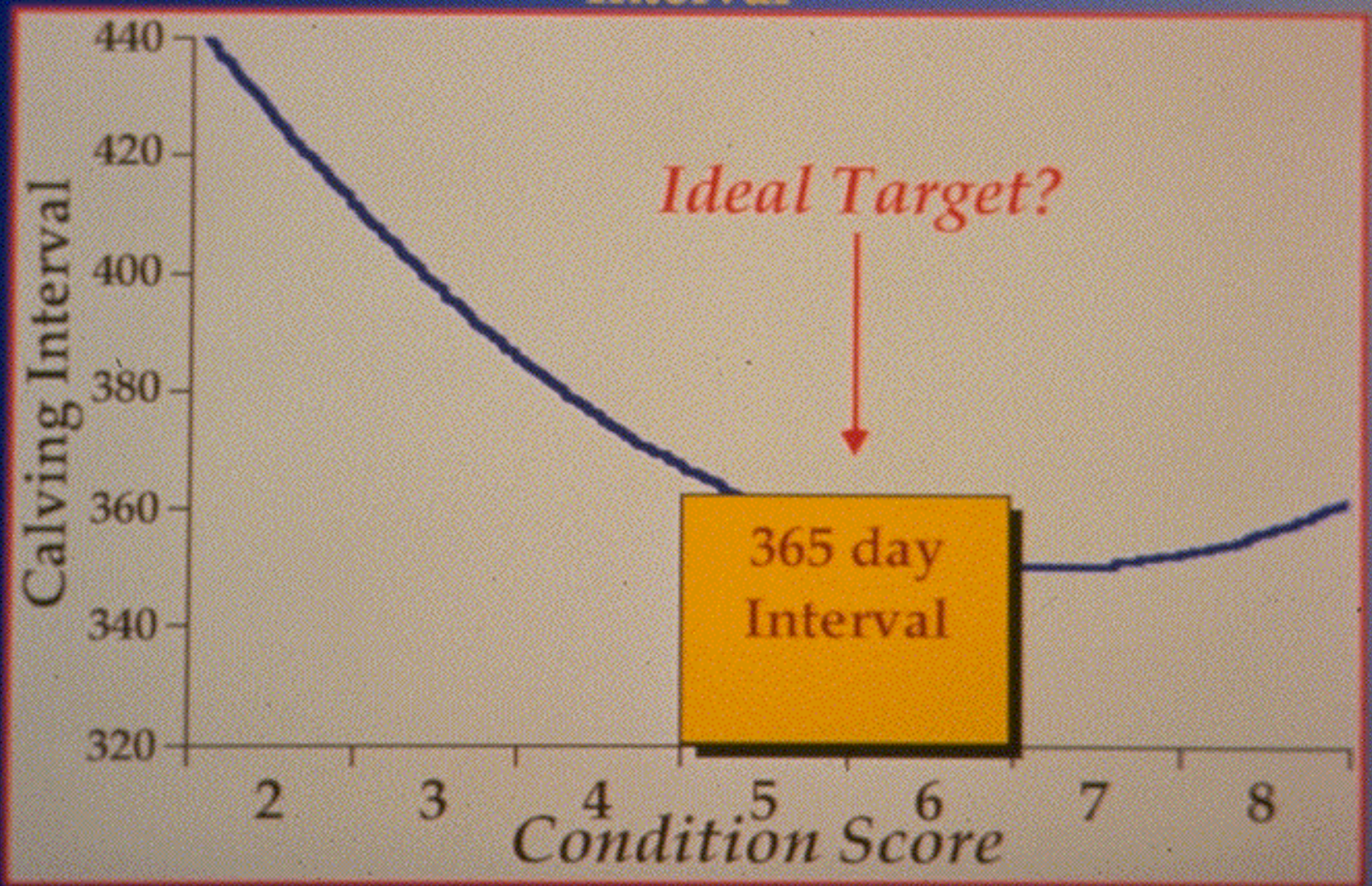
Flank

Brisket

Effect of Condition Score on Body Fat, lbs



Relationship between Condition Score and Calving Interval



Body Condition Scoring

1= Emaciated

2= Poor

3= Thin



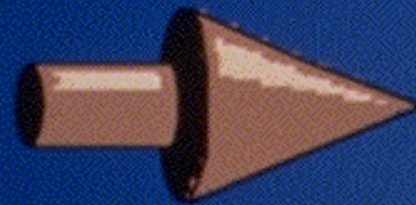
Thin

4= Borderline

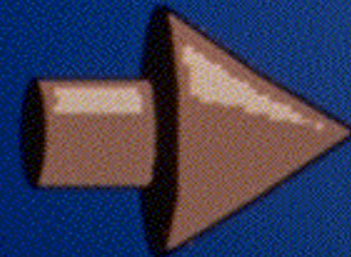
5= Moderate

6= Good

7= Very Good



Ideal

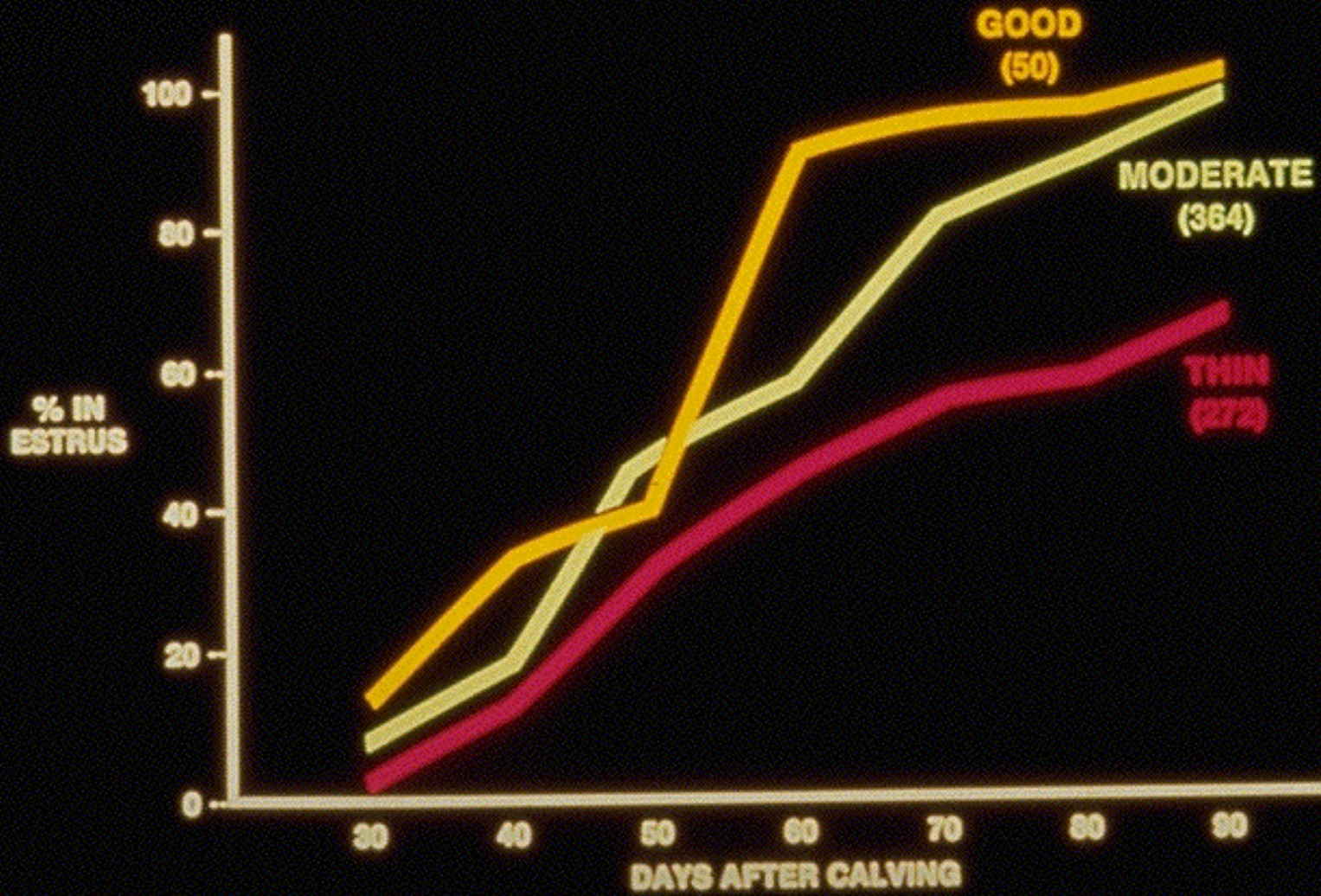


8= Fat

9= Obese

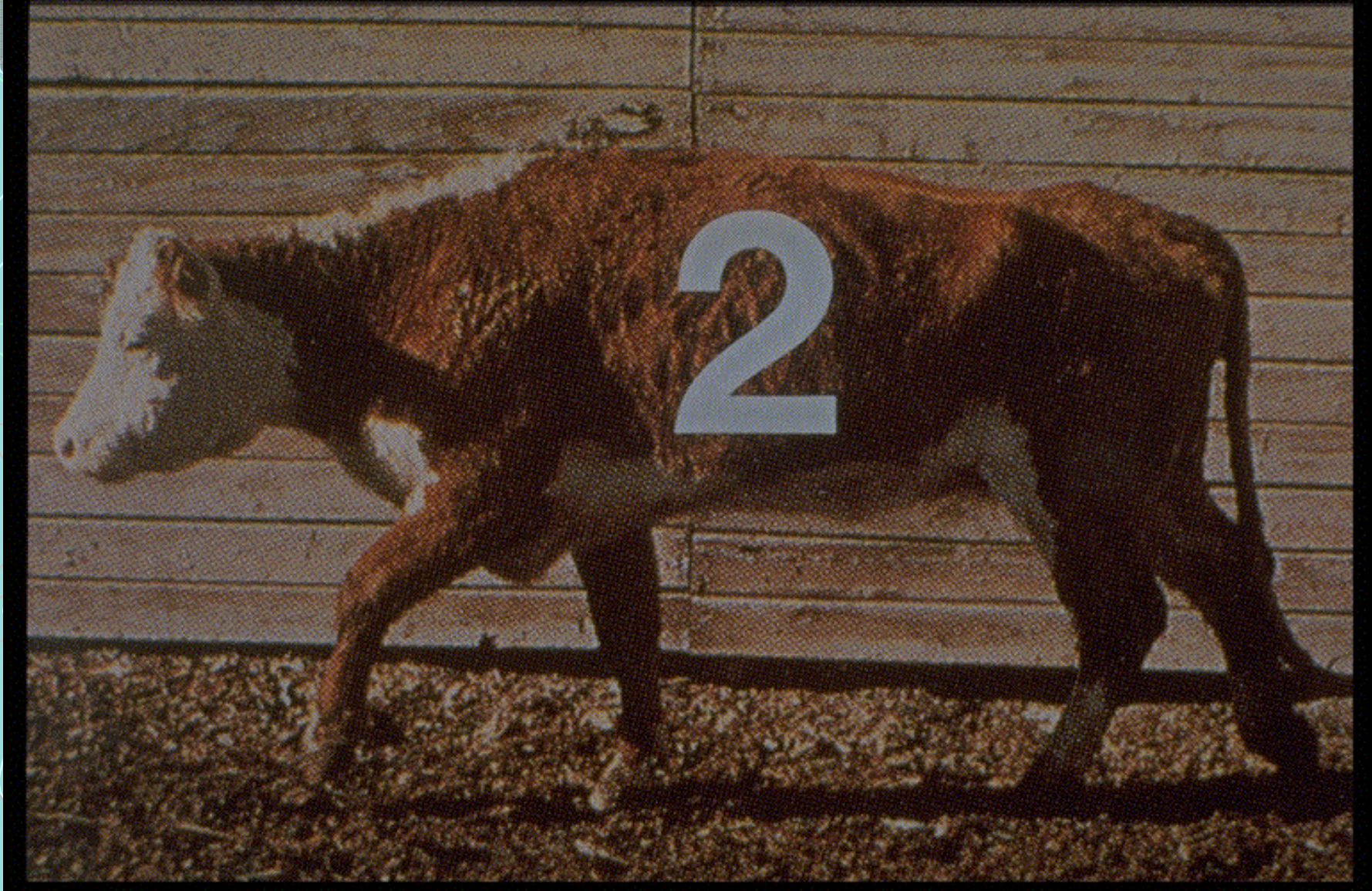
Fat

COW CONDITION AT CALVING





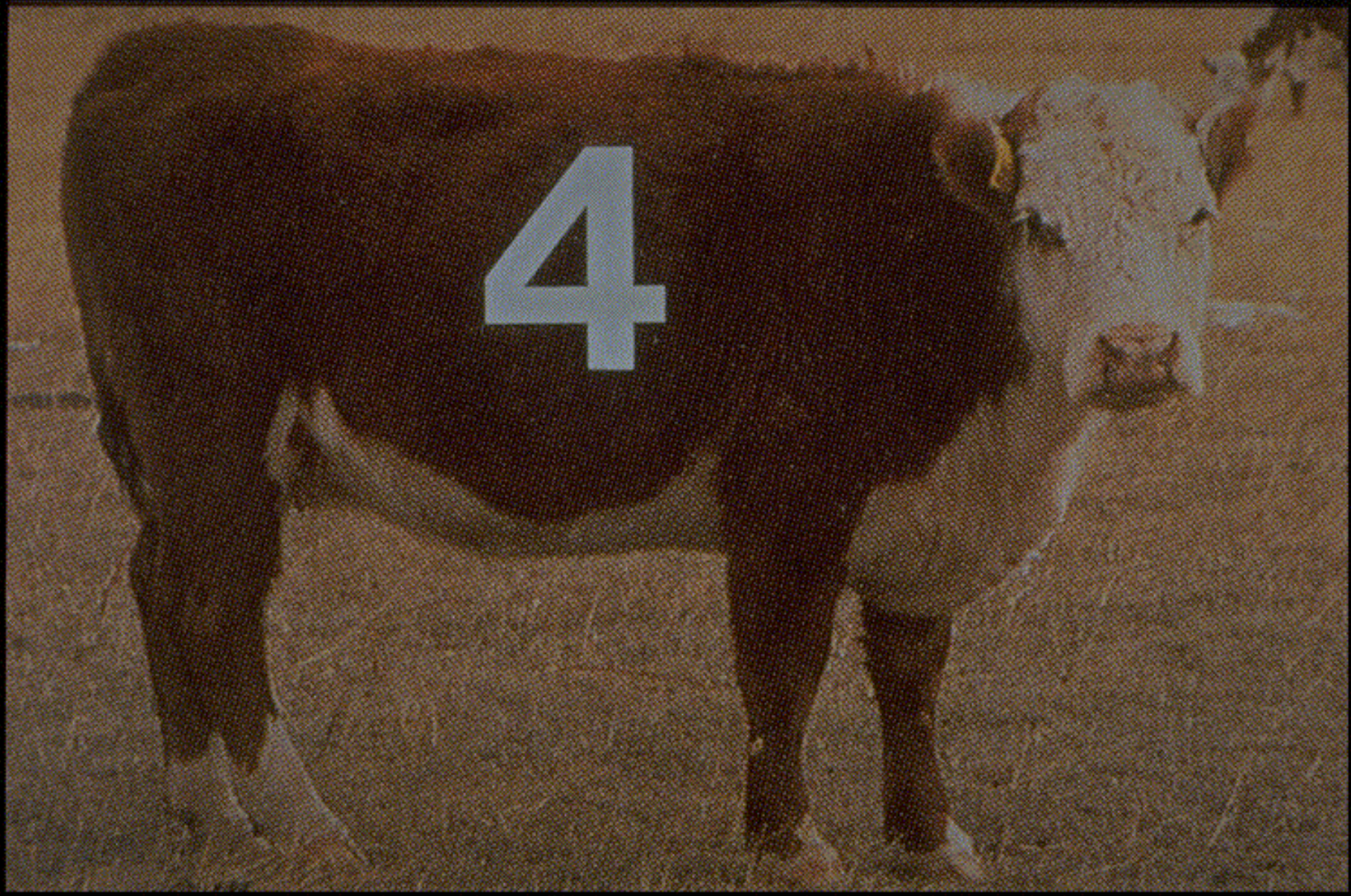
BCS 1

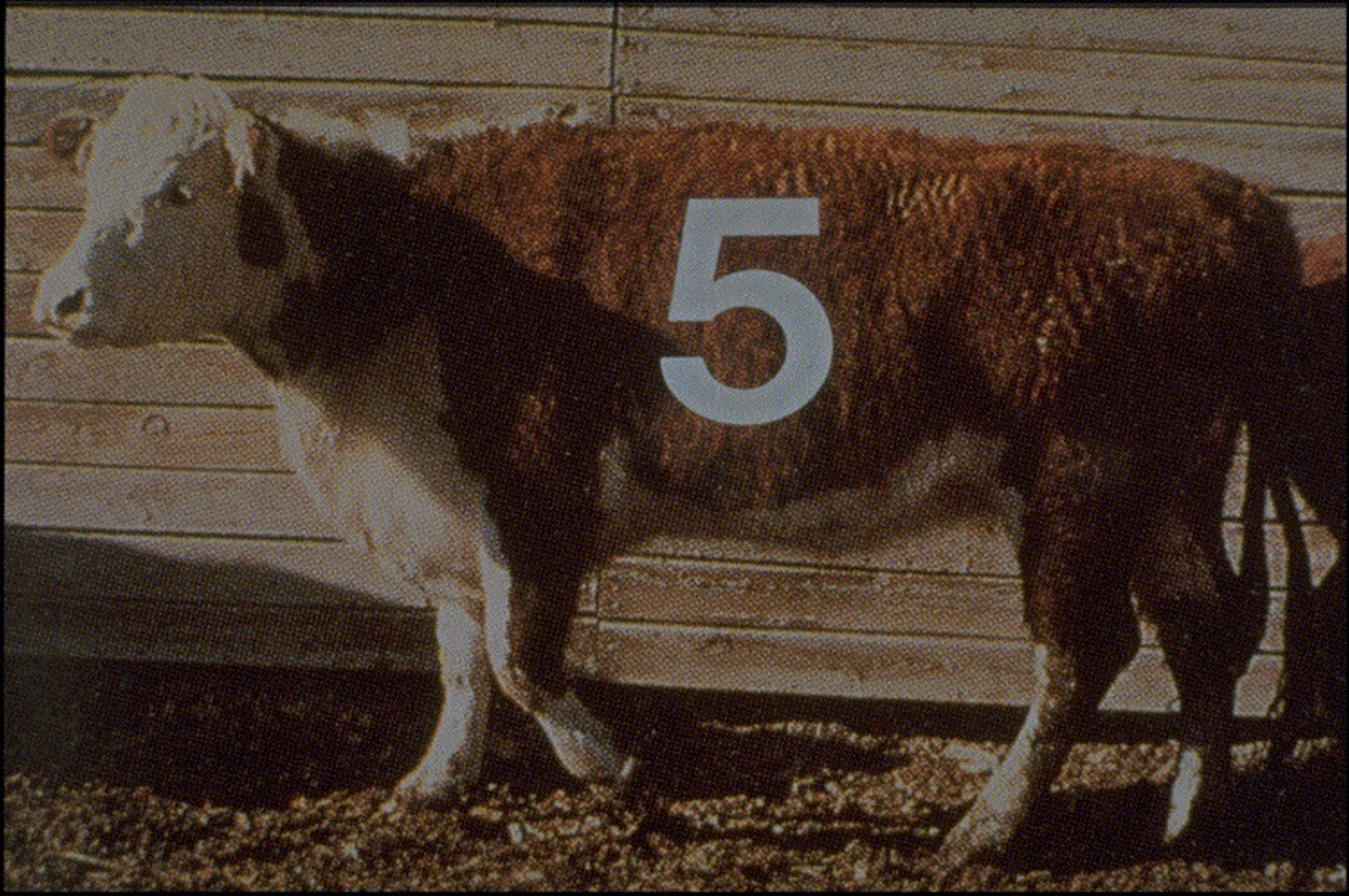




Condition Scores

4

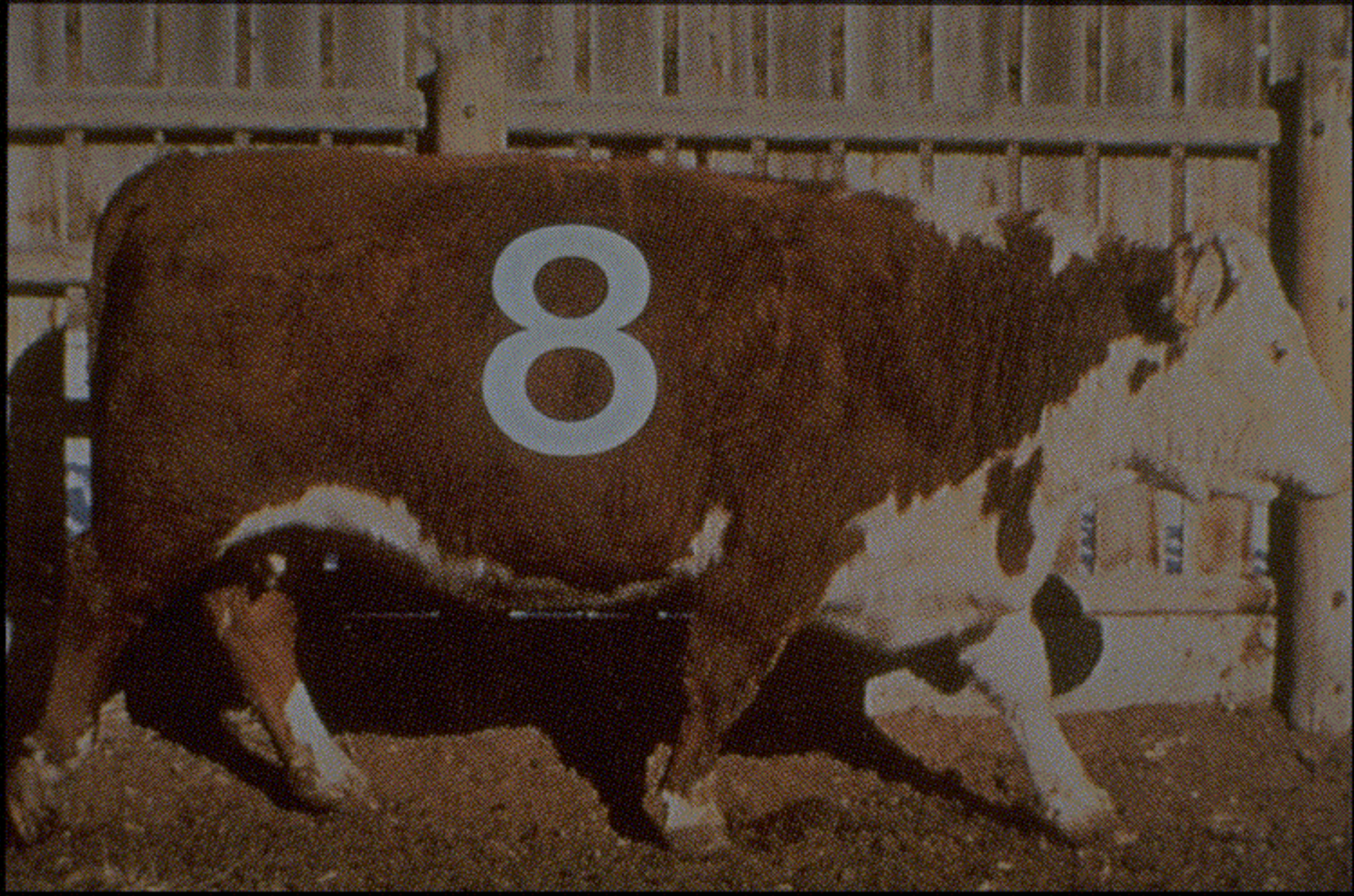








BCS 7



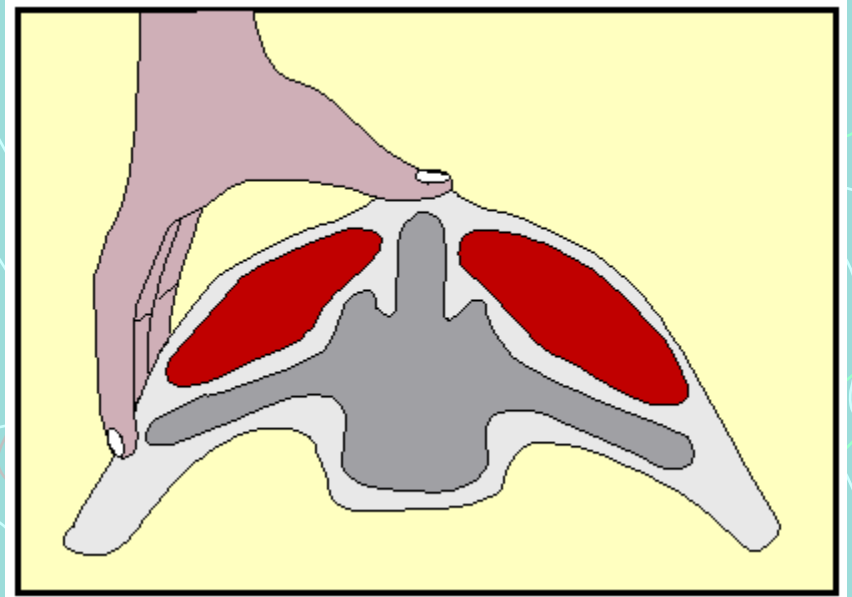


BCS 8 to 9

Sheep

Body Condition Scoring

- Range from 1 - 5
 - Extremely emaciated to Extremely fat



BCS 1

- Backbone is prominent and sharp
-
- Shortrib ends are sharp and easy to press between, over and around

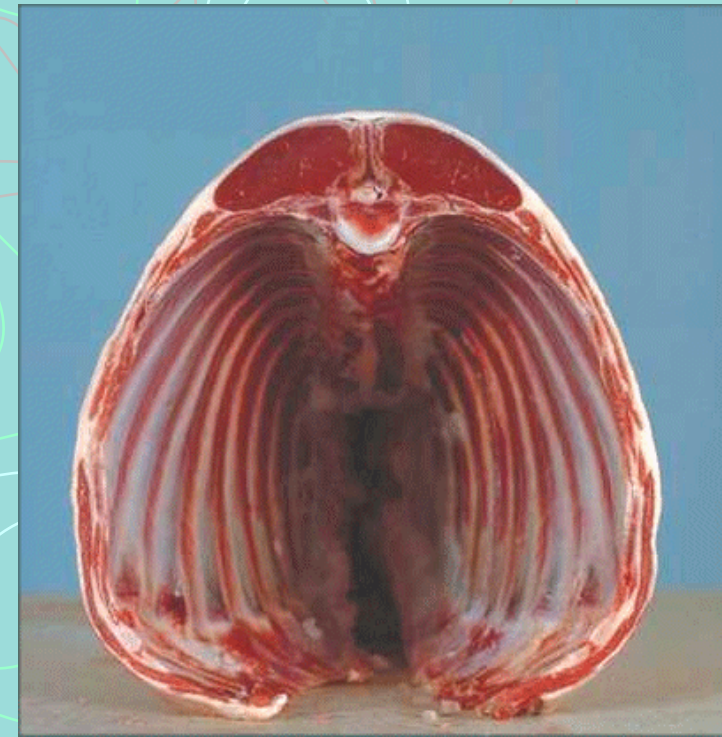


Source: Agriculture Western Australia web site

www.agric.gov.wa.au

BCS 2

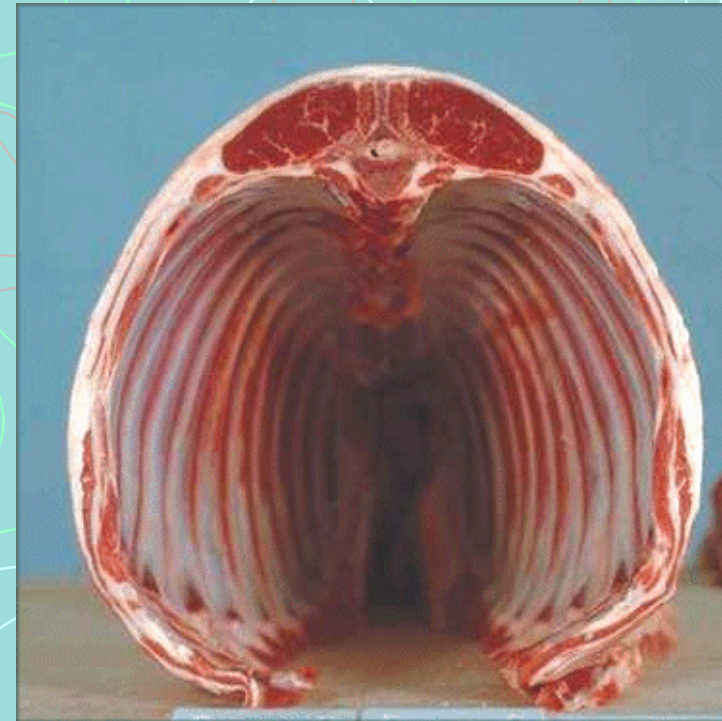
- Backbone is prominent but smooth
-
- Shortribs are smooth well-rounded ends -can feel between, over and around each smoothly



Source: Agriculture Western Australia web site

BCS 3

- Backbone can be felt but smooth and rounded
- Shortrib ends are smooth and well covered - firm pressure necessary to feel under and between short ribs



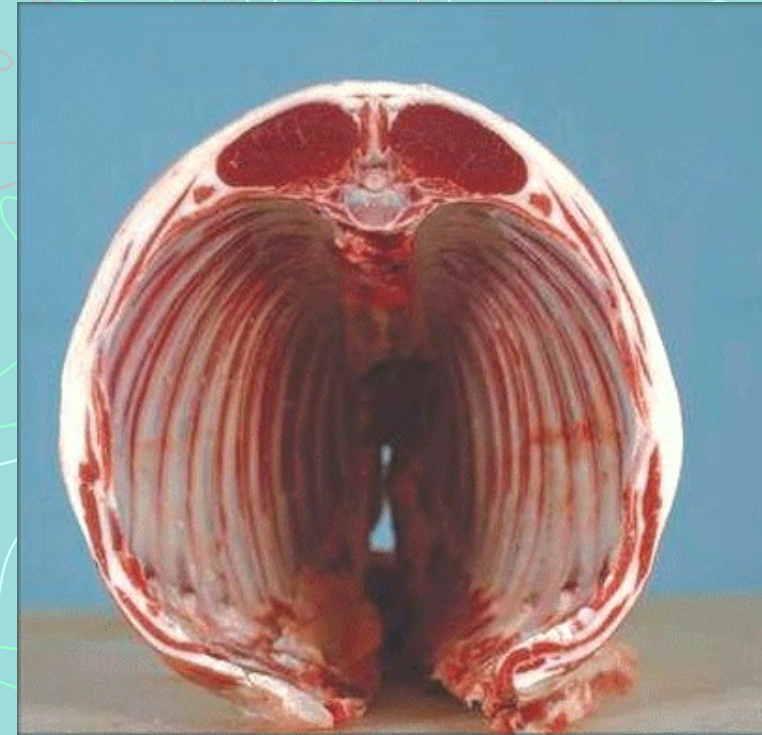
Source: Agriculture Western
Australia web site

www.agric.gov.wa.au



BCS 4

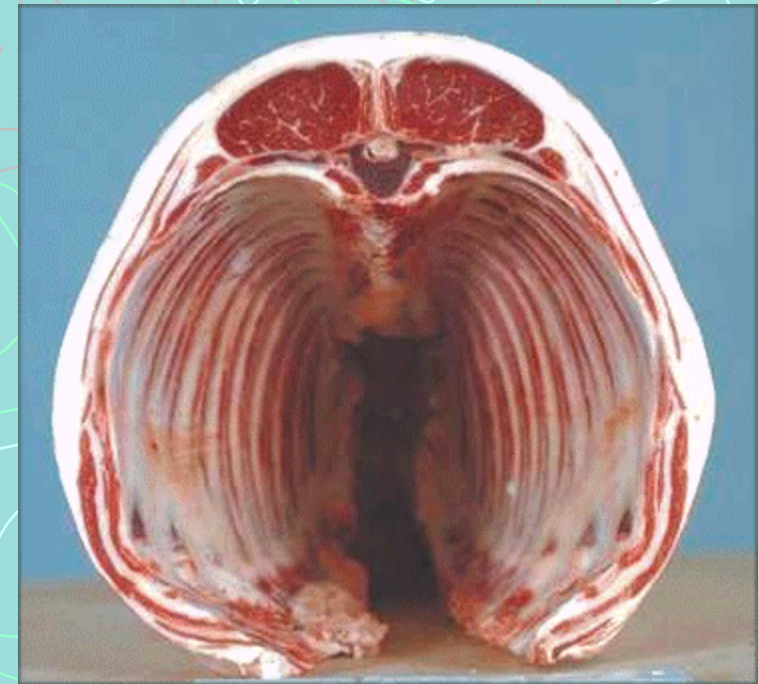
- Backbone is detectable with pressure on the thumb
-
- Individual short ribs can only be felt with firm pressure



Source: Agriculture Western Australia web site

BCS 5

- Backbone can be felt with firm pressure
-
- Shortribs cannot be felt even with firm pressure



Source: Agriculture Western Australia web site



Body Condition Scoring

- Can also monitor weight
 - Ewe should lose 5-7% of her body weight during lactation
 - Recover it after weaning and then gain weight during gestation



Horses

Body Condition Scoring

- Range from 1 - 9
 - Extremely emaciated to Extremely fat



BCS 1

- **Emaciated**
- Bony structures of neck, shoulders and withers easily noticeable
- No fatty tissue can be felt.



BCS 2

- Very Thin
- Bony structures of the neck, shoulders and withers are faintly discernible.
- Spinous processes, ribs, topline, point of hip and buttock are prominent.
- Noticeable space between inner buttocks.



BCS 3

- Thin
- Neck, withers and shoulder are accentuated, but not obviously thin.
- Tailhead is prominent. Slight fat cover over ribs, but still easily discernible.
- Twist is filled in, but without noticeable deposition of fatty tissue



BCS 6

- Moderately Fleshy
- Fat beginning to be deposited along the neck, withers and shoulders.
- Fat over the ribs beginning to feel spongy, ribs cannot easily be felt.
- Noticeable fat deposition between buttocks



BCS 8

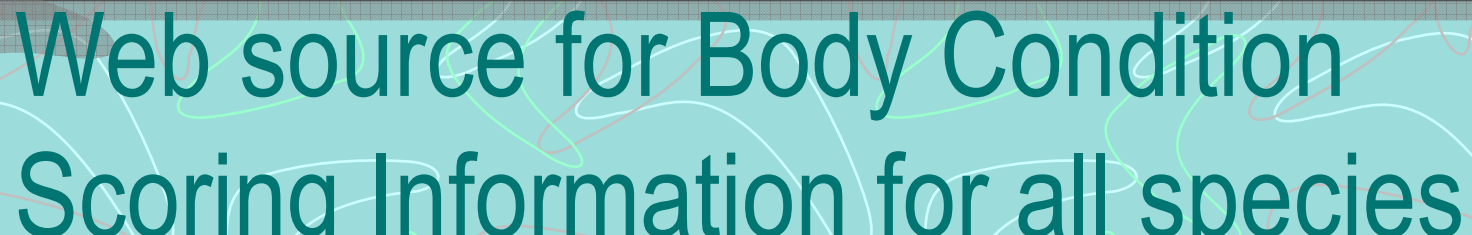
- **Fat**
- Area along withers is filled with fat, area behind shoulder is filled in flush with body.
- Ribs cannot be felt
- Significant fat deposited along inner buttocks.



BCS 9

- **Extremely Fat**
- Bulging fat along neck, shoulders and withers. Flank is filled in flush. Patchy fat appearing over ribs, obvious positive crease down back.
- Obvious fat deposited along inner buttocks.





Web source for Body Condition Scoring Information for all species

- <http://vetgate.ac.uk/browse/cabi/detail/70bbf1feed14af3d881391cbac69ed77.html>