

**Body Condition Scoring System (BCS) for Beef Cattle**  
(Richards et al., 1986. J. Anim. Sci. 62:300.)

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Condition	BCS	Description
<b>Thin</b>	1	<b>Emaciated</b> – Cow is extremely emaciated with no palpable fat detectable over spinous processes, transverse processes, hip bones, or ribs. Tail-head and ribs project quite prominently.
	2	<b>Poor</b> – Cow still appears somewhat emaciated but tail-head and ribs are less prominent. Individual spinous processes are still rather sharp to the touch, but some tissue cover over dorsal portion of ribs.
	3	<b>Thin</b> – Ribs are still individually identifiable but not quite as sharp to the touch. There is obvious palpable fat along spine and over tail-head with some tissue cover over dorsal portion of ribs.
<b>Borderline</b>	4	<b>Borderline</b> – Individual ribs are no longer visually obvious. The spinous processes can be identified individually on palpation but feel rounded rather than sharp. Some fat cover over ribs, transverse processes, and hip bones.
<b>Optimum/moderate</b>	5	<b>Moderate</b> – Cow has generally good overall appearance. On palpation, fat cover over ribs feels spongy and areas on either side of tail-head now have palpable fat cover.
	6	<b>High moderate</b> – Firm pressure now needs to be applied to feel spinous processes. A high degree of fat is palpable over ribs and around tail-head.
<b>Fat</b>	7	<b>Good</b> – Cow appears fleshy and obviously carries considerable fat. Very spongy fat cover over ribs and around tail-head. In fact, “rounds” or “pones” beginning to be obvious. Some fat around vulva and in crotch.
	8	<b>Fat</b> – Cow very fleshy and over-conditioned. Spinous processes almost impossible to palpate. Cow has large fat deposits over ribs and around tail-head, and below vulva. “Rounds” or “pones” are obvious.
	9	<b>Extremely fat</b> – Cow obviously extremely wasteful and patchy and looks blocky. Tail-head and hips buried in fatty tissue and “rounds” or “pones” of fat are protruding. Bone structure no longer visible and barely palpable. Animal’s mobility might even be impaired by large fatty deposits.

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