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STANDARD**

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**Grading of live cattle for meat trade — Specification**



Reference number  
DUS DARS 1356: 2023

**Compliance with this standard does not, of itself confer immunity from legal obligations**

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## National foreword

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Draft Uganda Standards adopted by the Technical Committee are widely circulated to stakeholders and the general public for comments. The committee reviews the comments before recommending the draft standards for approval and declaration as Uganda Standards by the National Standards Council.

This Draft Uganda Standard, DUS DARS 1356: 2023, *Grading of live cattle for meat trade — Specification*, is identical with and has been reproduced from a Draft African Standard, DARS 1356: 2023, *Grading of live cattle for meat trade — Specification*, and adopted as a Uganda Standard.

The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee UNBS/TC 213, *Live animals, meat and meat products*.

This standard will cancel and replace US 2156: 2020, *Live animals' grades — Specification*.

Wherever the words, "African Standard" appear, they should be replaced by "Uganda Standard".

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**Grading of live cattle for meat trade – Specification**



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## Foreword

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## **Introduction**

African Cattle herders and marketers deliver their cattle particularly bulls to market with common understanding of fair market based on the cattle body condition and frames: to Improve your knowledge and skills in producing cattle (beef) to market specifications, having skills in describing live weight and fat score of the live cattle and how they meet a market specification and be able to calculate dressing percentage of cattle and understand how improving quality assurance in production systems increases the number of cattle meeting market specifications.



## Grading of live Cattle – Specification

### 1. Scope

This draft African standard specifies requirements for grading of live cattle based on body conditions, conformation, weight, age, and sex for meat trade.

### 2. Normative References

There were no referenced documents in this standard.

### 3. Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the following terms and definitions shall apply:

#### 3.1

##### **grade**

defined parameters that categorise live cattle for meat trade into homogenous groups applied by market participants based on weight, age, sex, body condition and body conformation.

#### 3.2

##### **sex**

refers to whether a cattle is male or female

#### 3.3

##### **body condition**

overall body state of cattle assessed through visual observation taking into account fat and muscle deposition as it occurs in various places on the body

#### 3.4

##### **body condition score**

Is the score assigned through visual appraisal of specific body parts. The extent to which specific skeletal body parts {including; hips, hooks and pins, rump, shoulders, back (spinous processes of the thoracic vertebrae), ribs} are either hidden or smoothened by flesh or fat. The cattle are thus categorized as excellent; good; fair and poor

#### 3.5

##### **body conformation**

is the symmetry, size and shape of the various body regions of a cattle relative to each other or the general appearance of the animal according to what is considered a desirable appearance. Features of an animal that comprise the 'desirable appearance' include

#### 3.6

##### **conformation score**

qualitative categorization of cattle features based on body frame, height and defects, described as excellent, good or fair

#### 3.7

##### **castrated male**

male animals whose testicles have been rendered dysfunctional through an approved procedure

#### 3.8

##### **live weight**

the weight of an animal before slaughter determined through an appropriate and acceptable method

#### 3.9

##### **lordosis**

excessive inward curvature of the spine

**3.10**

**kyphosis**

excessive outward curvature of the spine

**3.11**

**semitendinosus**

long superficial muscle in the back of the thigh

**3.12**

**quadriceps**

large superficial muscle in the back of the thigh

**3.13**

**ossification (or osteogenesis)**

is the process of laying down new bone material by cells called osteoblasts. It is synonymous with bone tissue formation

## **4. Grading Specification for Cattle**

Grading of cattle shall be done in accordance with age, sex, and ossification as well as body weight, condition and conformation.

### **4.1 Age**

Categories will be based on records and/or dentition.

### **4.2 Sex**

Categories will be based on: male (castrated or un-castrated) and female.

### **4.3 Live weight**

live weight shall be determined by any appropriate method including weighing scale or weighing band.

The following live weight levels shall be used during grading of cattle

- a) Males: Weight category 1, minimum live weight of 300 Kg
- b) Males Weight category 2 minimum live weight 200 Kg
- c) Females: Weight category 1 minimum live weight 200 Kg
- d) All sex categories: With no weight limit

### **4.4 Body condition scores**

Body condition shall be scored as; excellent, good, fair or poor as shown in Table1.

Table 1 – Descriptions for body condition scores for Cattle

Body Score	Description
<b>Excellent</b>	Smooth and well covered; Dorsal spine only felt with pressure Transverse process cannot be seen; Heavy fat deposit on tail head, ribs, hooks and pins fully covered.
<b>Good</b>	Ranges from cattle with ribs that are visible; little fat cover, dorsal spines barely visible to animals that are smooth; and well covered dorsal spine cannot be seen but easily felt.
<b>Fair</b>	Ranges from cattle with dorsal spines pointed to the touch, hips, pins, tail head and ribs are prominent to animals with transverse process visible and muscle mass between hooks and pins slightly concave.
<b>Poor</b>	Marked emaciation with transverse processes projecting prominently and neural spines appear prominently.

#### 4.5 Body conformation

Conformation score shall encompass the symmetry, size and shape of the various body regions of cattle relative to each other or the general appearance of cattle . Three (3) levels of conformation encompassing all the identified features. The cattle shall be categorized as excellent, good or fair as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Body conformation classifications and descriptions for cattle

Scores	Description
<b>Excellent</b>	Cattle of good height (tall), with large frame and long and straight rump, loin and back, large heart girth and straight legs.
<b>Good</b>	Cattle of medium height (not as tall as the one with excellent conformation), with medium frame, shorter but straight rump, loin and back; medium heart girth and straight legs.
<b>Fair</b>	Cattle showing defects such as being very short and small frame, a small heart girth in relation to the overall body size; features on the skeletal size such as lordosis or kyphosis, or feet and legs such as being post-legged, buck-kneed, splay-footed, sickle-hocked among others.

#### 4.6 Cattle grades

The interaction of grading characteristics (weight, sex, age, body condition, and conformation) shall be categorized into four (4) grades as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3 – Grades and grading parameters for cattle

Grade	Sex	Weight (Kg)	Age	Body condition	Body conformation
<b>1</b>	Castrated or uncastrated Male	Minimum 300	1-3years (One to three pairs of incisors, not worn out)	Excellent	Excellent
		Minimum 300	1-3 years (One to two pairs of incisors, not worn out)	Excellent	Excellent

	Female	Minimum 200	1-3years (Two to three pairs of incisors, not worn out)	Excellent	Excellent
<b>2</b>	Castrated or Uncastrated Male	Minimum 200	1-3years (One to three pairs of incisors, not worn out)	Good	Good
		Minimum 200	1-3 years (One to two pairs of incisors, not worn out)	Good	Good
	Female	No limit	4-5years (Four pairs of incisors, not worn out)	Good	Good
<b>3</b>	All sex categories	No limit	Minimum 2 years (minimum 2 pairs of incisors)	Fair	Fair
<b>4</b>	All sex categories	No limit	No limit	Poor	Fair

### **Bibliography**

1. Kenya Standard, KS 2774-1:2018, *Grading live animal for meat trade-Specification-Part 1:Cattle*.

