Udder 5
Teat 4

Udder 4
Teat 4

Udder 7
Teat 3

Udder 8
Teat 7

Udder 7
Teat 9

> EXPERT CONNECTION

UDDER SUSPENSION AND TEAT SCORING SYSTEM

Udder suspension and teat size scores provide valuable data for use in stayability and other maternal selection tools. Udder and teat quality are economically important traits of beef cattle as they are generally accountable for the productive life of a female as well as the overall performance of their calf each year. Next to failure to breed, poor udder and teat conformation is the second most often used culling criteria for cows. The one-to-nine scoring system below describes numerical values that reflect differences in udder and teat quality used by IBBA.

Udder suspension scores are subjective recordings of udder support taken within 24 hours of the cow giving birth using the weakest quarter of the udder.

1 = Very pendulous (least desirable)
2 = A problem udder with weak rear or front attachment
3 = Pendulous
4 = Could become a problem udder
5 = Moderately tight
6 = Functional udder that lacks the balance of 7–9 scores
7 = Tight
8 = Level attachment in front and high rear attachment
9 = Very tight

Teat size scores are subjective recordings of teat length and circumference taken within 24 hours of the cow giving birth using the teat with the poorest quality.

1 = Very large (least desirable)
2 = Teats are large and balloon shaped
3 = Large
4 = Shape and size of teats may lead to problems
5 = Moderate (desirable)
6 = Problem free teat size
7 = Small (most desirable)
8 = Small, desirable teat size
9 = Very small (somewhat desirable)

Much of the IBBA data has been recorded as "5,5" indicating average udder suspension with moderate sized teats. It is important to properly inspect and report data using the worst quarter of the udder and least desired teat of the four. Proper reporting should indicate the true differences so that genetic variability can be evaluated in EPD calculations. See examples (left) for proper teat and udder conformation scoring.