

## **Approved Breed Standard – Texas Longhorns**

The most distinctive feature of the Texas Longhorn is the horn. Horns should be of moderate diameter, with the diameter of the horn not to exceed that of the poll. Females should have out swept horns with twist or curl preferred. Males can have a wide variety in shape and angle of horn. Horns less than 48" (4 feet) at maturity for both sexes are highly objectionable. Exhibition steers, regardless of age, are considered trophy steers (not market steers) and should have exceptional length or shape to the horn.

The head should be of moderate to pronounced length with moderate width across the forehead and a wide muzzle, giving an almost rectangular profile. The ears will be small and held close to the horn. Long hair in the ear is preferred. The neck should be trim in females and well-muscled in bulls, with no evidence of hump, and should blend in well at the shoulder.

The neck should be trim and tie in smoothly in both sexes. The bull should have a crest over the midpoint of the neck. The shoulder should be free with a moderate slope in both sexes. The topline should be strong and level with good width. Trophy steers may have a slight downward slope from the shoulders to hips. The hip should have a moderate slope from hooks to pins. Level hip/elevated pins or sharply sloped hips should be severely discounted. The tailhead should be balanced and neither square or overly sloped exhibiting a characteristic "fish hook" in the sacral vertebrae. The tail should be long and straight with a tail switch that reaches to at least the mid cannon and preferably the fetlocks at maturity.

The body should be deep in relation to the length of spine with balance between the heart girth and flank depth. Trophy steers will have a deeper heart girth in relation to flank depth. Ribs should be well sprung. The brisket should be clean and free of excessive fleshiness with moderate width.

The feet and legs should be strong with a large foot and well angled pasterns. There should be a moderate set to the hock when viewed from the profile. Fore and hind feet should point forward, being neither pigeon toed nor splay footed. Both sexes should have a strong stride with no knuckling of the pasterns, the rear foot should track precisely in the footprint of the fore foot. Upright pasterns or "post legged" animals are highly objectionable. Excessive space between claws is objectionable.

Muscling should be smooth in both sexes. The topline should be broad when viewed from the rear with good width of loin. The musculature should be carried well down the stifle in the rear and into the forearm on the fore. The hip should be well muscled without appearing square. Larger horned animals may have increased musculature in the neck, to support the increased head weight, but should still maintain appropriate smoothness.

The haircoat should be slick and short (seasonally) as Longhorn cattle are not considered haired cattle. Coat patterns and colors are extremely varied.

The underline should be clean with no prominent navel/prepuce or excessive flesh. The udder should be attached well forward in the front quarters and high in the rear quarters. The udder floor should be level with evenly spaced teats of a small diameter and short to moderate length. The teats should not extend below the level of the hock. Testicles should be even and of an appropriate circumference for age. Testicles should hang level and not show any evidence of twist.

Overall, the animal should appear well balanced and functional. Traditional Longhorn conformation traits are centered around ensuring longevity. The preceding breed standard was created to preserve and promote the characteristics that maintain the identity of the Texas Longhorn.