

Recording Coat Scores



TIP SHEET

Coat sleekness is recognised as an important tropical adaptation. Research has shown that variation exists in coat type between animals, and that a proportion of this variation is due to genetic differences. The submission of coat scores to BREEDPLAN will assist in the development of a Trial EBV for coat score once sufficient data has been collected.

WHY SHOULD COAT SCORES BE RECORDED?

Coat scores are a measure of adaptability of animals to tropical production systems, where sleek coated animals are more tropically adapted than woolly coated animals. Beef CRC research on Brahman and Tropical Composites found that there was a negative correlation between coat score and body condition score, indicating that

genetically sleek coated animals had better body condition scores compared to animals with woollier coats. Additionally, there is a positive genetic correlation between sleek coat and earlier age of puberty in Brahman females. For seedstock herds aiming to sell *Bos taurus* bulls into tropical regions, selecting for a sleeker coat may increase their tropical adaptability.

WHEN SHOULD COAT SCORES BE RECORDED?

In spring calving herds, coat scoring should be done at weaning in autumn and winter to gain maximum variation. In autumn calving herds, coat scoring should be done in the first winter following weaning.

COAT SCORING METHOD

Coat scores are recorded using a 1-7 scale as per the table below.

Coat Score	Coat Type	Description
1	Extremely Short	Hairs extremely short and closely applied to the skin. Found in <i>Bos indicus</i> , tropically adapted <i>Bos taurus</i> and some of their crossbreds.
2	Very Short	Coat sleek, hairs short and coarse, lying flat, just able to be lifted by the thumb.
3	Fairly Short	General appearance smooth-coated. Hairs easily lifted, usually fairly coarse.
4	Fairly Long	Coat not completely smooth, somewhat rough, patches of hairs being curved outwards, or whole coat showing sufficient length to be ruffled.
5	Long	Hairs distinctly long and lying loosely; predominantly coarse.
6	Woolly	Hairs erect, giving fur-like appearance. Fingers can be partly buried in the coat. Fine hairs of undercoat give soft handle.
7	Very Woolly	The more extreme expression of 6, with greater length and 'body', and heavy cover extending to neck and rump.

HOW DO I SUBMIT COAT SCORES?

Coat score measurements should be submitted to your BREEDPLAN processing centre. Coat scores should be submitted with a trait code of CT.

Coat score measurements can be submitted electronically using either:

- The BREEDPLAN compatible Microsoft Excel template (available to download in the [Help Centre](#) on the BREEDPLAN website).
- A BREEDPLAN compatible herd recording computer program.

Please see the [Methods of Submitting Data to BREEDPLAN](#) tip sheet, available in the [Help Centre](#) on the BREEDPLAN website, for further information. If you are unable to submit coat score information using either of the above methods, please contact staff at your BREEDPLAN processing centre to discuss alternative methods.

REFERENCES

Prayaga K.C., Corbet N.J., Johnston D.J., Wolcott M.L., Fordyce G., Burrow H.M. (2009). Genetics of adaptive traits in heifers and their relationship to growth, pubertal and carcass traits in two tropical beef cattle genotypes. *Animal Production Science*, 49. 413-425.

For more information regarding how to record coat score information, or EBVs in general, please contact staff at your BREEDPLAN processing centre.



Scan the QR code or click [here](#) to view a short video on recording this trait



Coat Score 2



Coat Score 3



Coat Score 4



Coat Score 5



Coat Score 6



Coat Score 7