

## SRPG Skills Weekend

### Showing Cattle

This is a great way to promote your stud & your breed, & is a great way to meet & socialise with like-minded people.

If you are keen to know & learn more about cattle, a cattle show will help you do all that. Constructive critique by a judge will give you ideas about how to improve your cattle & what to look for in a good animal. Networking with others will also help you to improve your eye with cattle & understand what to look for when selecting good cattle for breeding.

There is always something new to learn.

A great book to read about preparing & showing cattle is '**Beef Cattle – Breeding, Feeding and Showing**' by **Lucy Newham**.

It is now out of print but can be found in some libraries & agricultural facilities.

Lucy is a renowned cattle judge & breeder of Murray Grey cattle but has shown Lowlines over many years for Allambie Stud.

### Show Preparation

Begin feeding your show cattle a good diet about 3+ months prior to the show season & they will begin to fill out & bloom in time for their first shows.

- Introduce hard feed gradually so you don't upset the gut flora & cause an upset gut
- Start with a small amount of hard feed or pellets & gradually increase the amount over a couple of weeks until they are used to eating it.
- Feed show cattle twice a day (morning & night) so their feed is spread out over the day & not getting it all at once
- If using a cattle pellet, 11 – 15% Protein content is ideal for weight gain
- Make sure your cattle are being fed plenty (or ad-lib) hay to help the rumen digest the feed
- If possible, weigh your cattle on a weekly basis to find out what the daily weight gain is. You can adjust the feed intake to increase or decrease the weight gain as needed.
- **Don't let your cattle get fat!**
- If showing bulls, have a bull weight to aim for & work out your necessary daily weight gain to reach your target weight (eg. For show day). Ideally, an increase of 1kg per day in bodyweight is what to aim for.
- I use the bull scan sheets for the Royal Shows to work out the average weight of the bulls shown in the age class that my bull will be in. This will be my Target Weight to aim for.

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## **Show Box Equipment**

There are many items and cattle products that can be used for preparing cattle for a show, whether it be a local or a large national show.

Costs for show preparation can be very expensive but it is not always necessary to buy and use the numerous products & knick-knacks available to get you cattle looking their best for a show.

If your cattle have been fed well, their coats should have a natural shine & shouldn't need much 'product' to get them looking great.

If you are at a show, watch the professional fitters and ask questions about what they use, or how they blow the cattle hair, or clip the neck & shoulders of the cattle – this is a great way to learn & it might save you money by learning some of the tricks of the trade.

## ***Basic Requirements***

The following items are the basics that you will need to take to a local or one-day show.

Rope halter

Nose dog & lead – for cows/heifers

Nose lead – for bulls

Neck rope – to tie up cattle in the stalls

Show Halter & leads

Show Nose dog – for cows/heifers

Hay - enough for the day

Water bucket

Rake – to pick up cow poo

Bale of straw – if the local show society doesn't supply bedding

Cattle Shampoo

Plastic scrubbing brush – for washing

\*\* Some show venues won't have washing facilities so it is best to wash cows before you go to the show (the night before) & brush or blow any dust or dirt out when you get there.

Old cloth/towel – to wipe mucky faces/backsides

Scotch comb

Soft body brush

Cattle Coat Conditioner (eg. Revive)

or

Coat Shine Product (eg. Final Bloom, Pink Oil)

Stud sign

Name Header cards for exhibits (not a necessity but good for stud promotion) .....Template on ALCA website

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### ***Breed Uniform***

Lowline Vest..... Available through ALCA

Chambray/blue shirt .....Available through ALCA

Blue Jeans or Moleskin pants

\*\*\*\*\* Local shows will usually only require the Lowline Vest as breed uniform

Show Cane

Breed Tie (optional)..... Available through ALCA

### ***Show Box – extras***

If going to a larger show where the cattle will be staying for a few days (eg. Royal Shows), there are other items that might come in handy.

National Vendor Declaration Book – some interstate requirements

Copies of your Registration Certificates & any other relevant paperwork (eg. Health Declarations)

Spare NLIS ear tag – in case an animal loses one in transit

Scissors/knife

Show curtains – wire or rope to put them up

Safety pins – great for putting ribbons on display

Spare rope halter – in case one breaks or is lost

Cattle Trans Blocks – ideal for helping keep cattle guts healthy while away so they don't lose weight or get scours

DeScour Paste – ideal for calves if they get scours at a show

Cattle Blower

Extension cord

\*\*\* All electrical cords & appliances need to be Safety Tagged

Rubber matting – to stop cattle 'digging' sawdust from underneath them

Enough feed for the whole show – pellets/chaff/hay

Stud promotional material

Leather & brass cleaners – for show halters

Water hose & connections – some shows expect exhibitors to provide their own hoses

Rakes, broom, shovel + stand if you have one

Baby powder – for bulls after they have been scanned (to soak up the oil)

Black spray paint – to blacken hooves

Other cattle products that might enhance your animals.....Prime Time, Hocus Pocus, Kleen Sheen....

- There are many to choose from so ask other exhibitors what products they prefer

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### **Purchasing Equipment**

There are many places to purchase cattle equipment. Many horse shops have cattle products & most horse products can be used on cattle.

**The Cattle Shop** is a great place to find many items needed for farm animals, grooming & show equipment.

Daryl Holder has his van at most the Royal Shows but also has an on-line service & is very prompt.

**<http://www.thecattleshop.com.au/>**

Another way to order show equipment on-line is through **The Farmer's Mailbox**

**<http://www.fmb.com.au/>**