

The Value of Independence

MEAT AND LIVESTOCK COMMERCIAL SERVICES LTD (MLCSL)

BEEF

CARCASE AUTHENTICATION AND VERIFICATION SERVICES

	1	2	3	4L	4H	5L	5H
E							
U+							
-U							
R							
O+							
-O							
P+							
-P							



The benefits of the MLCSL's Independent Service

MLCSL staff have been classifying beef carcasses throughout GB since the early 1970s. The carcass information provided by the MLCSL service is widely used as the basis for trading between producers and slaughterers.

The MLCSL service incorporates the statutory requirements of the Mandatory EC Beef Carcass Classification Regulations which came into effect in GB on 1 January 1992, (as amended).

What does the MLCSL service offer?

The service offers the industry technically trained staff to independently establish all of the important carcass criteria as the basis for the transaction between buyer and seller.

The MLCSL service includes:

Identification	Individual ear tags recorded for supplier reference, providing a vital link in the chain of traceability.
Category	The carcass category (Sex) ie; Steer, Heifer, Cow, Young Bull, Mature Bull.
Dressing Specification	Monitoring of dressing specifications, these are recorded for supplier reference (see pages 4 and 5).
Carcass Weighing	Individual carcass weights (see appendix 2 for hot weight rebates).
Conformation	(See below and opposite page).
Fatness	(See below and opposite page).
Verification	Daily audit checks on documentation to verify the recorded carcass information for supplier confidence.

Conformation

An assessment of the overall shape of the carcass referenced to the EUROP scale.

Conformation is divided into five main classes: E,U,R,O and P; classes U,O and P are sub-divided into upper (+) and lower (-) bands. Conformation class E describes carcasses of outstanding shape, particularly of the type produced by double-muscled cattle, but these represent only a small proportion of the national kill. Class P describes poorly muscled carcasses of inferior shape, usually produced by cattle of extreme dairy breeds and cows.

Fatness

An assessment in five classes from 1 (very lean) to 5 (very fat), with classes 4 and 5 being subdivided into leaner (L) and fatter (H) bands.

Conformation



Fatness



The Classification Grid

When a carcass is described in classification terms, the conformation class is always given first. For example, the most common type of steer beef carcass would have a conformation class of R and a fat class of 4L. This would be recorded as R4L, and its position is shown in the grid.

15 point scale

To further enhance the classification grid some abattoirs have adopted a '15 point' grid in which each conformation and fat class is sub-divided into three, these are: low (-), medium (mid) and high (+) classes. The '15 point' grid allows for a more precise description of the carcass.

		Fatness						
		I	2	3	4L	4H	5L	5H
Conformation	E							
	U+							
	-U							
	R				R4L			
	O+							
	-O							
	P+							
	-P							

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Dressing Specifications

By industry agreement abattoirs may choose from three recognised dressing specifications;

- 1 Standard Specification (see Appendix 1)
- 2 EC Reference Specification
- 3 UK Specification

The dressing specification adopted is confirmed on each MLCSL classification document (see appendix 3).

The table opposite illustrates the parts of the carcass which are subject to trim depending on the specification used.

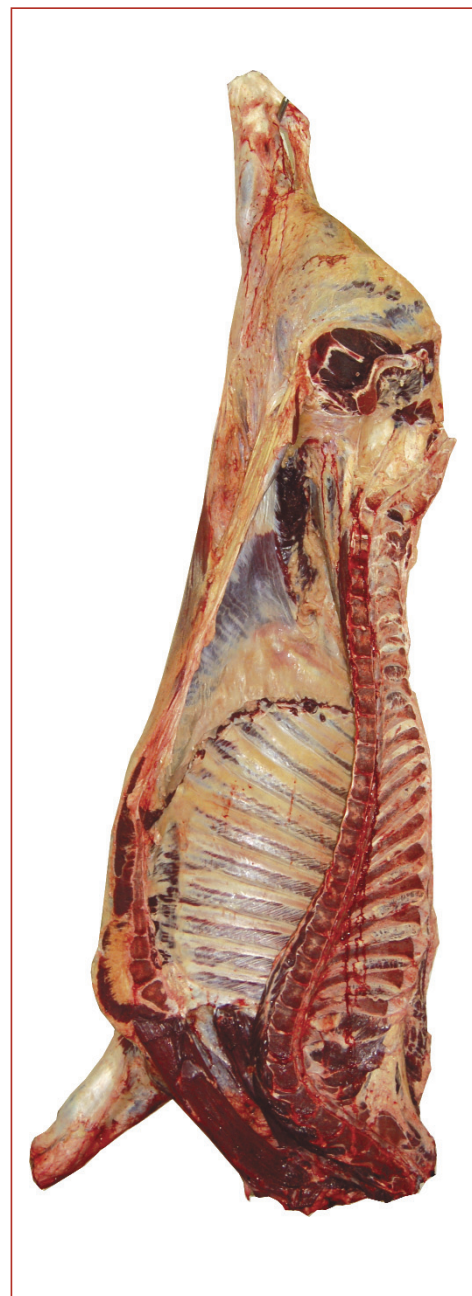
STANDARD SPECIFICATION (ex Kidney Knob and Channel Fat: KKCF)



EC REFERENCE SPECIFICATION



UK SPECIFICATION



	Cod/ Udder	Crown Fat	Thin Skirt	Bed Fat	Brisket Fat
1 Standard Specification (see appendix 1)	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
2 EC Reference Specification	OFF	OFF	OFF	ON	ON
3 UK Specification	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF

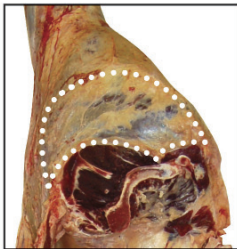
As a guide by using the co-efficients in EU regulations, the average carcasse weight will reduce between each of the specifications by the following:

- 1 Standard Specification to EC Reference Specification – Males 1.2% and Females 1.7%
- 2 EC Reference Specification to UK Specification – All categories, 0.8%

This indicates that the average carcasse weight reduces by 2% to 2.5% between the Standard Specification and the UK Specification.

TRIMMING REQUIREMENTS

TO REDUCE FROM STANDARD TO EC REFERENCE SPECIFICATION



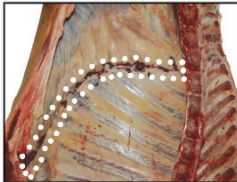
Topside (Crown) Fat Trim

- The heavier fat deposit on the inside of the topside is removed.
- Trimming must not expose the muscle and must be confined to the area identified on the illustration.



Cod/Mammary (Udder) Fat Removal

- The cod or udder fat is removed in its entirety.
- Trimming must not expose the muscle at any point and must be confined to the area identified on the illustration.



Thin Skirt Removal

- The fleshy part of the thin skirt is removed back to the ribs at the division between the thorax and abdomen.
- Trimming must be confined to the area identified on the illustration - no further trim of the abdominal membrane is permitted.
- Any fat on the inside of the pleura, between the ribs, must be left attached.

TO REDUCE FROM EC REFERENCE TO UK SPECIFICATION



Flank (Bed) Fat Trim

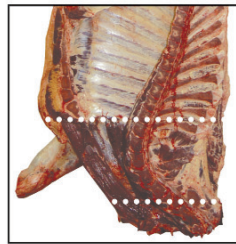
- The fat deposit within the flank fat area is removed.
- Trimming must not expose the muscle and must be confined to the area identified on the illustration.
- There must be no 'dropping' of the flank muscle.
- There must be no perforation, damage or cutting through of the outer carcasse/muscle.



Brisket Fat Trim

- The brisket must be trimmed to leave a covering of fat, the muscle tissue must not be exposed.
- Trimming must be confined to the area identified on the illustration.

APPLICABLE TO ALL SPECIFICATIONS



Neck Trim

- The sticking must be done in such a manner that the neck muscles are not damaged.
- The jugular vein and adjacent fat must be removed.
- Fat removal must not extend horizontally below the joint of the third and fourth cervical vertebrae or above or behind the first rib.
- There must be no removal or trimming of the neck muscle.

Hide Removal/Subcutaneous Fat

- The hide must be removed in such a way as to leave the subcutaneous fat intact.

Flank Edge

- There must be no trimming of the flank edge.
- The soft cartilage at the end of the sternum may be removed in a line with the flank edge.

Channel Fat Trim

- All channel fat to be removed.
- There must be no removal or trimming of any associated muscle in the channel.
- On male carcasses, the retractor muscle must be retained and must not be heavily trimmed.

Kidney Knob Fat Removal

- The kidney and kidney knob must be removed for the UK specification in price reporting abattoirs, but removal is optional in all other abattoirs.
- There must be no trimming of the abdominal membrane beyond the point where the kidney knob is naturally attached.



Photographs in agreement with RPAI UK

Appendix 1 – Standard Specification Dressing Specification

The following parts shall be removed from the carcase before weighing:

- (a) **Head**, including tongue. The head will be removed by a cut at right angles to the line of the back, between the skull and the spinal column, thereby leaving the entire spinal column on the carcase. The ears will be naturally attached to the carcase until inspected but may then be removed from the carcase before weighing. Where the ears are left attached at the time of weighing, a deduction of 1kg will be made (ie 0.5kg for each ear).
- (b) The **hind feet** will be removed at the hock joint between the tarsal and metatarsal (hind cannon) bones, or not more than 25mm (1 inch) from the joint towards the hoof, and the forefeet removed at knee joint between the carpal and metacarpal (fore cannon) bones.
- (c) **Hide**.
- (d) The **tail** will be removed at the junction between the fifth sacral vertebra and the first tail (coccygeal) vertebra. Where it is trade practice to leave the tail on the carcase, the carcase weight will be reduced by 1kg. (Note: there are five sacral vertebrae which are fused in cattle and the first tail vertebra articulates with the last sacral vertebra). (5/86)
- (e) **Alimentary canal** (ie stomachs and enclosing caul fat, guts and gut fat).
- (f) **Genito-urinary organs** (excluding kidneys). In cows the mammary tissue will be removed.
- (g) **Spleen, liver, pancreas**.
- (h) **Pillar of diaphragm** (ie thick skirt). Where it is trade practice to leave the pillar of the diaphragm on the carcase, the carcase weight will be reduced by 1kg.
- (i) **Diaphragm** (ie thin or rib skirt) trimmed to leave a margin of 12mm (0.5 inch) of membrane attached to the diaphragm intact.
- (j) Lungs, trachea, oesophagus, larynx (ie lights) and heart, and the thoracic fat which is loosely attached along the length of the breast bone.
- (k) **Thymus glands** (ie heart bread and neck bread).
- (l) Jugular vein and adjacent fat, but without undue trimming or cutting of the neck muscles (severed in removing the head, oesophagus and trachea) and associated fat.
- (m) The large blood vessel attached to the vertebrae.
- (n) **Spinal cord**.

The removal of kidneys, kidney knobs and channel fats (KKCF) is optional except in price reporting abattoirs.

Appendix 2 – Hot weight rebate

Carcases are “**Hot**” if weighed within one hour of slaughter. When carcases are weighed “**Hot**”, the “**Cold**” weight is ascertained by reducing the hot weight by 2.0%

Rounding

Carcase hot weights must be recorded to the same calibration as indicated on the scale with no rounding applied.

Appendix 3 – Computerised Data Capture Record

MLCS BEEF -Carcase Service												01/12/08	
Participant			Lot Details			Centre			Supplier				
A SMITH			No. :4			Name.:WINTERHILL			PRICE				
THE ABATTOIR			Dress :UK Spec			No. :1234 /0							
GREEN LANE			Size :005-005			Week No :41							
WINTERHILL						Staff No.:							
KKCF :Excl.													
EarTag	Kill.	aCat	Side (kg)	Side (kg)	Hot (kg)	Reb (kg)	Cold (kg)	Cond (kg)	Net.C (kg)	Class Remark	Breed DOB		
09875864222	000029	S	176.0	176.6	352.6	7.0	345.6	0.0	345.6	-U3	000000		
09875642133	000030	H	145.7	146.2	291.9	5.8	286.1	0.0	286.1	0+4H	000000		
76422356668	000031	S	164.3	164.8	329.1	6.6	322.5	0.0	322.5	R4L	000000		
24433681770	000032	YB	174.3	174.7	349.0	7.0	342.0	0.0	342.0	-U2	000000		
24433684321	000033	YB	164.9	165.5	330.4	6.6	323.8	0.0	323.8	R3	000000		
			Total	1620.0		0.0	1620.0						
			Brought Forward		0.0	0.0		0.0					
			Total	1620.0		0.0	1620.0						
<p>The carcasses on this form were classified by me at the centre shown above. The carcasses were dressed and the hot weight rebates were calculated in accordance with the Specification indicated above.</p>													
Signature MLCS CSO													
Page 01 01/12/08													

A copy of the MLCSL carcass classification document is made available for passing directly back to the producer, so insist on receiving this important document whether selling direct to abattoirs, through marketing groups or the electronic auction companies.

ENSURE YOUR CARCASSES ARE HANDLED BY THE MLCSL'S BEEF CARCASS AUTHENTICATION AND VERIFICATION SERVICES





BEEF

CARCASE AUTHENTICATION AND VERIFICATION SERVICES

MLCSL
Stoneleigh Park
Kenilworth
Warwickshire
CV8 2TL

www.mlcsl.co.uk

