CATTLEMEN’S LINGO

Balance  Animal with equal distribution of length in front, middle and rear, and equal in width from point of shoulders back to tailhead. A lack of faults.

Bang’s Disease  Brucellosis, also known as contagious abortion.

Barren  Sterile female.

Breed  Group of animals similar in colour, type and characteristics of group. When mated, members of same breed produce offspring of same colour, type, and other breed characteristics. They are said to “breed true”.

Britches  Rear quarters of beef bull.

Bottom Side  Maternal or dam’s parentage of pedigree.

Broody  Motherliness in beef cows.

Buller  Cow which is continuously in heat due to cystic ovaries.

Bully  Possessing masculine characteristics, heavy crest, aggressive, alert.

Bulling  When a cow tries to ride other cows, or when she stands if other try to ride her. A “bulling” cow is in heat.

Burnt  Bulls, especially, with uselessness hindered by overfeeding and lack of exercise.

By  Designate sire: A calf is by a certain bull.

Cancer Eye  Tumour of the eye region, which causes severe losses in herds of light, skinned bred.

Clean  Free of disease, especially Brucellosis.

Closebreeding  Mating of related animals. Term includes inbreeding and line-breeding.

Condition  Degree of fatness.

Constitution  Aggregate of physical power and vigor.

Crossbred  Animal from parents of two different breeds.

Crossbreeding  System of breeding where bull of one breed is mated to cows of another.

Cull  Animal of low quality.

Cull (verb)  To remove from herd.

Dam  Maternal parent.

Dirty  Animal believed to carry gene for snorter dwarfism.

Dropped  Born, a calf was dropped on May 1.

Estrus  Period of time when cow will accept bull; heat period.

Everyday clothes  Animal in breeding condition, not fat or fitted.

Feed Conversion Rate  Measure of the number of pounds of feed necessary to produce 100 pounds of live beef or carcass.

Family or Family Name  Determined by tracing ancestry from dam to granddam, etc, to a particular cow called the “foundation” cow.

Fed Cattle  Steers or heifers fed grain for slaughter.

Fertility Test  Test of semen for sperm count and measure of motility.

Finish  Degree or amount of fatness.

Fitted  Animal fattened, groomed, and trained for show or sale.

Founder  Nutritional ailment caused by over-eating or inflammation of uterus following parturition. Affected animals become lame with sore front feet & excessive hoof growth.

Freemartin  Female born as a twin with a bull; usually sterile.

Gene  Entity concerned with transmission of hereditary characteristics.

Get  Calves sired by same bull; hence, “get of sire”.

Heat  Period of time when females will accept bull.

Heavy-in-calf  Late stage of pregnancy.

Heritability Percentage  Ratio of inheritance of various traits, often an estimate based on experimental results.

Heifer  Female bovine that has not dropped a calf, although females usually are called heifers until they reach maturity.

Herd sire  Principal bull said to “head” a herd.

Hindquarter or Hind  Rear portion of carcass from which most of the highest priced beef cuts come from eg loin and round.

Hooks  Hip bones.

Hooky  Cow with prominent hooks.

Hybrid vigor  Increased growth rate often noted in cattle resulting from first-cross matings. It is believed desirable traits in parents are dominant over undesirable traits. Thus the amount of hybrid vigor is probably based on the closeness of breeding in the parents.

Inbreeding  Method of mating close relatives.

Linebreeding  Method of selective mating, usually to obtain predominance of a particularly outstanding bull into the ancestry of a calf or crop or cow herd. An attempt to genetically “fix” the characteristics of a bull in a herd.

Line of breeding  Determined by tracing ancestry from sire to grand sire, etc, on top of parental side of pedigree.

Loin-Eye  Main muscle of beef carcass in evaluation test. Area of loin-eye (sometimes called rib-eye) at 12th rib is used as indication of meatiness of carcass.

Long Rump  Animal with desirable length from hooks to pin bones.

Mellow  High quality finish, or fat covering; fat not too hard or too soft or mushy.

Mossy  Soft, smooth hair coat, pleasant to the touch.

Motility  Activeness of bull’s semen as seen through microscope.

Nick  If calves by a bull out of half-sisters or out of females of a certain line of breeding are especially outstanding, he is said to “nick” well with them.

Out of  Designates dam. A calf is out of a certain cow or heifer.

Overdone  Overfat show animal.

Pedigree  Written record of animal’s ancestry.

Performance Test  Measure of an animal’s performance, usually for a single trait, i.e., weight gains.

Plain-headed  Head like a Longhorn, no breed character.

Pin Bones  Anterior portion of pelvis; protrude on each side of rectum.

Pinkeye  Any of various inflammatory conditions of the eyes; attacks all ages.

Post-legged  Hind legs too straight.

Prepotent  Above average ability of breeding stock, especially bulls, to transmit their individual excellence to their offspring.

Produce  Offspring of a particular cow, as opposed to a bulls “get”. 
Production Test  Measure of several factors, which determine an animal's productiveness. Full production test includes records of animals weaning weight and grade, yearling weight and score, and classification score when mature.

Progeny Test  Measure of offspring of animals, usually bulls. Test may measure inheritance of weight gains, conformation grades or scores, carcass meatiness, dwarfism.

Purebred  All lines of ancestry tracing to registered stock of one breed. All purebreds are not registered, but all registered stock is purebred.

Quality  State of desirable bone, natural smoothness, fine hair, refined features; excellence of breed character.

Quittors  Corns between toes of cattle, especially bulls, which must be removed.

Rangy  Long-legged, long-bodied, long-necked.

Reactor  Animal which shows reaction to a test for disease.

Registered  Recorded in Herd Book of a recognised breed association which issues certificate that animal is offspring of registered parents and meets registration requirements.

Safe-in-calf  Pregnant beyond doubt: usually examined as such by vet.

Scrub  Plain animal, cull.

Seedstock  Registered animals worthy of use as foundation for herd.

Served  Female bred, but not necessarily safe in calf.

Service  Act of breeding.

Sickle-hocked  Crooked hind legs as viewed from the side.

Signs  Female showing symptoms of pregnancy or heat.

Soggy  Beefy, deep muscled, thickly made beef animal.

Spray  Surgical removal of ovaries.

Springer  Female showing definite signs of pregnancy.

Stag  Male bovine castrated after sex characteristics are apparent.

Steer  Male bovine castrated before characteristics of bull are developed.

Steer (verb)  To castrate.

Substance  Solidity, the unchanging natural qualities of an animal.

Tail end  Lowest quality portion of a group.

Thoroughbred  Breed of horses. Other registered animals are purebred.

Twist  Region between hind legs where thighs come together.

Type  All those characteristics, which contribute to an animal’s purpose. There are three types of cattle – beef, dairy, dual-purpose.

Well-bred  Animal with widely known ancestry.