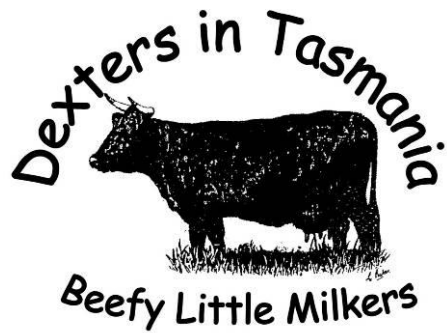


# Dexter Promotion Group of Tasmania



Hi Everyone

It was great to catch up with many of you at our AGM which was held at Clarendon House recently and the tour that followed with Matthew Smithies was fantastic. To show our appreciation for the publicity afforded our breed via the National Trust Heritage and their ongoing support, a mug and bottle of wine were presented to Matthew. The Committee remains unchanged, what a surprise that was. It was also nice to see Maura O'Connor attend the meeting and a welcome to her. We thought it a great opportunity to check out the facilities at Clarendon House in preparation for the upcoming DCAI Annual General Meeting being held there on 15 October 2011.

I have nominated for a position on the DCAI Council for the upcoming elections and hope that I can count on your support to try and get our Association moving in the right direction

Our many fundraising efforts over the past few months have seen our bank account grow to a healthy sum, thanks to everyone involved in securing our future endeavours in the short term anyway.

We have sold out of our coffee mugs, which have proved to be very popular with some going to other states to Dexter breeders who love our design. If anyone would like any more mugs please contact Andrea.

Check out the report on our new website.

Thanks to Mandy Gehrich and Maura O'Connor for submitting articles for this Newsletter.

Life is looking to be just as busy for the rest of the year, with cows calving, showing, AGM's, Stud Tour and a proposed Christmas Get Together.

ENJOY!!

*Marg Rawlings*

## From the Chair



I'm still here. Thank you for your confidence in electing me for another year – let's keep the enthusiasm for our wonderful little cows going!

The National AGM is looming up quickly. For those who normally shudder at the thought of an AGM and think "I'm not going near that boring meeting" think again. This AGM we are fortunate enough to host is going to be a ripper. We have been fortunate enough to have the pleasure of Carol Davidson coming from Canada to give us a talk on the History of Dexters in Australia, Kerry cattle versus Dexters and lots more! Thanks Marg for making first contact with her. OK, she happened to be organising a holiday here in October, so it wasn't ALL our doing but we do thank her immensely in taking time out for us. A gourmet, home cooked lunch will be provided (at a small cost) on the Saturday at the AGM and dinner is organised to be at one of The Country Club's wonderful restaurants. The weekend doesn't finish there, Sunday will be a full day bus tour of part of our beautiful state, visiting many fantastic food spots & a couple of studs. I am personally a little disappointed that we can't visit more but time just won't allow it. It will be a great time to relax and meet fellow Dexter enthusiasts and just have a great time. Seats on the bus are strictly limited so book early!!!

OK, now to a subject that bugs me, to register or not to register? REGISTER! The Dexter has only just been taken off the rare, endangered breed list. If we are not careful we will be back on it. If an animal is good enough to sell on as a breeding animal don't you think its genetics are good enough to be kept? And before you say "It's too expensive – people don't want the extra

cost of a registered animal” think about it! DNA and Parent Verification - \$34, Registration - \$44 to \$60.50, Transfer - \$44. Knowing your genetics will not be lost – PRICELESS! Be realistic. No one is going to quibble over an extra \$100 on the price and if they do are they REALLY the type of person you want to care for your beloved Dexter??

Looking forward to seeing as many members as possible at the AGM. Let’s show Australia how we do things down here! Did I mention the AGM is being held at Historic Clarendon House? We held our state AGM there and it is AMAZING!

That all ‘till next time.

*Andrea*

## DCAI AGM 15 October 2011

It is confirmed that the National Association Annual General Meeting will be held in Tasmania on 15 October 2011, and boy do we have a weekend planned for all Dexter breeders, locally and from interstate.

It starts at 11 am with the formalities of the AGM followed by a lunch being catered for by the Group to raise much needed funds. Cost is \$15 per head and the menu includes, homemade Lasagne, Potato & Cream Cheese Pie, various Salads, sweets, fruit platters, tea & coffee. Please send your booking & money to **Catherine Thomas, PO Box 350 George Town 7253.**

The afternoon has a question and answer session with the Councillors starting at 1 pm, and then at 2 pm Carol Davidson, a Canadian Dexter Breeder will give us a talk on the history of Dexters, genetics and including photos from the herds which early Australian imports came from. Then we are being given a guided tour of Clarendon House, with the day concluding at Clarendon House around 5pm.

We will then be adjourning to the Country Club in Launceston for our buffet Breed Dinner at Villa Italiana. Anyone wishing to book accommodation should do so quickly as rooms are limited.

On Sunday we will be providing a bus tour at a cost of \$35, buy your own breakfast at the Raspberry Farm, a visit to Ashgrove Cheeses, on to Railton to view Dexters from Goldshaft and Tasmanian Dexter Studs, then across to Preston for an informal BBQ lunch and cattle viewing, then back on the bus with a stop at Anvers Chocolates on the return to the Country Club.

We hope as many of you as possible will take the time to come along and interact with the many expected interstate visitors, it should be a great weekend and something to look forward to.

## Field Day - 2<sup>nd</sup> July

A great day was had at Daryl & Sue Crawford’s Deyrah Stud. It is probably best summed up from the following collection of photos. Thanks to everyone who attended it was refreshing to see so many new faces. A full repost is on the website, notes from the day are at the end of this Newsletter.



*Everyone in the yards*



*What are they looking at?? I best join in*



*Kinnaird Xenos – stud bull at Deyrah*



*Cuts of Beef, lets hope they wash off*



*Thank Goodness that is over!! Let's eat!!*



*Halter Training*



*Halter Making*

## New Members

A warm welcome to our latest new members Chris and Angie Howard from Mount Seymour and Ken and Sandra Michell from Don, we look forward to catching up with you in the near future.

## Cheesemaking Course

Want to do a cheese making course? Why not! I didn't have visions of starting my own boutique business - "Beefy CHEESY Little Milkers" but I do now have visions of being able to turn my own milk into some form of cheese. Hubby said no to digging out a cellar for me so my scale of production will have to stay small.

Way back last century when doing home economics I learned early to pick a partner who at least looked as if they might have some intelligence and Andrea seemed to know what a stove was so she seemed a good bet. I think she even knew the difference between a Ricotta and Camembert so she was way ahead of me. Partner for the course picked then down to business. (Whoops we were standing on the wrong side of the work bench. Not off to a good start!)



*Keeping warm around the fire*

To make cheese we needed to sterilize everything we touched, meticulously measure everything out and maintain the milk/cheese mixture and the bath of water it was sitting in at set temperatures. (Whoops got sidetracked and the temperature of the water dropped. Need to pay more attention! Oops! I put the stirrer on the bench so need to sterilize it again.) And while doing all this, the mind is suppose to absorb the mechanics of what was actually happening.

I always thought protein you got from eggs, lactic acid you got in your leg muscles after a run and whey was something Little Miss Muffet ate. I now know they have a lot to do with making cheese and I hope Andrea was paying attention and can remember the how and why. I was really concentrating on keeping the water temperature constant and instruments sterilized. Mesophilic and Thermophilic - Andrea could deal with those too! More hot water? Sure, I could manage that.

Such intense concentration only interrupted by life saving cups of coffee and home made biscuits, cakes, soup and Dexter sausage rolls (Yippee!!).

Back to check the temperatures and measure out another batch and get it going. More sterilizing and more heating. No I shouldn't have sterilized that just yet - need to check the water and milk temperature. He's bringing out sterilized syringes for measuring "starter". (Thank goodness I had the sense to choose a vet nurse to be my partner she new how to use one!) No I haven't checked the temperature of the milk I will do it now! Have we cut our curd? Re checked temperatures? We need to stir the curd. It shouldn't look like that should it? We should have done that GENTLY! Have we turned them over and drained them? Check the temperatures.

Somehow by Sunday afternoon we had made 7 and a bit cheeses. Can't get full marks for the Mozzarella because it wasn't too successful but I'll put that down to a time constraint not personal error. Am I now confident to make my own cheese? Surprisingly 3 days later yes I am. (Maybe just a quick email to Andrea if I get stuck and I'll need to borrow the 2 husbands that were continually washing all the dishes and organising the food. They'd be great in anyone's kitchen!)

I enjoyed the weekend, learnt heaps, discovered talents I didn't know I had and must agree with my old home economics teacher that the kitchen is not for me. However I'm sure my old Agriculture teacher would be pleased to hear I can make cheese!

***Mandy Gehrich***

## Website

After being bored on a rainy day, I thought it would be useful if the Group had their own website. So feeling inspired I logged on to Weebly and set about creating. The site is now up and running, with a blog page for our members to access and keep us up to date with the happenings on their farms, ask questions or make comments. To gain this access you have to accept the invitation from Weebly to join and then off you go. I have sent out invitations to those I have correct email addresses for, and a number have logged on and started posting comments. For those who haven't yet logged on or have not received an email please let me know so that I can get access to the Blog organised for you. You can phone on 6429 1287 or my email address is [rawlingsdexter@westnet.com.au](mailto:rawlingsdexter@westnet.com.au)

The reaction to date has been great, so keep posting everyone, we are up to around 20 people visiting our site daily which will only grow as we use the site more and keep the information current. The cost to the group is nothing, so I figure any publicity is great publicity but free is even better.

For anyone considering creating their own website it was so simple with Weebly and thanks to Andrea for showing me this great medium and one that is easy to use and update. Please check it out and make it our own!!

The website address is  
[www.dextersintasmania.weebly.com](http://www.dextersintasmania.weebly.com)

***Marg Rawlings***  
***Promotions Officer***

## Dates for the Calendar

30 Sept - 1 Oct Burnie Show  
6 - 8 October Launceston Royal Show  
15 October DCAI AGM – Clarendon House  
Evandale  
16 October Stud Tours and Food Tasting NW  
Tassie  
29 October - Ulverstone Show  
11 - 12 Nov - Scottsdale Show  
19 Nov - Deloraine Show  
Late Nov – Christmas Get Together  
3 Dec - Circular Heads Show

## Research on Dexter cattle in Royal Dublin Society Library, Ballsbridge, Dublin

During a recent visit to Ireland I spent an afternoon in the Library of the Royal Dublin Society in their grounds at Ballsbridge, Dublin. With the assistance of Gerard Whelan, Librarian, I was able to view the Register, Herd Books and a couple of photographic albums plus the following work, now out of print, edited by P. L. Curran: *Kerry and Dexter cattle and other ancient Irish breeds - a history*. Dublin: Royal Dublin Society, 1990. ISBN 0-86027-029-7.

The Register comprises hand-written, cryptic entries of the number of males or females submitted to the Royal Dublin Society for registration together with a reference number to their entry in the Herd Book, which was published annually. The register began in 1890 and includes both Kerry and Dexter entered in the order of registration. The following are examples of entries for D. O'Sullivan, as I was interested to see if my great grandfather, Daniel O'Sullivan had more animals other than the bull for which he was awarded the Society's medal:

1.1.1890 D. P. O'Sullivan 7 Kerry cows  
10.11.1890 No. 26 S. P. O'Sullivan 6 Kerry cows  
12.11.1891 No. 4 D. P. O'Sullivan 6 Kerry cows  
14.9.1892 No. 20 D. O'Sullivan 2 Kerry cows  
Sept 14 1892 D. O'Sullivan 2 cows entry no. 20 (Kerrys)  
21.9.1896 No 31 D. O'Sullivan 1 bull, 2 cows (Dexters) 15/- fee  
20.9.1897 No. 7 D. Sullivan 1 cow (Dexter) 5/-  
30.9.1897 No. 9 D. O'Sullivan 1 Dexter cow  
There were no Dexters registered after 1921.

The Herd book, published annually and including both Dexter and Kerry breeds, is more informative and it was here that I was able to determine which of the above records related to my great-grandfather. A list of judges, appointed by the Society, is given at the commencement of each volume and it was interesting to note that except for two British judges all but three of the fourteen Irish judges were from Co. Kerry. The other three were James Robertson, Malahide, Co. Dublin, Richard Barter, Blarney, Co. Cork and W. Campion, Midleton, Co. Cork. There is also an index to the owners of Kerry and Dexter cows and bulls, each breed and sex listed separately. From this index I was able to establish which of the D. O'Sullivan's in the register related to my great grandfather as the full address of each owner is also given. Vol. V, covering registrations for 1896, was published in 1897.

The Herd book is divided into two sections, the Kerry breed first, with a further subdivision into cows and bulls, followed by a similar arrangement for the Dexter breed.

It would appear that in 1896 there was a special inspection of Dexter cattle in Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry covering breeders/owners of Dexter cattle in the surrounding area for at least two to three pages for both males and females for this area are listed. Using the date and [page] number given in the Register I was delighted to find that the entry for "21.9.1896 No. 31 D. O'Sullivan 1 bull, 2 cows (Dexters) 15/- fee" was for my great-grandfather, recorded as follows:

Bulls, p. 31  
246 LORD HILLGROVE  
Black; calved 1895; owner, Daniel O'Sullivan, 19 Main Street, Cahirciveen; breeder unknown. Earmark No. 110. Qualified by inspection

Cows, p. 42  
O'Sullivan Daniel, 19, Main Street, Cahirciveen

878 ERIN'S COLLEEN DUHV  
Black; calved 1895; owner, Daniel O'Sullivan; breeder unknown. Earmark No. 112. Qualified by inspection

879 ERIN'S QUEEN  
Black; calved 1895; owner, Daniel O'Sullivan; breeder unknown. Earmark No. 109. Qualified by inspection

If medallions were issued for the two cows they, sadly, have not survived.

A careful check of the remaining herd books did not reveal any more entries for my great grandfather. It is unknown whether he had other Dexter animals which were not registered or why he had only the three that were registered.

The Library holds at least two large photographic albums containing large format photos of both cows and bulls, probably photographed at the Society's grounds at Ballsbridge. Most animals, from memory, were not polled. It would be interesting for someone expert in the features of the breed to compare the animals then to those produced now. Curran's work, which I understand is due to come out shortly in an updated edition, contains a number of illustrations from these albums.

*Maura O'Connor*  
*July 2011*

## Committee Contacts

After our recent AGM the Committee remains unchanged. Please feel free to contact any one of us should you need some help, have any concerns or just ring for a chat

### *Chairperson*

Andrea O'Grady - Phone 6496 1969  
[goldshaft@hotmail.net.au](mailto:goldshaft@hotmail.net.au)

### *Secretary*

Catherine Thomas - Phone 6382 4878  
[swnygwyntfarm@bigpond.com](mailto:swnygwyntfarm@bigpond.com)

### *Treasurer*

Peter Fleming - Phone 6396 1136  
[p-t-fleming@bigpond.com](mailto:p-t-fleming@bigpond.com)

### *Promotions Officer*

Marg Rawlings - Phone 6429 1287  
[rawlingsdexter@westnet.com.au](mailto:rawlingsdexter@westnet.com.au)

## Reference Material from the Field Day

### Importance of Body Condition Scoring to Cattle Producers

Body condition scoring of beef cattle can be an effective management tool for evaluating the energy reserves of cows and the whole nutritional program throughout the year. Adjusting the nutritional program to obtain desired body condition at different stages of production is necessary to enhance production efficiency. Females that are too thin or too fat can be an expensive investment. Thin cows can have difficulty rebreeding, while fat cows are prone to calving problems and excessive feed costs. Body condition scores (BCS) allow producers, extension personnel, and researchers to communicate more effectively regarding the herd's nutritional status.

### What is Body Condition Scoring?

A common scoring system has been developed to estimate the average body condition of cows in a herd. This system provides producers a relative score based on an evaluation of fat deposits in relation to skeletal features.

The most widely used body condition scoring system for beef cattle in the U.S. (Figure 1) assigns scores from 1 (emaciated and carrying virtually no fat) to 9 (excessively fat).

### Figure 1. Body condition scoring system for beef cattle.

Adapted from Wagner et al., 1988. Journal of Animal Science

#### Score Description

##### thin

- 1 Severely emaciated; starving and weak; no palpable fat detectable over back, hips or ribs; tailhead and individual ribs prominently visible; all skeletal structures are visible and sharp to the touch; animals are usually disease stricken. Under normal production systems cattle in this condition score are rare.
- 2 Emaciated; similar to BCS 1, but not weakened; little visible muscle tissue; tailhead and ribs less prominent.
- 3 Very thin; no fat over ribs or in brisket; backbone easily visible, slight increase in muscling over BCS

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##### borderline

- 4 Borderline; individual ribs noticeable but overall fat cover is lacking; increased musculature through shoulders and hindquarters; hips and backbone slightly rounded versus sharp appearance of BCS 3.

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##### optimum

- 5 Moderate; increased fat cover over ribs, generally only 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> ribs are individually distinguishable; tailhead full, but not rounded.
- 6 Good; back, ribs, and tailhead slightly rounded and spongy when palpated; slight fat deposition in brisket.

## fat

- 7 Fat; cow appears fleshy and carries fat over the back, tailhead, and brisket; ribs are not visible; area of vulva and external rectum contain moderate fat deposits; may have slight fat in udder.
- 8 Very fat; squared appearance due to excess fat over back, tailhead, and hindquarters; extreme fat deposition in brisket and throughout ribs; excessive fat around vulva and rectum, and within udder; mobility may begin to be restricted.
- 9 Obese; similar to BCS 8, but to a greater degree; majority of fat deposited in udder limits effective lactation. Under normal production systems cattle in this condition score are rare.

## Nutritional Priorities of Cows

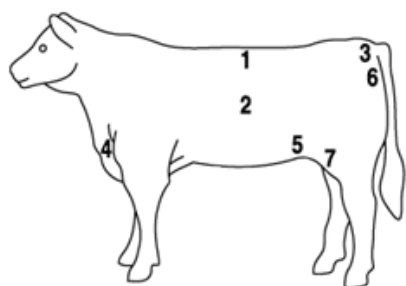
Individual herds vary by breed, frame, or type (i.e., English or Continental) but their nutritional priorities are similar (Figure 2). When nutrient intake fulfills the highest priority requirements, the excess is used to fill lower priority requirements. When all current requirements are fulfilled, the excess is stored as fat.



**Figure 2. Prioritization of nutritional requirements for the beef cow.** Adapted from Short et al., 1990. Journal of Animal Science

Most English and Continental beef breeds tend to deposit excess fat externally (subcutaneous), whereas dairy and Brahman-influenced breeds deposit more fat internally (KPH or mesenteric). During periods of low energy intake, excess external body fat is the first body tissue used to meet nutritional requirements. When energy is insufficient, fat stores may not be enough to fulfill requirements. When this happens, muscle (protein) is broken down to satisfy energy demand.

Cattle generally deposit external (subcutaneous) fat in the body in the following order: 1) back or loin, 2) ribs, 3) tailhead, 4) brisket, 5) flank, 6) vulva and/or rectum, 7) udder or mammary gland (Figure 3). When requirements exceed nutrient intake and external fat is broken down, it is utilized in the reverse order.



**Figure 3. Fat deposition sites in the cow.**

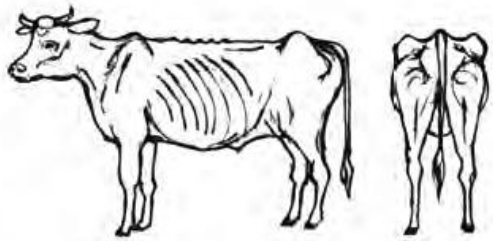
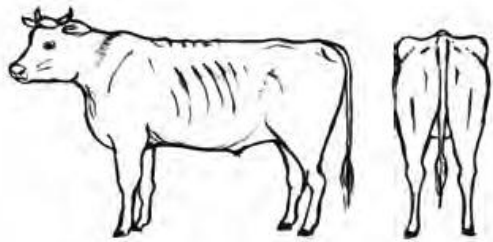
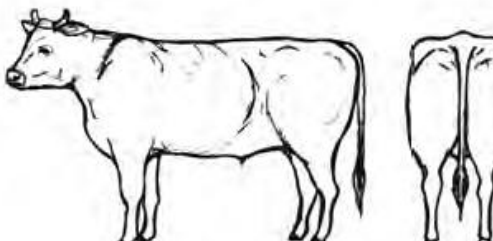
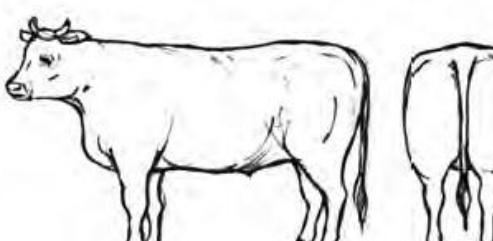
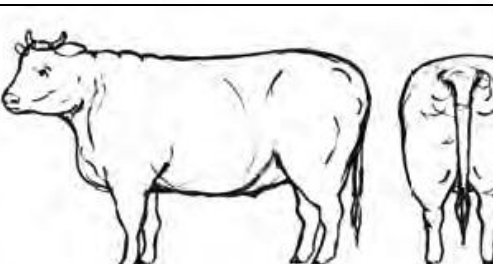
## Visual Body Condition Scoring

Cattle can normally be scored solely by visual observation; however, certain circumstances may occur in which manual palpation along with visual observation may be desirable. Cattle commonly score in the range from 3 to 7. Scores on the extreme ends of the scale (1, 2, 8 and 9) are rarely observed.

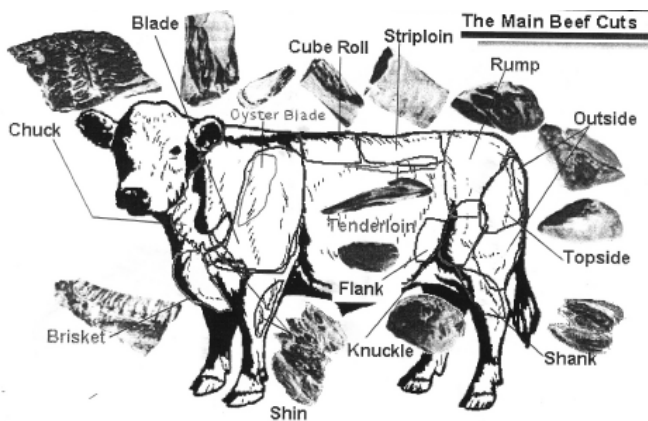
Research has shown a strong correlation between the current scoring system and actual fat deposition in the animal. This scoring system takes into account 80 to 90 percent of the total variation in fat of a beef cow.

**Reference** [www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/ansci/beef/as1026w.htm](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/ansci/beef/as1026w.htm)

# Cattle body condition scoring

	<p>Condition score 1</p> <p>Backbone prominent Hips and shoulder bones prominent Ribs clearly visible Tail-head area recessed Skeletal body outline</p>
	<p>Condition score 2</p> <p>Backbone visible Hips and shoulder bones visible Ribs visible faintly Tail-head area slightly recessed Body outline bony</p>
	<p>Condition score 3</p> <p>Hip bones visible faintly Ribs generally not visible Tail-head area not recessed Body outline almost smooth</p>
	<p>Condition score 4</p> <p>Hip bones not visible Ribs well covered Tail-head area slightly lumpy Body outline rounded</p>
	<p>Condition score 5</p> <p>Hip bones showing fat deposit Ribs very well covered Tail-head area very lumpy Body outline bulging due to fat</p>

Reference [www.dpi.qld.gov.au/.../Animal-HD-Investigation-Condition-scores.pdf](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/.../Animal-HD-Investigation-Condition-scores.pdf)



Reference Meat Livestock Australia