



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Cortland County

Beef Cattle Carcass Ultrasound

Heather Birdsall, Sr. Extension Resource Educator – Livestock
SCNY Area Ag Team
Certified Ultrasound Technician

County Office Building
60 Central Avenue
Cortland, NY 13045

Tel: 607-753-5077
Voice: 607-753-5222
Fax: 607-753-5212
hhb6@cornell.edu

Checklist for Collecting Ultrasound Data

When? - At weaning time

- ❖ Review breed association guidelines for collecting ultrasound data.
- ❖ Determine the optimum time frame to collect the data based on animal age and sale deadlines.
- ❖ Obtain list of certified technicians recognized by your breed association.
- ❖ Make sure that your cattle are enrolled in your breed's performance program and that weaning weights have been submitted.
- ❖ Discuss ultrasound data collection with other producers in your area to possibly reduce travel costs.

When? - 60 to 90 days before expected date of scanning

- ❖ Determine how many animals will be scanned.
- ❖ Verify that you have barn sheets for the cattle to be scanned, and that the correct cattle are on the barn sheets.
- ❖ Verify that you have access to facilities satisfactory for scanning cattle - squeeze chute & scales.
- ❖ Contact approved technician(s) about scheduling the scan.
- ❖ Discuss special conditions at this time - outdoor facility, multiple locations, etc.
- ❖ Develop a back up plan.

When? - 14 days prior to scanning

- ❖ Confirm scan date with the technician.
- ❖ Make final arrangements for facilities.
- ❖ Check scales!

When? - 48 hours prior to scanning

- ❖ Gather all paperwork.
- ❖ Make final arrangements for cattle to be at facility for scanning.

When? - Day of scanning

- ❖ Have animals ready at the scheduled time.
- ❖ Be able to properly identify all animals by tattoo.
- ❖ Complete barn sheets and give to technician.
- ❖ Point out exceptions - incorrect tattoos or animal data, barn sheet add-ons, purchased cattle, etc.
- ❖ Check payable to CUP for (\$4.00 X number of head scanned) for processing fees.

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Cornell Cooperative Extension in Cortland County provides equal program and employment opportunities, NYS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, NYS College of Human Ecology, and NYS College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, Cooperative Extension associations, county governing bodies, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating.

Tips for Collecting Ultrasound Data

- ❖ It is best to weigh cattle at the same time they are scanned. If this is impossible and the cattle need to be moved to another location for weighing, weigh them after they are scanned and fax the completed barn sheet to technician. In some cases if the cattle are weighed in advance of scanning, and the scan session must be rescheduled, it may be necessary to re-weigh the animals. Animals must be weighed seven (+ or - 7) days prior of after scanning session.
- ❖ Cattle must be dry. If it is raining on the scan date and the cattle can not be held and scanned under roof - plan on rescheduling.
- ❖ Allow plenty of time from the scan date to the sale date or catalog deadline. Under the best conditions, there is about a 14 day calendar day turnaround on data (including shipping to the lab and return of data from the breed association). For time critical scans (central tests, production sales, etc.) during peak scanning season allow 14 to 21 calendar days!
- ❖ Allow plenty of time to collect the data! Cattle can usually be scanned at a rate of 12 to 15 per head per hour. Speed is limited by facilities, animal behavior and how quickly new pens can be brought in to the chute. Ideal conditions would be a constant flow of cattle, pre-clipped and an indoor squeeze chute. There is never a perfect facility, but ones with multiple problems make for very slow work.

Rejected Image Trouble Shooting Guide

Problem	Breeder Responsibility	Technician Responsibility
No squeeze chute with side panel doors to properly restrain the cattle and provide access to the region of scanning	X	
Raining, misty, or bright sunlight: cattle must be dry in the region of scanning and out of direct/bright sunlight to allow for seeing the images on the monitor.	X	
Unsafe electrical supply: a grounded 110-volt outlet with a clean signal is required.	X	
Poor Contact: cattle must be clipped & cleaned in region of scanning - no more than 1/2 inch of hair in scanning area.	X	
Cattle not processed at Lab: cattle not weighed within 7 days of scanning.	X	
Cattle not adjusted to end points: Cattle outside age range	X	
Supplemental heat for equipment & oil.	X	
Images rejected at Lab: Improper equipment calibration.		X
Images rejected at Lab: Improper gain & focus settings.		X
Images rejected at Lab: Reference points not visible on images.		X
Images rejected at Lab: Poor contact - insufficient couplant (oil)		X
Images rejected at Lab: Fewer than 4 IMF images.		X

Additional Barn sheet Comments:

Breeder's Responsibility: Provide completed barn sheets to the technician. Cattle not processed within the 7 day window are due to incomplete paperwork. Every animal scanned must be on the barn sheets, or have a tattoo, birth date and scan weight provided to the technician at time of scanning.

Technician's Responsibility: Make sure the breeder has supplied complete, correct paperwork. Breeds must be split out as well as multiple breeders as stated in the training manual. DO NOT enter any other ID than tattoo on keypad. Every scan session must have contact person, phone number, and address.

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Cornell Cooperative Extension in Cortland County provides equal program and employment opportunities, NYS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, NYS College of Human Ecology, and NYS College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, Cooperative Extension associations, county governing bodies, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating.