



VPP Beef Niche Market Cow earns a premium - BCS #3

**DQC**  
Dairy Quality Center  
a Division of Agri-Education, Inc.

# BEEF TRIM



Unworthy of selling into the VPP Beef Niche Market - BCS #1

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Southwest Region

## Sweeping the Nation. . .

Have you noticed a common theme in your dairy periodicals and media the last four months? Stories have focused on stockmanship/ low stress animal handling/ cow care and animal movement... the list goes on but the messages are all the same. Work smarter so the cows know what you want! Consumers and retailers insist on gentle animal management.

Newer automobiles use the hands-free method when parallel parking...GPS for crop farming makes it possible to travel across fields during planting, cultivating, and harvesting without steering ... why wouldn't the advancement of livestock handling be preferred when working with dairy cows too?

Hands-free at the dairy could be translated to low stress animal handling! So what are the benefits of hands-free low stress stockmanship techniques?

1. Smart Cows! (Not related to smart cars). You cultivate the atmosphere of people working smarter not harder. We see our top VPP herds educating employees on the effectiveness of applying visual pressure to stimulate animal movement.

2. Efficiency! The cows will be more responsive - needing fewer employees to bring up cows to the parlor.

3. Creates another opportunity to monitor locomotion and encourage early culling to earn more from your culls and reduce the need to euthanize near downers.

4. Employees demonstrate respect for every animal when using the low stress techniques (no hitting, yelling, and no temper tantrums by the employees).

5. Best of all... your market animals reveal high quality carcasses at the packer which translates as money for you from the hanging carcass! (Reduces trim loss and cutouts from bruising).

What's at the bottom of this barrel?

Sustainability; for you, your family and employees. One definition of sustainability is a plan to increase production, the ability to keep growing and having the skills to move into the future.

Your ability to sustain your dairy operation is challenged by many outside forces, including the foresight of your management team or the dedication and commitment of your employees. Add in your dairy herd's health, your milk market and their intent to continue buying your milk. Don't forget your meat packer and their ability to find niche markets for your dairy beef. Add to this your desire to capture a premium for your high quality carcasses and milk!

Beyond the markets the real drivers of a sustainable food system are the retailers and consumers, not to mention future generations.

The Verified Premium Plus program rewards the changes on your dairy. The veterinarian verifies your production practices, and guides your course in sustainable decisions. Hands-free is the right move to maintain your high quality locomotion and body condition scores.

What do you see in your future? Prepare your dairy to adapt to new methods, techniques and strategies. Gone are the days of marketing poor quality cows as a last-ditch effort. How do you calculate and schedule your next steps to success? Be proud of your efforts to meet and exceed consumer expectations as you lead your dairy into the future. How will you eliminate waste, plan early culling and fully embrace other sustainable practices? Let the winds of change keep you alert as you prepare for a great future!

Sustainability can be aligned with having your hands free and head on straight.

