

# DESCRIPTION OF NGUNI CATTLE

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(Adapted and adopted by Liaison Committee for  
Indigenous Livestock)

## 1. SIZE AND MASS

Bulls are of medium size weighing 500-800 kg. The average shoulder height of Phase C bulls (+ 15 months) is + 120 cm. Cows are smallish and weigh 300-400 kg. Their body length is + 130 cm and height at shoulder + 119 cm.

## 2. SHAPE AND PROPORTIONS

Nguni cattle should have a functionally efficient conformation. They are of respiratory type and exhibit harmonious proportions giving a neat appearance.

## 3. HEAD

The head is of medium size and length with lean fleshing and an alert appearance. The shape is not coffin shaped. The jaws are deep.

The profile is longitudinally straight but slightly dished laterally.

The forehead is usually at least as long as the face and widest at the eyes - orbital prominence.

The eyes are well-spaced, alert and the brows are not heavy or prominent. There should be good pigmentation around the eyes. Their apparent size varies between sexes, being prominent in females, but not protruding in males.

The face is wide, decreasing only slightly to the muzzle.

Its profile is straight. The nose is straight, strong and well-defined. The muzzle is broad, strong and dark-pigmented.

The lower jaw is well-formed, but not too prominent or over / undershot.

Ears are small, pointed and covered with short, dark-coloured fine hair and no fringe. Their position is below and behind the horns.

Ngunis are predominantly horned, but occasionally naturally polled animals occur.

The poll width depends on the presence and placement of the horns being wider and rounder in bulls and animals with wide or no horns.

## 4. HORNS

Horns are crescent-shaped in bulls and characteristically lyre-shaped, thinner and longer in mature females. They are round in cross-section and dark, especially at the tips.

## 5. NECK AND DEWLAP

The neck is moderately long and well-attached to head and forequarters being lean in cows but shorter and fuller in bulls.

The dewlap is smaller than that of the Afrikaner, commencing as a single fold between the lower jaw, tucked up below the throat and terminating between the forelegs.

## 6. HUMP

The hump is situated cervico-thoracically and is muscular in structure. The size and shape of the hump is reasonably well-developed in bulls, especially after 3 years, but in females it is only evident in individual animals in good condition.

## **7. FOREQUARTERS**

The withers are comparatively narrow and well-defined in females, heavier in males.

The shoulder is short and relatively upright.

The barrel of the chest is of the respiratory type with well sprung ribs.

The brisket is only slightly prominent.

The forearm is of moderate length, lightly muscled and fine boned.

The knee is small and round with dense bone.

Cannons are moderate in length, fetlocks small and pasterns are short. All have fine, dense bone. Pasterns are short and slightly sloped to upright. Feet are high-heeled, round shaped and hooves have dark dense horn close together in front, but can be more open medially. Front feet are larger than hind feet. Claws articulate separately and more freely.

## **8. MIDDLE PIECE**

The back is straight, strong and well-muscled in the loin of bulls, but the top line has tendency to be slightly hollow. The abdomen has adequate capacity and is well carried. The hind flank has fair depth and fullness and the navel flap is small.

## **9. HINDQUARTERS**

The rump is not very broad in hook bone, thurl and pin bone, but moderately long, dropping from hook to pin bones. This together with a prominent sacrum gives a slightly rooky tendency to the rump.

The tail is long and thin with a flexible tip. It has no long hair on it but has a full brush (switch) and extends down to the hocks.

The thighs are round and relatively lean and the twist is not very deep.

The shank (gaskin) is long and lean.

The hocks are of excellent depth with good placement, but have a tendency to be sickle- and cow- hocked.

The bone of the hind legs is small and dense.

The cannons, fetlocks, pastern and feet are of similar quality to that of the forelegs.

## **10. HIDE AND HAIR**

The Nguni has a well-pigmented, motile hide of medium thickness and the coat is short, fine and glossy (oily). The coat patterns are legion and warrant a separate descriptive catalogue, but black, red, dun, roan, speckled and parched animals are acceptable. Pure white and unpigmented animals are discriminated against.

## **11. MALE ORGANS**

Testes are of functional size and shape, equal in size and not hypoplastic. The scrotum is pigmented with well-developed thermoregulatory function. The sheath is small and not pendulous.

## **12. MILK SYSTEM**

The udder is moderate in size, but well-developed. It is well-attached and – carried and does not droop.

Teats are smallish, but well-pigmented and functional.

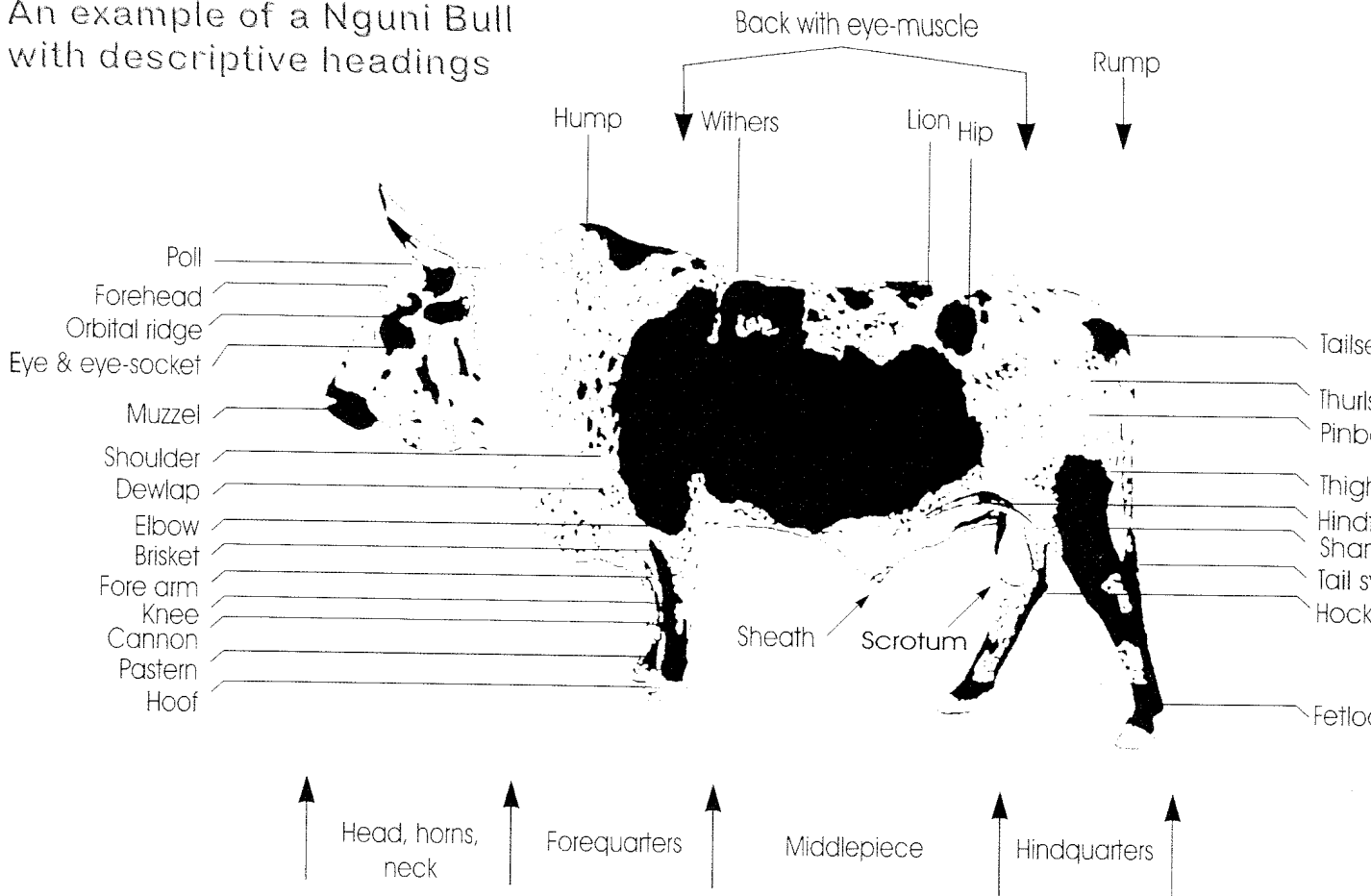
Milk veins are not prominent.

## **13. TEMPERAMENT**

The Nguni is docile, but alert and has good mothering abilities

# PHENOTYPIC DESCRIPTION

An example of a Nguni Bull with descriptive headings



An example of a Nguni Cow with descriptive headings

