



Holstein Association USA Conformation Advisory Committee Recommendations February 17, 2026

The following recommendations were made at the Conformation Advisory Committee meeting held on February 17, 2026. They were approved at the HAUSA Board of Directors Meeting on March 27, 2026. This information is being shared in accordance with the publication requirements outlined in HAUSA's [Disclosure Policy](#).

1. Sliding Scale Penalty for Stature

Implement a sliding scale penalty for Stature, with 60 inches considered the ideal height. The penalty would be deducted from the Front End & Capacity major breakdown, which represents 15% of the final classification score. The table below illustrates how stature measurements above 60 inches would affect Front End & Capacity and the resulting impact on final score:

| Stature (inches) | Linear Score | Deduction from Front End & Capacity | Impact on Final Score |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <=60" | 25 | No Deduction | None |
| 61" | 30 | -1 | -0.15 |
| 62" | 35 | -2 | -0.3 |
| 63" | 40 | -4 | -0.6 |
| 64" | 45 | -6 | -0.9 |
| 65" | 50 | -8 | -1.2 |
| 66" | 50 | -11 | -1.65 |
| 67" | 50 | -14 | -2.1 |
| 68" | 50 | -17 | -2.55 |
| 69" | 50 | -20 | -3 |
| 70" | 50 | -23 | -3.45 |

This recommendation defines a breed standard for ideal stature for the first time and is intended to moderate extreme stature in our breed, while rewarding balance, strength, and functional correctness. This will be implemented with the May 2026 classification program.

2. Eligibility for Breed Age Average (BAA)

To be eligible for inclusion in a herd's Breed Age Average (BAA), cows must have calved within the previous 24 months. This change is intended to ensure that BAA calculations reflect currently active, productive cows in a herd. This will be implemented for classifications in May 2026 and after.



Joint Conformation Advisory Committee & Genetic Advancement Committee Recommendation February 17, 2026

The following recommendation was made at a joint meeting of the Conformation Advisory and Genetic Advancement Committee meetings held on February 17, 2026. It was approved at the HAUSA Board of Directors Meeting on March 27, 2026. This information is being shared in accordance with the publication requirements outlined in HAUSA's [Disclosure Policy](#).

Holstein Conformation Composite (HCC)

The committee recommends implementing the Holstein Conformation Composite (HCC) as presented by staff. The HCC is a new selection tool, designed to help breeders identify animals with the combination of conformation traits most closely associated with balance, functionality, and long-term durability.

HCC will initially be published as a new trait, alongside PTA Type (PTAT) and the existing Udder Composite (UDC), Foot & Leg Composite (FLC), and Body Weight Composite (BWC) values. HCC values for active A.I. bulls will be released before July 1, 2026. Incorporation of HCC in TPI® would be evaluated later in 2026.

The committee adopted the following mission statement for the Holstein Conformation Composite:

The Holstein Conformation Composite (HCC) is a selection tool designed to identify animals with the combination of conformation traits most associated with balanced, functionally correct Holstein cattle. The HCC emphasizes intermediate optimum values for key traits that support long-term functionality. It promotes moderate frame size, balanced udders built for longevity and production potential, and sound feet and legs. The HCC identifies cattle that move well, maintain structural soundness, and produce profitably across many lactations, representing the balanced, durable cow that dairy producers recognize as their most profitable. Developed through collaboration between experienced breeders and the empirical analysis of Holstein Association USA's comprehensive database of linear conformation and production records, the HCC provides breeders an alternative to Predicted Transmitting Ability for Type (PTAT) by weighting individual conformation traits based on breed priorities, considering the relationships between traits, rather than being

based on Final Score alone. The formula is evaluated periodically by Holstein Association USA's Conformation Advisory and Genetic Advancement Committees to ensure it continues to advance the Holstein breed and serve the evolving needs of breeders worldwide.

The HCC incorporates HAUSA linear conformation traits, with each trait evaluated based on its relationship to functional balance and longevity. Trait weightings reflect both how heritable each trait is and how traits correlate to one another genetically. This approach helps explain why certain traits, such as Stature, receive relatively greater emphasis than may be expected. For ease of presentation, several weights shown in the table below are rounded; actual trait weights sum to 100%.

| Trait | Weighting | Emphasis |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Stature | 15% | Favors Lower Values |
| Strength | 9% | Favors Higher Values |
| Body Depth | 3% | Intermediate Optimum |
| Dairy Form | 4% | Favors Higher Values |
| Rump Angle | 6% | Intermediate Optimum |
| Rump Width | 5% | Intermediate Optimum |
| Rear Legs – Side View | 5% | Intermediate Optimum |
| Rear Legs – Rear View | 2% | Favors Higher Values |
| Foot Angle | 8% | Favors Higher Values |
| Feet & Leg Score | 7% | Favors Higher Values |
| Fore Udder Attachment | 6% | Favors Higher Values |
| Rear Udder Height | 3% | Favors Higher Values |
| Rear Udder Width | 5% | Favors Higher Values |
| Udder Cleft | 8% | Favors Higher Values |
| Udder Depth | 5% | Intermediate Optimum |
| Front Teat Placement | 2% | Intermediate Optimum |
| Rear Teat Placement | 4% | Intermediate Optimum |
| Teat Length | 5% | Intermediate Optimum |