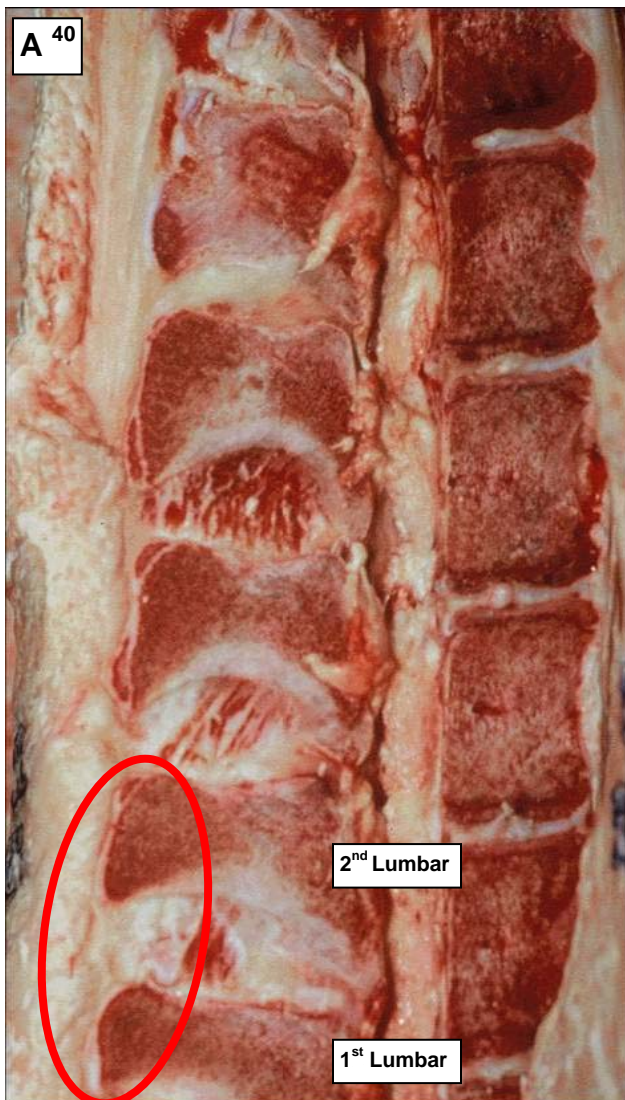


## Description of Carcass Maturity Characteristics within A Maturity Classification

	A <sup>00</sup>	A <sup>40</sup>	A <sup>50</sup>	A <sup>100</sup>
All Vertebrae	Some evidence of cartilage in all vertebrae			
Sacral Vertebrae	Show distinct separation	Show distinct separation, caps show considerable evidence of cartilage	Show separation, caps show evidence of cartilage	Completely fused
Lumbar Vertebrae	No ossification	Caps tend to be partially ossified	Caps tend to be nearly moderately ossified	Nearly completely ossified
Thoracic Vertebrae	No ossification	No ossification	No ossification	Some evidence of ossification
Split Vertebrae Surfaces	Soft, porous & very red	Tend to be soft, porous & red	Tend to be moderately soft, porous & moderately red	Slightly red & slightly soft
Ribs	Only slight tendency toward flatness	Tendency toward flatness	Some tendency toward flatness & narrow	Slightly wide & slightly flat
Lean Texture & Color	Very fine, light grayish red	Very fine, light red	Very fine, moderately light red	Fine, moderately light red

**Image 1.** Photographic demonstration of the lumbar vertebrae of a carcass with A<sup>40</sup> Overall Maturity.



**Image 2.** Photographic demonstration of the lumbar vertebrae of a carcass with A<sup>50</sup> Overall Maturity.

