

NATIONAL 4-H LIVESTOCK JUDGING CONTEST

Tuesday, November 14, 2023
Superintendent - Dr. Brian Bolt
Associate Superintendent – Dr. John Rayfield
Board of Directors, Chair – Matt Gunderson and Vice-Chair – Bonnie Boyden

General Rules for 4-H National Livestock Judging, Skillathon and Quiz Bowl

RESPONSIBILITY

The National Youth Livestock Contests endorses and supports the International Association of Fairs and Expositions National Code of Show Ring Ethics (“Code of Ethics”). All contestants and their families agree to abide by this Code of Ethics and all rules and regulations. Each state representative, State 4-H Program Leader and any other designated representative, coach, contestant and their family are responsible for becoming familiar with those sections and abide by those rules and regulations at all times. The purpose of the contest shall encourage all coaches, contestants and their families to maintain a high standard of ethics while competing. Violation of rules and regulations shall lead to penalties for contestants and possibly their coach and/or team which may include disqualification, barring from future contests, removal of awards and reporting the infraction to the North American Livestock Show and Rodeo Managers’ Association (NALSARMA).

LIABILITY

It is understood that all persons participating in the National Youth Livestock Contests, whether participating as a contestant, parent/guardian of a contestant, coach, or in any other capacity, acting on behalf of themselves, their principals, their agents or employees, agree to make no claim against the National Youth Livestock Contests, any official or anyone acting by, for or through them or any of them, for loss, damage or injury to any property, animal or person resulting from any cause.

ADMINISTRATION OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The National Youth Livestock Contests reserves to its Executive Committee, Management Committee and Contest Superintendent the final and absolute right to interpret these rules and regulations and to arbitrarily settle and determine all matters, questions and differences in regard thereto, or otherwise arising out of or connected with or incident to a Contest, and the right to amend or add to these rules as its judgment may determine.

ENTRIES

THE NATIONAL YOUTH LIVESTOCK CONTESTS RESERVES THE ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO REJECT ENTIRELY OR ACCEPT CONDITIONALLY ANY ENTRY OR APPLICATION FOR ENTRY OR TO WITHDRAW CLASSIFICATION AND PRIZES IN ANY CONTEST UPON THE CLOSING OF ENTRIES WHENEVER IT, IN ITS SOLE JUDGMENT, DETERMINES THAT SUCH ACTION WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF NATIONAL YOUTH LIVESTOCK CONTESTS (SPECIFIC INFORMATION IS PRINTED IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION).

REJECTION OF ENTRY/DISQUALIFICATION

OVERRIDING RULE

- Contestants, by submission of an entry or application, expressly acknowledge that there is no right, whether constitutional, statutory, or otherwise, to participate or compete in the National 4-H Livestock Contests (Judging, Skillathon & Quiz Bowl).
- Contestants, by submission of an entry or application, expressly acknowledge that all procedures and remedies set forth in the rules applicable to decisions to reject entries or disqualify contestants are the sole and exclusive procedures and remedies available to the contestant. Further, contestants, parents/guardians of contestants, coaches, and all other persons participating in the National Youth Livestock Contests in any capacity whatsoever, waive any and every right to challenge, question, or contest any and all actions or inactions, rules, regulations, deadlines and schedule for the National Youth Livestock Contests, and, to the fullest extent permitted by law, contestants, parents/guardians of contestants, coaches, and all other persons participating in the National Youth Livestock Contests in any capacity whatsoever, will not now or at any time in the future pursue any legal action of any kind, nature, and character whatsoever against the National Youth Livestock Contests or its Executive Committee, Management Committee, Contest Superintendent, or any other parties affiliated with the National Youth Livestock Contests, or cause or knowingly permit any such legal action to be pursued in any federal, state, or municipal court, administrative agency, arbitral forum, or other tribunal, arising out of any of the matters covered by the rules.
- Contestants, by submission of an entry or application, expressly acknowledge that submission of an entry to the National 4-H Livestock Contests (Judging, Skillathon & Quiz Bowl) be treated as consent to the following:
 - a. National Youth Livestock Contests reserves the absolute right and discretion to submit the name of a disqualified contestant to whomever it chooses, including, but not limited to, the North American Livestock Show and Rodeo Managers' Rule Infraction Database (the "database"), any appropriate governmental agencies or authorities, and representatives from any State 4-H Office, other livestock contest, exposition or fair.
 - b. National Youth Livestock Contests reserves the absolute right and discretion to use any means deemed necessary to obtain information from the database and/or any other State 4-H Office, college, university, livestock contest, exposition or fair regarding any contestant submitting an entry to the National 4-H Livestock Contests (Judging, Skillathon & Quiz Bowl). Information requested may include, but is not limited to, decisions to disqualify or withhold an entry acceptance from the contestant in a prior contest.
 - c. National Youth Livestock Contests reserves the absolute right and discretion to reject an entry submitted by or disqualify a contestant from competition if he or she has been disqualified from competition in any other livestock contest, show, exposition or fair, or has had a premium withheld or withdrawn by any other livestock contest, show, exposition or fair, for any reason, including, but not limited to, rules infraction, misrepresentation or fraud.

REJECTED ENTRIES

- The responsibility for making proper entry rests upon the contestant, coach, state representative and/or their respective State 4-H Office. **All entries must be submitted at the State 4-H Office prior to deadline for the state representative's and State 4-H Program Leader's signatures.**
- Any rejected entries will be returned to the contestant with a written explanation regarding reasons for rejection.
- If the coach believes additional information may warrant reconsideration of the decision to reject an entry, the coach must submit a written request for reconsideration, to include a detailed explanation of why the entry should be reconsidered, and, where appropriate, documentation supporting the explanation. The request for reconsideration must be received by the respective Contest (Judging, Skillathon, Quiz Bowl), within 48 hours of the received date of emailing of the rejection of entry notification from the Superintendent. **DECISIONS REGARDING RECONSIDERATION WILL BE MADE IN THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH LIVESTOCK CONTESTS AND SHALL BE FINAL.** The coach will be promptly notified in writing of the final determination.

DISQUALIFICATION

- Contestants, parents/guardians, and coaches who fail to comply with any and all rules, regulations, deadlines and schedules are subject to premium cancellation, disqualification from current and future participation in the National 4-H Livestock Contests (Judging, Skillathon & Quiz Bowl), and/or other third parties, including governmental authorities where appropriate.
- Following a determination that a contestant has been disqualified for a rule infraction, that state's coach shall receive written notification of the determination to include an explanation of the reasons for the determination and any resulting disciplinary action.
- If the coach believes additional information may warrant re-examination of the decision, he or she may submit a request for reconsideration. The request for reconsideration shall be in writing, and must include a detailed explanation of why the decision should be reviewed, and, where appropriate, documentation supporting the explanation. All reconsideration requests must be received within 48 hours if seven (7) days prior to the event; 24 hours if within seven (7) days of the event; and within 60 minutes of notification on the day of the contest. **DECISIONS REGARDING RECONSIDERATION WILL BE MADE IN THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH LIVESTOCK CONTESTS AND SHALL BE FINAL.** The coach will be promptly notified in writing of the final determination.
- Direct criticism or interference with the committee member, volunteer, official, judge, fair or livestock contest management, other contestants, breed representatives, or event officials from the contestant, contestant's parents/guardians, contestants extended family or coach before, during, or after the contest is prohibited. In the furtherance of their official duty, all judges, fair and livestock contest management, or other contest officials shall be treated with courtesy, cooperation and respect and no person shall direct abusive or threatening conduct toward them.

MAKING ENTRY

The responsibility for making proper entry rests upon the coach. **All entries must be submitted at the State 4-H Office prior to deadline for the state representative's and State 4-H Program Leader's signatures. Any and all entries submitted following the applicable deadline will be automatically and immediately rejected, and such entries will not receive a refund in any amount for any fees paid in connection therewith. All official entry forms that are physically submitted to the State 4-H Office must be completed using blue ink pens, not pencils. All official entry forms that are submitted to the State 4-H Office via email, or any other electronic medium, must be submitted as full-color copies to confirm the use of a blue ink color in completing the forms. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, any signature present on an official entry form will be treated in all respects as having the same force and effect as an original manual signature, and all persons shall be entitled to conclusively rely upon the validity and authenticity of such signature, so long as such signature is in one of the following forms: (a) an original manual signature; (b) a scanned or photocopied manual signature in full-color; or (c) any other electronic signature permitted by applicable law that is a true representation of the signatory's actual signature (including, without limitation, an electronic signature affixed to an official entry form through an electronic signature system such as DocuSign).**

FRAUD

The National Youth Livestock Contests Management Committee reserves the right to withhold the awards and premiums in any case in which it shall appear that the regulations have not been complied with, or that fraud or deception has been practiced or attempted. Ribbons, medals and prizes awarded shall be forfeited.

SEVERABILITY

If any portion, provision, or part of the rules are held, determined or adjudicated by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, unenforceable, void or voidable for any reason whatsoever, each such portion, provision or part shall be severed from the remaining portions, provisions or parts of these rules, and such determination or adjudication shall not affect the validity or enforceability of such remaining portions, provisions, or parts.

GOVERNING LAW AND JURISDICTION

In the event that any legal action of any kind, nature, and character whatsoever is pursued pursuant to a dispute arising under, or relating in any manner to, the rules, the rules shall be governed by and construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Nebraska, without regard to its conflict of law principles, and the parties to such legal action shall submit to the jurisdiction and venue of the federal courts located in the State of Nebraska and the state courts located in Sarpy County, Nebraska.

FORCE MAJEURE AND GOVERNMENTAL REGULATION

In view of the fact that the National Youth Livestock Contests Management Committee d.b.a. National 4-H Livestock Contests (Judging, Skillathon, Quiz Bowl) ("The Contest") is a non-profit corporation depending to a great degree upon the contributions and services of a substantial number of donors and volunteers, the National Youth Livestock Contests Management Committee deems it appropriate and prudent to be excused from liability, as set forth below in this paragraph, in the event of early cancellation of its events, operations and activities by reason of force majeure and/or governmental regulation. Accordingly, the following shall apply to the operations and activities conducted by the National Youth Livestock Contests.

Force Majeure

The National Youth Livestock Contests Management Committee shall not be liable for any delay or failure to perform its operations, activities, contests and events to the extent such delay or failure results from a force majeure occurrence. A force majeure occurrence is defined as any occurrence arising from causes beyond the reasonable control of the National Youth Livestock Contests Management Committee and National 4-H Livestock Contests (Judging, Skillathon, Quiz Bowl) which delays or prevents performance by the otherwise required by this Agreement, including but not limited to any (i) breakage or accident to equipment, machinery or facilities; (ii) any strikes, lock-outs or other labor difficulties; (iii) statutes, ordinances, regulations, orders or rules issued by governmental authorities; (iv) judicial decrees or orders; (v) acts of God; (vi) animal diseases and/or quarantines; (vii) wars, riots or insurrections; (viii) civil disobediences, public demonstrations or sabotage; (ix) fires, floods, explosions or inclement weather; (x) inability to obtain necessary labor, materials, supplies, utilities or transportation; (xi) depressions, recessions or other economic downturns; (xii) embargoes or energy shortages; or (xiii) other causes beyond the National Youth Livestock Contests reasonable control.

Governmental Regulation

The National Youth Livestock Contests Management Committee and National 4-H Livestock Contests (Judging, Skillathon, Quiz Bowl) shall not be liable for any delay or failure to perform its operations, activities, contests and events to the extent such delay or failure results from the National 4-H Livestock Contests (Judging, Skillathon, Quiz Bowl) good faith compliance with applicable governmental statutes, ordinances, regulations, orders, rules or other directives, including but not limited to compliance with governmental directives concerning public health and safety, animal disease prevention, detection and response (including animal quarantine and/or destruction) and protection of the environment.

LIVESTOCK JUDGING CONTEST RULES AND REGULATIONS

ENTRY

Each state is invited to enter one 4-H Livestock judging team of three members. A team may also enter an alternate. When the alternate judges, the three members with the highest total scores will make up the state total. The contestant with the lowest score is eligible for individual awards. The team members will be selected in a manner determined by the State 4-H Program Leader. The contestants must be certified by the State 4-H Program Leader or their written appointed designee on entry form and filed with the National Youth Livestock Contest [Vice - Chair by October 16](#). **NO LATE OR INCOMPLETE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED. (ACCEPTED ENTRIES ARE DEEMED SUBMITTED WHEN ALL REQUIRED ENTRY MATERIALS HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE HAVING ALL COMPLETED INFORMATION)**

An entry fee of \$400.00 may be paid by check to the ***National Youth Livestock Contest***

Each state that enters a 4-H livestock judging team is responsible for medical/accident insurance for all members of their team while traveling to and from the NAILE and during the National 4-H Judging Contest and other events associated with the NAILE.

CONTESTANTS AND ELIGIBILITY

1. Contestants must be bona fide 4-H Club members approved by the 4-H Program Leaders of their respective states. State 4-H Leaders are responsible for determining the eligibility of participants in the National 4H Livestock Judging Contest from their respective states.
2. Each contestant must have passed his or her 14th birthday and cannot have passed his or her 19th birthday by January 1st of the current year.
3. To be eligible to participate as a contestant in the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest at the North American Livestock Exposition, an individual:
 - A) shall not have participated in **any** post-secondary (university, college, junior college or technical school) competitive collegiate livestock judging/evaluation contest/event at any level. A competitive event is defined here as an event open to more than one educational institution (or its students) in which scores are kept and awards are offered to any or all participants;
 - B) neither shall a contestant have completed or be currently enrolled in a post- secondary course primarily in visual livestock judging/evaluation. Anyone who is listed on the Official Entry Form and is enrolled and/or received college credit **must** submit a college **transcript with the team's entry. Syllabi** must be submitted for any agriculture related courses. **No late or incomplete entries will be accepted after October 16.** This includes copies of the entry forms and materials submitted to the committee's Vice-Chair, as so stated on the entry form.
 - C) shall not participate in the North American International Livestock Exposition Junior College Judging Contest in the same year he/she is a contestant in the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest.
4. Contestants who have served as an official team member in the National 4-H Livestock Judging contest are ineligible to compete a second time.
5. Anyone who participates in the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest shall not be allowed to exhibit or show a beef and/or sheep animal at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) during the period of Nov 10 - 14, 2023. The cattle and sheep youth must choose between exhibiting livestock at the NAILE or judging in the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest during this period, they are not allowed to do both. You as an individual cannot exhibit or show a beef and/or sheep; however, they can have a beef and/or sheep shown with a substitute exhibitor if the request is made by November 1 to Bobby Bell at the NAILE.
6. Communication regarding the contest and any request shall only be received from the state team coach and/or state program leader only.
7. If the coach and/or state program leader believes, additional information may warrant reconsideration of the decision the coach/program leader must submit a written request with a \$250.00 fee to the contest superintendent, chair and vice chair. There will be no refund of said fee unless ruled in favor of the protest. At that time, the fee will be fully refunded. Cash and digital transfers only.

Violation of any of these rules shall disqualify all members of the entered team as contestants in this or future National 4-H Livestock Judging Contests. Further, the coach shall be barred from participation in the current, as well as, future contest.

METHOD OF CONDUCT

(Any amendment to the “Method of Conduct” section sent to State 4-H Leaders and/or their delegated contacts by July 1, 2023, will be in effect for the 2023 contest.)

1. Contestants and coaches are permitted to visit the North American International Livestock Exposition starting on Saturday, November 11. However, they are required to stay out of the East Hall where the contest will be held and the West Wing and Hall where the beef cattle are located. All participants and coaches shall avoid the East Hall including hallways on Monday during the Senior Collegiate contest. Any violation could result in disqualification of the team. Contestants and coaches may visit the trade show and are allowed in the stands to watch the beef cattle show in Freedom Hall, (no individual listed on the entry form shall be allowed on the floor, show ring or ringside of the Arena or in beef tie-outs). Contestants and coaches must stay out of all beef and sheep stalling areas.
2. A coaches meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, November 13 in the Crowne Plaza, Louisville Airport Hotel, Meeting Room. At that time, the program will be explained and contest instructions will be given. Coaches should be prepared to check names, addresses, and ages of their contestants.
3. All contestants and coaches will report to the East Hall of the Exposition Center on Tuesday, November 14 at 7:30 a.m., where they will receive final instructions regarding the remainder of the contest.
4. No contestant shall wear any clothing, pins, or badges that will in any way reveal his/her identity or the state that he/she represents. The contest will be held inside so dress accordingly. No hats are to be worn during the contest.
5. All electronic communication devices of any kind are prohibited. Please advise your contestants to remove these devices prior to the start of the contest. If a contestant's phone should ring, or if they are discovered using such electronic devices during the contest, the contestant and their team may be disqualified.
6. Contestants will be divided into groups for the contest and will remain with their assigned group throughout the contest and the delivery of oral reasons. While the contest is in progress, there will be no conferring between contestants or between a contestant and anyone else except as directed by the Superintendent or his/her representative. Offending contestants may be disqualified.
7. The contest will be comprised of eleven (11) classes of livestock. Of these eleven classes, four will be beef, three will be swine, three will be sheep, and one will be a class of meat goat does or market wethers. In the event that a high quality goat class cannot be located, the committee has the right to add a fourth sheep class. Sheep Breeds for class consideration shall also include hair type sheep. All classes will be comprised of four animals, and the animals will be designated with numbers 1-2-3-4. At least one breeding class from each species will have performance data and a scenario included. However, contest administrators and officials will strive to include performance information and scenarios for all breeding classes, if possible. See the Guidelines: National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest for a description of scenarios and performance definitions. Of the four species being evaluated, a minimum of one class may be made up of intact males.
8. Reasons will be given on four classes (two beef, one swine, and one sheep). Questions will be asked on three classes. One swine (breeding or market); one sheep or meat goat (breeding or market); one beef (breeding or market) that will comprise the question classes. A beef breeding class with performance records will automatically be an oral reasons class. Contestants will be provided a blank notebook/pad on the morning of the contest. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while giving oral reasons.
9. Two minutes will be allowed to give oral reasons on each class.
10. Contestants will be allowed twelve (12) minutes to place each non-reasons class.

11. Contestants will be allowed fifteen (15) minutes on each reasons class, to make their observations, take notes, and fill-out their placing.
12. Once time has been called and judging on a class has been completed, contestants must immediately turn in their placing when requested by their Group Leader. Any contestant failing to turn in their placing either by the time the Ring Clerk picks up the Group's placing from the Group Leader or the group has rotated to the next class shall receive a zero as a placing score for that class. Contest reserves the right to modify this rule as needed.
13. Breeding cattle and steers will NOT be handled. All judging of non-reasons cattle classes will be done from a distance of 10-15 feet. Close inspection may be allowed. This will be determined after selection of the classes.
14. Breeding sheep and goats will not be handled since they will be judged loose in a pen. When handling market lambs and meat goat wethers, contestants will stand in line and will be allowed 15 seconds to handle each lamb or goat individually. Lambs and goats will not be rehandled at any time.
15. All official 4-H coaches and assistants as listed on the state entry form (spouses if they want to) must be available and shall be required to assist during the morning of the contest to assist with the running of the contest. Job responsibilities will be assigned at the coaches' meeting on Monday evening prior to the contest.

SUPERINTENDENT

1. It shall be the duty of the Superintendent to see that all rules and regulations of the contest are followed. He/she shall determine the answers to all questions which may arise in connection with the interpretation of the rules governing the contest.
2. The superintendent shall have assistant superintendents and helpers to assist with contest management.
3. The Superintendent will not serve as an official judge nor listen to oral reasons.
4. The Superintendent shall take charge of all records and shall have all scores tabulated and totaled.
5. All decisions by the Superintendent, Chair and/or Board of Directors shall be deemed final and shall not be further challenged.

CONTEST HELP

Any handlers, clerks, assistants and attendants, etc. shall be under the direction of the Superintendent. They shall carry out all assignments in an orderly manner; and no contest help shall confer with a contestant, contest committee, contest's official Judges, or anyone from the public or other coaches while serving in their official contest capacity unless directed by the Superintendent.

DETERMINATION OF RATINGS

1. Fifty (50) points shall constitute a perfect mark for placing classes and 50 points a perfect mark on oral reasons.
2. Highest total score overall wins.
 - a. If there is a tie then the highest total reasons score breaks the tie.
 - b. If still tied then the lower placings in reasons classes wins.
 - c. If still tied then the highest total questions score wins.
3. Highest reasons score wins.
 - a. If there is a tie then the lower placings classes wins.
 - b. If there is still a tie the highest total overall score wins
4. Highest score within the species wins.
 - a. If there is a tie then the highest total reasons score within the specie wins.
 - b. If still tied then the highest total reason score overall wins.
 - c. If still tied then the highest total score overall wins.
5. The records tabulated and submitted by the Superintendent to the Secretary-Manager of the North American International Livestock Exposition shall be final, once they have been publicly announced.
6. Team alternates are eligible for individual awards.

JUDGES

1. A committee of judges shall place all classes and listen to oral reasons. If the number of teams entered indicates that additional judges are necessary to expedite the process of listening to oral reasons, the Superintendent shall have the authority to appoint such judges.
2. The judges shall place the classes while the contestants are working in the area. The judges shall mark their placings, indicate the cuts to be made and file that placing with the referee judge.
3. Contestants will **NOT** be offered their placing as they appear before an official judge to give their oral reasons. When a contestant has finished giving oral reasons on a class, the judge will place the official reasons score on a master sheet that will be used for tabulation.

CONTESTANTS AND TEAMS WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE CONTEST FOR INFRACTIONS OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS

ENTRY MATERIALS due by October 16:

- 1) **State Entry Form – with all the required signatures (Program Leaders and Coaches), youth and coaches information**
- 2) Anyone who is listed on the Official Entry Form and is enrolled and/or received college credit **must** submit a college **transcript with the team's entry. Syllabi** must be submitted for any agriculture related courses.
- 3) **Signed National 4-H Livestock Contest Code of Ethics for coaches.**
- 4) **An entry fee of \$400.00 maybe paid by check to the National Youth Livestock Contest.**
- 5) **All forms, required materials and check must be sent to Vice-Chair Bonnie Boyden. You may email the forms to bboyden@umd.edu and mail the check or mailed to 9501 Crain Highway, Box 1, Bel Alton, MD 20611. All documents and payments must be received by October 16.**

Failure to submit all entry materials by the deadline shall deem the state's entry incomplete and thus ineligible to compete in that year's National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest.

WEBSITE FOR ALL INFORMATION FOR THE 2023 CONTEST:

<https://youthlivestockcontests.org/>

If you have questions about the livestock judging contest or desire additional information, please contact the Superintendent:

Dr. Brain Bolt
LIVESTOCK SPECIALIST
Cooperative Extension, Clemson University

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