

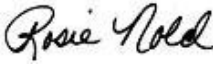


SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

August 2026

TO: State 4-H Program Leaders
Extension Livestock Specialists
Animal Science Department Heads

FROM: Rosie Nold 
Superintendent, National 4-H Livestock Skillathon Contest
Assistant Dean, College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences, South Dakota State

RE: 2026 National 4-H Livestock Skillathon Contest

The 25th annual National 4-H Livestock Skillathon Contest will be held on **Monday, November 16, 2026** during the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE). This comprehensive livestock knowledge competition will be conducted in Louisville at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center.

We are asking for your help in distributing this information to appropriate individuals in your state. We also seek your input in improving and more firmly establishing this type of comprehensive livestock knowledge contest. We appreciate your assistance in moving this educational effort forward.

All required forms are to be mailed or emailed to Rosie Nold, Committee Superintendent (rosemarie.nold@sdstate.edu). Required entry materials include:

1. State entry form with all required signatures, youth and coaches' information,
2. State 4-H Leader Verification form,
3. Participant Code of Conduct forms, and
4. Signed Code of Ethics form.

Contest Fees:

Registration fee of \$600 to "National Youth Livestock Contests" is required. Information on the payment options is on <https://youthlivestockcontests.org/>, where an electronic payment option is available. If electronic payment cannot be used, checks payable to "National Youth Livestock Contests" should be sent with the entry materials to Rosie Nold. Late registration at \$1000/team will be accepted up to one week after the deadline (October 21, 11:59 p.m.). No refunds for team entries will be given.

New for 2026 extra meal tickets can only be purchased on the website by October 14th. There is a limit of 5 extra tickets per team. Ticket cost is \$30.00 per ticket. Each team will receive 5 tickets for the awards breakfast with the team's registration.

Contest entry and other relevant forms, along with study materials can be found at <https://youthlivestockcontests.org/>. The North American International Livestock Exposition website will not have this information.

The following items are included on the website:

1. **National 4-H Livestock Skillathon Contest Rules and Regulations.** Please note there is a “General Rules” section that applies to the Skillathon, Judging and Quiz Bowl contests.
2. **Team Entry Form: Due by October 14th.**
 - Form must be completed with all required signatures and contact information.
 - The responsibility for verification of eligibility lies with the State 4-H Program Leader/Director.
 - Be sure all of the requested information is included, signed and correct. Substitution of contestants may be made during the coaches’ meeting as long as they are listed on the entry form.
3. **Other forms:**
 - State 4-H Leader Verification form, and
 - Kentucky 4-H Code of Conduct (for every participant)
 - **Code of Ethics** (to be returned with entry).

All forms must be received or postmarked by October 14.

Hotel:

The contest headquarter hotel is the Crowne Plaza, Phillips Lane, Louisville, KY 40209; phone: (502-367-2251). This is the large hotel adjacent to the NAILE grounds. Please reach out to the hotel for reservations. When you open the following link, the page will say “National Livestock Judging Contest 2026” – this is correct, the same link is used for judging, skillathon and quiz bowl.

[National Contest 2026 - Start your reservation](#)

Coaches’ Meeting:

A coaches’ meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on the Sunday evening just prior to the contest at the Crowne Plaza, Louisville Airport Hotel. Contest instructions will be given at this time. Due to room size constraints, **we are asking that only one coach enter the room until we know there is adequate seating** for at least one coach from each state.

Contact:

For further information regarding the contest, I may be contacted at:

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Assistant Dean
College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences
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