

State Fair Overview for First Time 4-H Livestock Exhibitors

Are you thinking about exhibiting at the Nebraska State Fair 4-H Livestock Show for the first time? Below is a list of topics that may be different from your local County Fair. The general summary may help a 4-H family in becoming more prepared to exhibit at the Nebraska State Fair 4-H Livestock Show.

Who can participate?

- Youth who are enrolled in the project they are exhibiting in the county which they represent by June 15.
- 4-H member that is 9 years of age before January 1 of the current year with the last year of eligibility being 4-H age of 18.
- Youth who have completed the annual quality assurance training through Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) by August 10.
- Note: 4-H youth are not required to exhibit at the county level to exhibit at the State Fair.

Nomination and Entry Process:

All beef, swine, sheep and goat projects must be nominated online by June 15. A nomination is the identification process for making an individual animal eligible for show entry and providing evidence that the animal is part of the youth livestock project. All beef, swine, sheep, and goat nominations are required to have a DNA sample pulled by June 15. Exhibitors should work with their local Extension office to obtain their DNA envelopes and EID tags for beef and swine projects. Each nomination submitted will incur a \$7.00 fee. All beef, sheep, swine, and goat projects nominated by the appropriate deadline of June 15, will be eligible for exhibition in either 4-H or FFA. The designation can be determined at check-in during the State Fair. This option does not allow an animal to be shown in both 4-H and FFA at State Fair.

Exhibitors will be required to submit their online entry form by August 10. No additional entries may be added after this date and there are no options for a late entry. Exhibitors will have the option to substitute at check-in any animal that is on their nomination list that was not already entered.

Entry Fees:

Beef, Sheep, Swine, Goat, Rabbit and Poultry exhibitors will receive free admission for the entirety of the State Fair with a wristband, but other guests will be expected to pay a daily fee or may purchase a wristband. Dog exhibitors will receive a free one day admission gate pass. Exhibitors will have the options to pay for exhibitor parking and extra pens/stalls. For Beef exhibitors, a permit is required to bring a blocking chute and for sheep/goat exhibitors they are also required to purchase a stand permit.

Entry Fees for 2023: Beef (\$50/entry), Sheep (\$25/entry), Swine (\$25/entry), Goat (\$25/entry), Rabbit (\$5.00/entry), Poultry (\$5.00/entry) and Dog (\$5.00/entry)

Note: All 4-H and FFA entry fees are non-refundable.

Schedule:

The State Fair is a multi-day event. 4-H Exhibitors may come in as early as Thursday and are expected to stay as long as Saturday or Sunday, depending on which species and which division. All shows will happen on Saturday and Sunday in various locations on the fairgrounds and will run simultaneously. For this reason, exhibitors considering showing two or more species may want to consider reviewing the schedule to see when the shows may overlap. Note: Shows will not wait for exhibitors who may be showing in a different ring. If this might be an issue, talk with the show superintendent and have a substitute showman ready and an extra backtag for that substitute in case classes overlap. The 4-H and FFA livestock shows are hosted on two separate weekends.

Lodging:

Exhibitors should consider booking lodging 6-12 months in advance. Families may look at hotel rooms for lodging, but many families consider camping on the grounds or off site.

State Fair Veterinarian Check-In and Load-In Procedures:

All Livestock will be examined prior to entering the Nebraska State Fairgrounds by an authorized State Fair representative in "Brunk's Lot" (offsite parking area directly south of the fairgrounds). All animals must be accompanied by a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection CVI except for poultry originating from Nebraska. Review the State Fair Health Requirements in detail. There will be an extended amount of time that an exhibitor may need to wait in line before entering the fairgrounds. Be prepared to wait in line with your livestock and consider the time of the day and temperatures. The exhibitor does not need to be present to drop off tack and animals. There will be State Fair Staff and Volunteers navigating you through the load in process to your barns. There will be a map provided with directions on how to enter the barns from Brunk's Lot online. Exhibitors will have a limited amount of time to unload tack and animals. **Note: This process does not mean the animal is checked in for the show but that they can enter the fairgrounds. Please check the schedule for official check-in times for your specie where you will check registration papers, tattoos, or turn in weigh cards. See "check-In below".**

Stalling/Bedding/Equipment:

All 4-H exhibitors will be stalled based on their county that was listed during the entry process. There are county assignments, but actual stalls/pens are first come first serve. If an exhibitor wants extra space in the barn, consider purchasing extra pens or stalls. The first bedding will be provided for exhibitors in the Sheep Barn and Swine Barn. Bulk bedding will be provided in the cattle barn and tie-out area. Exhibitors will be permitted to bring onto the grounds a limited amount of feed, hay, or straw. There are guidelines on generators, fans, extension cords, electrical devices, chutes, scales, etc. Please review the General Livestock Rules in detail if you are considering bringing any equipment.

Check-In:

Every beef, swine, goat, sheep, poultry, rabbit, and dog entry must be checked in during the listed check-in time frame. If an animal is not checked in during the listed time, the animal is ineligible for exhibition. Each species will require different items for check-in. Ear tattoos and ear tags must match the online nomination or else the animal will be excused or shifted to a class that meets the proper identification requirements. Exhibitors should check prior to coming to the fairgrounds that the ear tag is still intact, and the ear tattoo remains legible and accurate.

All beef, swine, goat, sheep, poultry, and rabbit exhibitors will be required to turn in an ethics affidavit. Each market affidavit will be reviewed with a State Fair Veterinarian to review the withdrawal period of any drug administered. If the withdrawal period is not met, the market animal will be excused from exhibition.

Market lambs will be classified according to the breed standard set forth by the All-American Junior Sheep Show and/or the respective breed association at check-in by an assigned Classifier.

What to Expect in the Show Ring

Beef, sheep, and goats will all be shown in one large, divided ring in the Five Points Bank Arena. Expect sound coming from all three different rings throughout the day. Each ring is separated by short panels or bike racks. As you are training your animal, consider bringing in items like banners, sounds, colors, other animals to better prepare the animal for the State Fair. Class sizes will vary but you can expect up to 12-20 animals per class.

Swine will show in the Aurora Coop Pavilion and be the only species in that arena. There will be two rings but all classes will have a labeled class so exhibitors should be aware of which ring they are exhibiting in.

Rabbits and poultry will show in the Sheep Barn in a separate ring space near their cages. There will be two tables, but guidance will be provided so exhibitors should be aware of which table they are assigned.

Announcements will be made over each loudspeaker for each area. Exhibitors should be aware of the show order. Classes will not stop if an exhibitor is not present or showing in a different ring.

Showmanship Age Divisions:

There are two age divisions for Showmanship at the State Fair: Intermediate (9 – 13 years old before January 1 of the current year). Senior (14 – 18 years old before January 1 of the current year).

Drug Testing and DNA:

All Grand and Reserve Grand Champion beef, lamb, goat, and swine market animals will be tested for prohibited substances. Testing will be done immediately following the Final Selection of each species. Each exhibitor's cooperation is required. All Grand and Reserve Grand Market animals tested will be harvested and held until all testing has been completed. ALL OTHER MARKET ANIMALS WILL BE SUBJECT TO RANDOM TESTING.

The Nebraska State Fair may pull DNA on any market and/or breeding animal and test against the DNA submitted by the exhibitor as part of the 4-H/FFA state fair animal nomination process. It is a violation if a DNA sample collected at the Nebraska State Fair does not match the DNA sample submitted by the exhibitor as part of the animal nomination process.

Show Rules:

All exhibitors should review the species 4-H Fairbook, Nebraska State Fair Health Requirements, and Nebraska State Fair Livestock Rules closely. Exhibitors may be excused or disqualified for various infractions.

4-H livestock shows are blow and go; meaning animals may be clipped, blown, and brushed/combed to enhance their appearance. All animals will be shown free of any adhesive, glue, paint, or powder products. All animals will be subject to a visual inspection and/or toweling for the presence of adhesive, glue, paint, or powder products.

All market classes and certain commercial breeding classes will have an incorporated weigh-back. Animals not meeting the 5% variance above the declared weight at check-in will be lowered one ribbon group and will not be eligible for any champion awards.

Market animals which are administered treatments having a reported withdrawal and/or elimination time period beyond the show date will be ineligible from competition.

Load Out:

Exhibitors will have to follow the assigned load out schedule and may not be able to leave immediately after exhibition. Families will have to wait in Brunk's Lot and wait in line before coming on the grounds to load out.

Post Fair:

Exhibitors should prepare for returning home after a livestock event with proper cleaning and disinfecting, isolation of show animals from other animals on your farm for a minimum of 14 to 30 days, avoiding any cross-contamination and monitoring animals for signs of illness.

Exhibitors should plan on receiving their ribbon placing premiums after the State Fair from their County Extension Office.