

Alaska 4-H State Livestock Project Guidelines



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Hello, Alaska 4-H Families!

You are to be commended for taking on a livestock project in Alaska 4-H! Whether this is old hat for you, or you are brand new to the concept of raising animals as a 4-H project, you have taken on a rewarding, educational commitment that will serve your 4-H youth well into adulthood.



The Alaska 4-H State Livestock Project Guidelines are here to serve as a resource and guide for you, and to bring consistency to Alaska 4-H livestock programs. They are not intended to replace the education, requirements, or policies established by the committed 4-H leaders, 4-H staff, livestock committees, or Superintendents in your district. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide unity across the state in Alaska 4-H Livestock programming, encouragement and support in your educational endeavors, the available statewide resources available to you, and to serve as a jumping-off point of reference in your livestock projects.

These guidelines reflect the efforts and expertise of a statewide panel comprised of 4-H staff, parents, leaders, and youth representatives. They are in place to serve Alaska 4-H members, their families, 4-H leaders, staff members, and all of those who are involved in the amazing work of raising animals and livestock as an Alaska 4-H project.

Here is to making the best better in Alaska 4-H livestock projects!

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Alaska 4-H State Livestock Project Panel

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MatSu/Copper River Valley Representatives:

Heather Corbridge, Livestock Committee Treasurer

Rayne Reynolds, Livestock Resource Leader

Tanana District Representatives:

Tanja Bryan, Adult Livestock Representative

Youth Representative: Jude Huffman, Market Livestock Program member

Goals of the Alaska 4-H Livestock Statewide Panel

It is the goal and purpose of the Alaska 4-H State Livestock Panel to maintain a statewide set of guidelines, incorporating each district's policies, University requirements, and other needed/helpful information for Alaska 4-H youth members and families in order to make the best better in Alaska 4-H livestock programs.

Alaska 4-H State Livestock Project Guidelines

Purpose of the Alaska 4-H Livestock Project Guidelines

The purpose of the Alaska State 4-H Livestock Project Guidelines is to provide a standard for all Alaska 4-H youth members and families raising livestock as an Alaska 4-H project and a set of expectations for the objectives and outcomes of each 4-H livestock project across Alaska.

These guidelines are to enhance and accompany each district's established set of policies and not serve as a replacement. Districts may opt for stricter guidelines and procedures as they suit each district but may not implement lesser guidelines than the Alaska 4-H State Guidelines.

General Rules for Alaska 4-H Livestock Project Exhibitors:

1. Exhibitors are responsible for knowledge of and adherence to all district and state rules.
2. Youth must be at least 8 years old to participate in a competitive 4-H program.

The 4-H age is the age of the individual on Aug. 15 of the current 4-H year (which runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30).

3. 4-H members must compete in their age group:
 - Junior—8 years old by Aug. 15 of the current 4-H year through 11
 - Intermediate—12-14 years old
 - Senior—15-18 years old
4. Cloverbud 4-H members may participate in those contests not restricted by age but will receive a participation ribbon only. In alignment with national recommendations and guidelines, Cloverbud members may not participate in large animal projects.
5. Exhibitors are responsible for proper equipment and attire according to their district's guidelines.
6. Exhibitors are responsible for knowledge of and adherence to all rules.
7. To participate in any 4-H livestock event, exhibitors must be enrolled in Alaska 4-H in their appropriate district with all enrollment fees paid by their district's enrollment deadline.
8. Appropriate district contracts and agreements must be signed by the district deadline.
9. All livestock exhibitors in Alaska 4-H are expected to complete a 4-H record book in their project area, turning it in to their appropriate Extension office by the appointed deadline of their Extension office.

Expected Conduct:

1. The 4-H Code of Conduct will be expected of all who participate in 4-H events. Good sportsmanship and ethical behavior are required. Exhibitors, parents, and observers will act respectfully at all times. Exhibitors, parents, and observers considered being verbally or physically abusive and/or exhibiting objectionable behavior will be excused from the 4-H livestock event at the discretion of the 4-H coordinator.
2. The Extension office and livestock committees will make all possible efforts to secure the best available judges. The judges' decisions are final. Any interference with the judges, exhibitors, or officials, or any discourteousness or unsportsmanlike display toward them, will be cause for disqualification of the exhibitor. Exhibitors will follow the judge's directions at all times and, on request, will answer questions or demonstrate as indicated by the judge.
3. Parents and adults are encouraged to instruct members on the proper care and fitting of their animals, assisting only when absolutely necessary. 4-H exhibitions are youth shows and the 4-H member should do the actual care and fitting of the animals. The livestock superintendent has the authority to censor adults abusing the members' right to do their own work.
4. Youth livestock shows are provided so youth may learn by doing. Parents and other adults should instruct, advise, and encourage youth exhibitors in the proper care and fitting of their animals prior to entering the show ring. Coaching AFTER the member enters the ring may result in the member's removal from the ring.

Animal Specific:

1. Drug Abuse. No illegal drug, off-label use of drugs (uses other than allowed explicitly on the drug label), or use of unethical means to alter the physical composition, appearance, or disposition of a project animal is permitted. Violators will be disqualified immediately from the 4-H Livestock Program and barred from all future participation. Suspicion of drug use may result in a veterinarian's review and/or blood test. The Livestock Committee, Species Superintendent, or 4-H Program Coordinator may request testing or review.
2. The Superintendent or 4-H Program Coordinator reserves the right to have any animal removed from the exhibition facility for one of the following reasons: unruly animal or animals that present a general safety hazard; animal does not meet the project and ownership requirements; unhealthy animals.

3. All animals entered into a 4-H exhibition will reflect the appropriate weights, ages, and level of care as specified in their 4-H member's district livestock policies.
4. 4-H entries are to be entered and exhibited by the 4-H member who has raised the animal and should reflect their learning during the current 4-H year.
5. All 4-H exhibits, including animals, must be clean, neat, and properly prepared for exhibition and judging. The 4-H Program Coordinator or the 4-H Division Superintendent may refuse substandard or improperly prepared exhibits.
6. All animals housed at a 4-H exhibition must be checked by the exhibition veterinarian before they are unloaded or penned.
7. Proof of vaccinations for market livestock animals may be requested before entry.
8. No animal exhibiting signs of illness, parasites, incomplete healing, or injury will be permitted at a 4-H exhibition.
9. Except in the case of illness, emergency, or removal by the Livestock Superintendents or Program Coordinator, animals are to remain on exhibit through the duration of the 4-H exhibition as scheduled by the exhibiting district.
10. Exhibitors and accompanying adults will adhere to scheduled meetings required at their exhibition. Consequences for missing these vital meetings will be set by districts.
11. All market livestock projects are subject to the policies of the 4-H district in which a 4-H member exhibits.
12. 4-H members exhibiting animals must care for their animals and stalls until the animal leaves the exhibition. If animals are not properly cared for and fed while on exhibit, the Livestock Superintendent will make arrangements for their proper care, and the cost of labor and feed will be paid by the 4-H member. If the exhibitor fails to provide proper care for the animal, he/she may forfeit all premiums, be asked to remove the animal from the exhibition or have the cost of providing those services deducted from all sale proceeds (relating to the participants of a market sale).
13. In the issue of horned animals, each district will set their policy (in writing) regarding the allowance of these animals at their 4-H exhibition.
14. Following livestock shows' protocol and safety standards nationwide, cattle will be tied at all 4-H exhibitions.
15. Male large livestock will be castrated and healed from castration prior to all 4-H exhibitions.

Awards and Placings:

1. Per 4-H national policy, Cloverbud 4-H exhibits will receive participation ribbons only. Their exhibits will be evaluated so that they will learn what they did well and where they might improve.
2. Junior through Senior 4-H exhibits will be judged by the Danish system and awarded blue (excellent), red (good), or white (worthy) ribbons according to the quality, workmanship, and skill exhibited in comparison to an established standard based in part on the exhibitor's grade and experience.
3. Champion and Reserve Champion ribbons will be awarded in selected classes if meritorious exhibits exist.
4. Single entries in classes will not necessarily mean first place. Judges will award placings based on the type and quality of entries. Champions and reserve champions will be selected in each class only when the judge deems there are entries of championship quality.
5. An award will only be given where merit exists. Only blue-ribbon projects will be considered for class trophy or top award.

Emergency Situations at Livestock Events:

1. In case of emergency, accident, or injury, an appropriate call to the pertinent authorities will be made, and the 4-H Program Coordinator must be notified immediately. In case of any animal emergency, the Livestock Superintendent will also be immediately notified.

Protests and Grievances:

1. All protests must be presented in writing to the appropriate 4-H Program Coordinator and clearly state the cause of the complaint or appeal. No appeal based upon the statement that the judge or judges were incompetent will be considered. The protest will be aired in a meeting of the superintendent in charge, 4-H Program Coordinator, protester, and other parties involved in the dispute (as determined by the 4-H Program Coordinator).

Auctioning livestock in Alaska 4-H:

1. All policies of the district in which a 4-H member auctions will be adhered to.
2. Auctioning outside of one's district will be handled on a case-by-case request basis. Allowance for out-of-district members to auction will be at the discretion of the district's Board, Council, or Committee in which the youth requests to auction. Every allowance

will first be given for a district to provide a successful project and auction for those youth currently enrolled within their district prior to determining whether that district's program is able to absorb the impact of an out-of-district youth member auctioning. Districts cannot discriminate against applicants based on their home districts. Each district will utilize a standardized process for determining if an out-of-district youth can participate, which will be applied to each request to eliminate bias. Additionally, all 4-H youth must contact their home district 4-H Program Coordinator before contacting a secondary district's council.

3. All efforts to advertise before the livestock auction should be with the intent of bringing bidders to the auction. Arrangements or discussions of private animal sales prior to the auction shall not take place. Ensure you understand your district's consequences for discussing private sales before the auction!
4. District 4-H Livestock Programs, Committees, Boards, and Councils will work to develop an appropriate nonprofit entity or third-party institution to clerk the sale and distribute funds raised at all district livestock auctions and handle the information required by the IRS.

Education

1. The overall goal of a livestock project in Alaska 4-H is to enhance the agricultural education of Alaska 4-H youth.
2. Workshops and Clinics: The value of a 4-H livestock project comes from the educational opportunities that each district provides. The workshops, clinics, and classes that come to Alaska 4-H youth through agricultural experts, volunteers, leaders, superintendents, and guest speakers provide a layered, quality educational experience for Alaska 4-H youth and will be encouraged by 4-H program staff and volunteers. The goal of each session is "to make the best better."
3. Each district's policies require workshops over the course of a livestock project, and each district will continue to track their district's youths' progress on the requirement.
4. At the state level, Alaska 4-H will support and encourage these learning opportunities for all youth and will work toward providing ideas and opportunities for all Alaska 4-H youth and/or volunteers who are new to livestock projects or may need assistance in finding ideas for learning workshops in their area.
5. YQCA – www.yqcaprogram.org: To standardize and unify the educational aspects of Alaska 4-H livestock projects, all 4-H youth taking part in a livestock market project will be required to complete the Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) program. The YQCA program is a nationally recognized livestock quality assurance program and will be

offered on an individual basis for families to purchase (\$12) and complete at home online. As representatives within Alaska are trained in the YQCA program delivery, it will also be offered via in-person instruction. YQCA will be utilized in Alaska 4-H to ensure all Alaska 4-H youth completing market livestock projects have received unified and standardized information on Quality Assurance and raising livestock.

6. YQCA does not replace hands-on learning, workshops, farm tours, and instruction from district 4-H leaders, volunteers, superintendents, or university employees but rather enhances all Alaska 4-H livestock projects.
7. Individual district policies may allow YQCA to be included in said district's required workshop count as a solid and quality learning opportunity for youth completing livestock projects.
8. All Alaska 4-H youth enrolled in market livestock projects will be required to complete the YQCA program beginning in 4-H year 2023-24.
9. Alaska 4-H Website – Livestock page: The Alaska 4-H livestock page will serve as a centralized storage place and educational tool for 4-H youth and families. The site will include online learning opportunities, state guidelines, pertinent forms, information on the Alaska State Livestock Contest, national opportunities, and other information appropriate to enhancing the livestock projects of Alaska 4-H members and families.
10. The Alaska 4-H Livestock webpage will also include digital learning opportunities as they come up, which may be presented to district staff and/or livestock committees for approval to be considered one of the required workshops.
11. Alaska State Livestock Contest: The Alaska State Livestock Contest is a quality educational opportunity in the form of a statewide competition open to all enrolled Alaska 4-H members. This contest provides an opportunity for 4-H youth to showcase their learning and knowledge in agriculture while competing with other 4-H youth from around the state. The Alaska State Livestock Contest mirrors the Alaska State Horse Contest and national 4-H livestock competitions in format and offers segments in Livestock Judging; Skill-a-Thon; Public Speaking; and Quiz Bowl. A small art contest is offered most years as a fun way to shine a light on Alaska 4-H artists. Youth may form teams or compete individually. Youth engaged in livestock projects will find the study for the contest and the actual contest itself a great way to enhance their project and agricultural learning. This contest serves as the qualifier for national 4-H livestock competitions. Find more information and contest rules on the Alaska 4-H Livestock website.
12. National 4-H Livestock Competitions: 4-H youth from across the U.S. who have qualified at their state competitions gather annually to compete while representing their state at either Western Nationals held at N.A.I.L.E. (North American International Livestock

Exposition) in Louisville, Kentucky, (November) or at Eastern Nationals, held at National Western Roundup in Denver, Colorado (January). Youth may compete in each segment of the competition just once throughout their 4-H career so as not to repeat any one segment. Example: Over their 4-H career, should members qualify, they would be able to compete in each segment once: Quiz Bowl, Skill-a-Thon, Livestock Judging, and Public Speaking.

Qualifying youth work with their district program coordinator and state 4-H program leader to complete the registration requirements for these events. Information on these competitions may be found on the Alaska 4-H Livestock website, on the competition's home pages, or by contacting the district program coordinator or the Alaska 4-H Livestock point of contact, Cassandra Rankin.

Record-Keeping

1. Record-keeping is essential to successful agricultural projects and production and is emphasized in all Alaska 4-H livestock projects.
2. All Alaska 4-H youth completing livestock projects will be required to maintain and submit appropriate records for their livestock project.
3. Alaska 4-H General Record Book: The Alaska 4-H General Record Book serves as a cover letter for all Alaska 4-H youth members and their 4-H projects. It includes the events a 4-H member took part in over the course of the year and provides an overview of the member's participation in the current 4-H year. This book is to be included in all 4-H Record Bookbinders, and project-specific inserts are completed (one for each project) and inserted in the binder behind the General Record Book.
4. Alaska 4-H Livestock Project Insert: The Alaska 4-H Livestock Project insert is a record all on its own and is required for all youth exhibiting or marketing a livestock project in Alaska 4-H. This project insert requires youth to record the time spent on their project, the tasks they participated in as part of their project, the medical and financial information as it pertains to their project, and the rate of gain associated with their market project. Instructions on how to complete this project insert can be found at: [A Closer Look at Alaska 4-H Livestock Project Insert \(uaf.edu\)](http://uaf.edu)
5. Each district handles its district record-keeping requirements.
6. In addition, Senior division 4-H youth are encouraged to participate in the state record book contest each year should their record book qualify. District 4-H employees will work with youth to prepare their record book for this contest for those who qualify.

Independence, Belonging, Generosity, Mastery

1. The goal of any 4-H project is to foster independence, belonging, generosity, and mastery.
2. Independence is grown while 4-H members work throughout their project to ethically care for and exhibit their 4-H animals. While family involvement is vital, a 4-H project should display the learning and growth of the 4-H member as they responsibly care for their project animal/s.
3. 4-H leaders, superintendents, volunteers, and employees will create an environment of belonging in their clubs, groups, and districts. While market animals involve a different level of participation (auction), equal emphasis will be given to small stock project and non-market project youth to ensure a celebration of successes in all projects, at both the individual and club levels as well as at the district and state levels.
4. 4-H leaders, superintendents, volunteers, and employees will work with youth who are not accustomed or familiar with farm settings to help them grasp the concept of raising animals as a 4-H project.
5. As 4-H members pledge “my hands to larger service,” those raising livestock will be encouraged to contribute to their community, whether through donations of their agricultural products, community service, or sharing their skills and knowledge with fellow 4-H members.
6. 4-H members will enjoy a sense of mastery in their project area as they grow and learn and continue “to make the best better.” It is the hope and the goal of 4-H programming that the experience and skill 4-H members attain in their project areas will equip them to be the mentors and leaders for younger and newer 4-H’ers in their district and the state.

FAQs of Raising Livestock as a 4-H Project:

How do I start?

The goal of any market project is to raise an animal to the industry standard of that animal. Familiarize yourself with your district's procedures for raising livestock, which reflect the industry standard. Learn about the possession dates, the born-by dates, the minimum weight requirements, and industry standards on the species you wish to raise. Enroll in a local club that raises livestock and speak with other members for tips and information as you set your project goals.

Where do I get an animal?

There are breeders across Alaska who breed specifically for 4-H possession dates. Ask 4-H members within your district where they get their animals and how to get on a breeder's list.

How do I know what breed to get?

By talking to members and families within your club and district, you will learn what breeds are best for the market. Study industry standards and 4-H materials to help you choose your breed.

Where do I learn how to care for my animal?

Before bringing your animal home, you should have a good idea of how to care for it. Research can be done by attending workshops and learning opportunities within your district. You will learn from other 4-H members, national 4-H publications and resources, your superintendents, your research, and other 4-H families how best to care for your animal.

What if I do not want to sell my animal for food?

All 4-H youth are encouraged to exhibit their animals for show at 4-H exhibitions. Selling animals in the 4-H market program is not a requirement for any 4-H member, and non-market project youth are expected and encouraged to learn proper showing techniques and to compete in livestock shows in their project animal's species and division.

Resources:

This list is not all-inclusive, and many resources can be found online by searching for 4-H projects in your chosen species. Your superintendents, fellow 4-H families, and district staff and faculty are all excellent resources with a wealth of knowledge on available local resources to help you grow in your project area.

State Resources:

Alaska 4-H State Livestock Page: [Alaska State 4-H Livestock | Alaska 4-H \(uaf.edu\)](#)

Alaska State 4-H Livestock Facebook page: [Alaska State 4-H Livestock](#)

National Resources:

Ohio State University Extension offers various resources for youth who raise livestock. The site to order these resources is [OSU Extension Publishing](#). These handbooks are a wealth of information and are official resources for state and national livestock competitions. OSU Extension also has hands-on learning kits for all species of livestock.

YQCA learning modules are found at www.YQCAProgram.org

Swine Resources:

[Swine Resource Handbook for Market and Breeding Projects - OSU Extension Publishing](#)

Beef Resources:

[Beef Resource Handbook - OSU Extension Publishing](#)

Goat Resources:

[Goat Resource Handbook - OSU Extension Publishing](#)

Sheep Resources:

[Sheep Resource Handbook for Market and Breeding Projects - OSU Extension Publishing](#)

Dairy Resources:

[Dairy Resource Handbook - OSU Extension Publishing](#)

Llamas and Alpaca Resources:

[Llama and Alpaca Resource Handbook - OSU Extension Publishing](#)

Rabbit and Cavy Resources:

[Rabbit Resource Handbook - OSU Extension Publishing](#)

[Cavy Resource Handbook: A 4-H Guide to Guinea Pigs - OSU Extension Publishing](#)

Online Resources from Extension Offices across the nation:

Wyoming Extension, Weston County, offers a poultry resource handbook for 4-H members that is available for download.

wyoextension.org/westoncounty/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Poultry-Resource-Handbook-PDF.pdf

Animal U from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is a great learning site for youth participating in large and small livestock projects.

[Home • Animal U • Iowa State University Extension and Outreach \(iastate.edu\)](#)

Michigan State University Extension has a database of learning videos for 4-H members taking part in raising and showing animals.

[Livestock Learning Videos - 4-H Animal Science \(msu.edu\)](#)

University of Wyoming Extension offers a self-paced course on meat produced by a 4-H livestock project.

[4-H Meat Fabrication - Extension \(instructure.com\)](#)

See your district's page under [Home | Alaska 4-H \(uaf.edu\)](#) for more information, resources and requirements for livestock projects, events, and opportunities in your district!



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To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.