Iowa 4-H Livestock Show Requirements: Animal Identification, Weighing, and Exhibiting Requirements for County, State, and Interstate Shows

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Animal Identification, Weighing, and Exhibiting Requirements for County, State and Interstate Shows

Many 4-H’ers enroll in projects that involve animals. 4-H’ers can share what they have learned by their involvement in animal projects in a number of ways. Many choose to share at a fair. Counties and the Iowa State Fair Board have established an animal science class in which 4-H’ers can create an exhibit highlighting some aspect of learning through an animal project. The 4-H’er need not own or care for an animal to select this form of participation.

4-H’ers choosing to exhibit animals must meet uniform state 4-H regulations as outlined in this publication. These guidelines apply to county, state and interstate shows.

GENERAL AGE REQUIREMENTS
- County Fair – Must have completed 4th grade
- State Fair – Must have completed 5th grade
- Ak-Sar-Ben – Must have completed 5th grade

A 4-H’er is eligible through 12th grade (or that equivalent). These grade requirements apply unless a particular show is more restrictive. A 4-H’er becomes ineligible to exhibit beyond the county level upon completion of the calendar year of high school graduation. Note: In the event that a 4-H’er has dropped out of high school, the 4-H’er is only eligible to exhibit livestock through the calendar year that his/her class graduated.

GENERAL ANIMAL REQUIREMENTS
- An animal may be identified by only one 4-H’er
  * See “Ownership Requirements” section for exceptions involving horses.
- Animals identified as part of a 4-H project cannot also be identified or exhibited as an FFA project.
  Youth however may identify separate animals in the same division. For example, a youth may ID market lambs A, B and C in 4-H, and market lambs D, E and F in FFA, or horses A and B in 4-H and horses C and D in FFA.
- Animals offered for sale in an animal auction, whether live or online, are considered to have changed ownership. This applies even if bought back by the original owner or if the owner refuses a bid or says, “No Sale.” Exhibitors may participate in a ribbon auction as long as they don’t sell the project animal.
- All animals must meet health requirements as outlined by the state veterinarian.
- All animals must be in the care of the 4-H’er.

OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS
- All animals must be owned by the 4-H’er, and identified with an individual 4-H’er. When registration papers are involved, the papers must be in the 4-H’er’s name or show a logical family relationship. For example, Jones Family Farms shows a logical family relationship to Emily Jones, but B&G Farms does not. For specific beef registration requirements, refer to Iowa Junior Beef Breeds rules.
- Animals changing ownership after being identified for a project are ineligible to be exhibited as 4-H animals for that 4-H year.
- EXCEPTION TO OWNERSHIP: Horses may be leased as 4-H projects. The 4-H’er must complete a lease form. Only riding or driving horses are eligible for lease; horses in halter, or conformation classes, must be owned by the 4-H’er.
- EXCEPTION TO INDIVIDUAL IDENTIFICATION: If a family includes more 4-H’ers than horses, more than one 4-H’er may identify the same horse.

FOOD SAFETY & QUALITY ASSURANCE (FSQA)
- 4-H’ers exhibiting livestock at the State Fair in (beef, dairy, meat goat, poultry, rabbit, sheep, swine) are required to be certified in FSQA
- Some counties require FSQA at the county level as well; check with your county office
- County offices implement FSQA so contact your county office for training and testing details
IMPORTANT DEADLINES

**FEBRUARY 1:** All market steers and market heifers must be owned and identified by February 1. By the time of the weigh-in, the animal(s) must be cared for by the 4-H'er. All State Fair market beef must be tagged, weighed, have retinal images collected and entered in 4hOnline.

**MAY 15:** All other animals, with the exception of pets and poultry, must be owned and identified by May 15 (rabbits must be identified by July 1). By the time of the weigh-in, the animal(s) must be cared for by the 4-H'er. All animals must be identified in 4hOnline. See below pages for specific weigh-in and identification requirements for each species.

**JUNE 15:** Additional market lambs, pigs, and meat goats can be identified on a livestock identification form submitted to the county extension office by June 15 and be eligible to show at fairs and shows held after September 1. These animals are ineligible to show at 4-H shows held before September 1.

WEIGHING AND TAGGING

Weighing and tagging must be conducted under the direction of either state or county 4-H Program staff. Weigh-in information can be collected on paper identification forms. Extension staff are responsible for entering weigh-in information (i.e. tag, weight, etc.) into 4hOnline, where after, the 4-H'er can confirm accuracy and completeness. Ear tags must be ordered through the State 4-H Office.

REGIONAL/NATIONAL SHOW REQUIREMENTS

This publication states only Iowa 4-H requirements regarding age of the exhibitor and animal identification and weighing requirements for county, state, and interstate shows. Each livestock show prints a premium book outlining rules and regulations for that particular show. In some cases, show rules require advance knowledge and action in order to be eligible to exhibit at that show. Ak-Sar-Ben, American Royal, NAILE and the National Western Stock Show are examples; they require DNA samples. Most regional and national shows post premium book and entry information on their website.

County Extension staff are responsible for seeing that premium lists and entry forms are available to 4-H'ers entering these shows.

Youth are responsible for knowing the rules contained in the premium book.

Extension staff may be required to certify entries for youth exhibiting at regional/national shows, so staff should be sufficiently familiar with the rules to be sure they are certifying entries that meet both the show requirements as well as the Iowa 4-H requirements contained in this publication.

Species ID Requirements

**[FOR COUNTY, STATE AND INTERSTATE SHOWS]**

**MARKET BEEF [STEERS AND HEIFERS]**
- Maximum of 10 head can be identified
- Official Iowa 4-H tag and weighed at a county weigh-in
- Retinal images (required for State Fair)
- 4hOnline ID required by Feb. 1 (required for State Fair, optional for county fair only animals)
- DNA required for Ak-Sar-Ben

**FEEDER CALF**
- Maximum of 6 head can be identified
- Must be identified properly for county fair requirements (tag, sex, birth date, etc.)
- DNA required for Ak-Sar-Ben

**DAIRY CATTLE**
- Maximum of 20 head can be identified
- 4hOnline ID required by May 15

**BREEDING BEEF**
- Maximum of 10 head can be identified (total for purebred and commercial)
- 4hOnline ID required by May 15
  - All heifers MUST have birth date listed
  - State Fair eligible animals MUST have a tattoo listed (both registered and commercial); calfhood vaccination is not acceptable identification
  - Registered breed heifers must have registration number listed
- If a heifer is originally identified and weighed as a market heifer, the heifer can be eligible as breeding but does not need to be re-identified in 4hOnline under the breeding beef category

**DAIRY GOAT**
- Maximum of 20 head can be identified
- 4hOnline ID required by May 15
DOG
- Maximum of 4 head can be identified
- 4hOnline ID required by May 15
- Rabies vaccination date and information required

HORSE
- Maximum of 5 head can be identified; of those, a max. of 2 may be leased
- 4hOnline ID required by May 15
- Leased horses must have completed lease form, 4H 106C, uploaded into 4hOnline
- Halter/confirmation class horses must be owned; cannot be leased
- Photos uploaded into 4hOnline (required for State Fair)

MEAT GOAT
- Maximum of 10 head can be identified in 4hOnline (market wethers and/or those attending a weigh-in)
- Maximum of 10 head can be identified in 4hOnline (breeding does or county fair only market wethers)
- 4hOnline ID required by May 15
- ALL State Fair meat goats (market wethers and breeding does) must have a 4-H tag (or tattoo for does)
- Retinal images (State Fair market wethers)
- DNA required for Ak-Sar-Ben

PETS
- 4hOnline ID is optional; refer to your county fair rule requirements

POULTRY
- 4hOnline ID is optional for county and/or State Fair
- State Fair market broilers must make special entry by June 1.

RABBIT
- Maximum ID of 30 animals can be identified
- 4hOnline ID required by July 1 (State Fair)
- Tattoo required in 4hOnline (State Fair)

SHEEP
- Maximum of 30 head can be identified in 4hOnline (State Fair and/or those attending a weigh-in)
- Maximum of 15 head can be identified in 4hOnline (county fair only, did not attend a weigh-in)
- 4hOnline ID required by May 15
- ALL State Fair sheep (market, commercial and purebred breeding) must have a 4-H tag, weighed and retinal images collected at a county weigh-in by May 15
- DNA required for Ak-Sar-Ben
- Commercial and purebred ewe lambs must be born on or after January 1

SWINE
- Maximum of 40 head can be identified in 4hOnline (State Fair and/or those attending a weigh-in)
- Maximum of 40 head can be identified in 4hOnline (county fair only, did not attend a weigh-in)
- 4hOnline ID required by May 15
- ALL State Fair swine (market and breeding), must have a special DNA punch tag
- DNA (hair) required for Ak-Sar-Ben
- Breeding gilts must be farrowed on or after January 1

Prepared by Mike Anderson, Iowa State University Extension & Outreach 4-H youth livestock program specialist