



2017-2018 TEXAS 4-H/FFA LIVESTOCK PROGRAM ETHICS POLICY

(Updated March, 2017)



County Name: _____

This ethics policy applies to any 4-H/FFA member planning to exhibit animals at livestock shows in Texas. It includes junior, as well as open class exhibitors who compete in structured classes of competition. All classes of livestock offered at the livestock event are included: Cattle (Beef and Dairy), Goats (Angora, Boer, dairy, meat, Cashmere), Equine (Horses), Llamas and other specialty animals, Poultry, Rabbits, Sheep, Swine, and any other livestock classes offered. This "Texas 4-H/FFA Livestock Program Ethics Policy" will be enhanced with additional rules and guidelines which individual fairs and livestock shows adhere to on the local, county, state, regional, and national levels.

The following practices or procedures are unacceptable and are defined as being deceptive, fraudulent, unethical, and inhumane in the care, fitting, preparation and showing of all classes of livestock. The use of any illegal drug is prohibited. Any substance used to phenotypically alter the appearance of an animal entered in livestock events is prohibited (See Guideline #8). Proof of any animal being subjected to illegal and/or unethical practice(s) and/or procedure(s) described herein subjects the animal to immediate disqualification. The animal is ineligible for exhibition at any livestock show on the local, county, state, regional and national levels. The exhibitor will forfeit any premium, awards, or auction proceeds, and may be prohibited from future competition at livestock shows in Texas, as well as being subject to potential criminal prosecution.

The following is a listing of guidelines all 4-H/FFA exhibitors must follow to enter livestock at organized competitive events.

1. Exhibitors must be bona fide members of a 4-H Club or FFA Chapter in the state of Texas and care for their animals under the direct supervision of a County Extension Agent or Agricultural Science Teacher. Exhibitors must be enrolled in, and attending, public or private and/or home school elementary or secondary schools in Texas. Exhibitors must be in grades 3rd – 12th for the exhibition year.
2. All exhibitors must have viable proof (Junior division) of ownership available to prove length of time animals have been owned. Market animals (Beef, Sheep, Swine, Goats) must be owned and under exhibitor's daily care by the following deadline dates: June 30 – All major Steers and State Fair Lambs, Goats, Swine; October 31 – Lambs and Goats; November 30 – Swine; to be eligible to participate at any major livestock show within Texas. Proof of ownership also includes all small market animals (Rabbits and Poultry). The official ownership date is the date shown on the bill of sale or receipt of sale, unless the animal was bred by the exhibitor, in which calving or birth records will be utilized. (Individual show rules may determine ownership requirements for non-market animals.) Registered breeding livestock must show the exhibitor as the sole owner of the animal on the breed association papers or certificates. Breeding animals with additional registration papers within the breed association of validation record or in another breed association may be evaluated for multiple ownership. If additional registration papers are found active within an association indicating ownership information conflicting with the exhibitor's sole ownership designation, the breeding animal may be considered multiple-owned and subject to disqualification. Breeding animal validation deadlines dates: June 30 – Spring Heifer Validation; October 31 – Breeding Sheep and Goats and November 1 – Fall Heifer Validation.
3. Exhibitors must continuously own and personally feed and care for their animal(s) throughout the entire feeding period. The feeding period begins immediately following the county level state validation date (not the validation deadline date listed previously) through exhibition at all shows (exhibitors must provide continuous care for breeding heifers, sheep and goats throughout the animal's eligibility to show). Prior approval must be granted by the "Species Specific County Level State Validation Committee" in the event the animal will be outside the direct care of the exhibitor for more than **48 HOURS**. Exceptions may be made with approval from the "Species Specific County Level State Validation Committee". By signing this document, the exhibitor and parent/guardian, recognize his/her responsibilities for the feeding and care of livestock projects throughout the feeding period and hereby authorizes the State Validation Coordinator or designated representative, supervising Agricultural Science Teacher/County Extension Agent and the "Species Specific County Level State Validation Committee" **the right to inspect your livestock project(s), along with any other state validated livestock projects on premises, at any time during the feeding period with or without prior notice.** Any exhibitor in violation of the feeding/care rule is subject to disqualification.
4. Animals validated for major livestock shows may also be exhibited at other shows. Be advised, however, that if any validated animal is exhibited and SOLD at any other show (including a county show), the animal will be ineligible to show at any subsequent major livestock show. **Additionally, state validated livestock offered for sale during the feeding period via private treaty, private or public auction will be ineligible to show at any subsequent major livestock show. If ownership changes or has the possibility of changing through a sale offering (including animal(s) purchased back by the exhibitor of validation record), regardless of method or length of time, that chain of animal ownership is considered broken and will be ineligible to show at any remaining livestock shows in the feeding period requiring state validation.**

State validation deadline dates are as follows:

State Fair and Heart of Texas:

June 30 for steers, heifers, lambs, goats and swine

All Other Major

June 30 for steers

October 31 for lambs and goats

October 31 breeding sheep and goats

November 1 breeding heifers

November 30 for swine

5. Any method used to misrepresent the age of an animal for a class in which it is shown is deceptive and considered a violation of the rules and guidelines.
6. Showing an animal for another individual by claiming ownership in order to show in a specific livestock class or event is prohibited. False ownership is a violation of the rules and guidelines.
7. Treating an animal internally or externally, with any irritant, counter-irritant, or other substance used to artificially change the conformation or appearance of an animal for show is considered unethical, inhumane, and is prohibited. Surgery, injection or insertion of foreign material under the skin and/or into the flesh of an animal to change the natural contour, conformation or appearance of an animal's body is illegal. This includes vegetable oil, air, silicon or any other substance used to alter the shape of the animal. Acceptable practices of physical preparation which are allowed include, clipping of hair, trimming of hooves, dehorning, removal of ancillary teats, and docking of tails.
8. The use of unethical fitting, showing and/or handling practices or devices compromising animal welfare shall not be tolerated.
9. The Administration of the Texas 4-H and/or FFA Programs reserve the final and absolute right to interpret these guidelines 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 "Texas 4-H/FFA Livestock Program Ethics Policy".

Any violation of the "Texas 4-H/FFA Livestock Program Ethics Policy" or specific rules as designated by individual fairs and livestock shows may result in forfeiture of premiums and awards, disqualification, and may result in probationary status and/or loss of eligibility for future participation in organized livestock competition. **Possible civil penalties may be imposed by the proper authorities based on evidence provided by the livestock show of exhibitors in violation of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act/or the animal mistreatment, neglect, and abandonment laws that apply on the local, state, and/or national levels.** All rule violations will be dealt with on an individual basis by the "Specie Specific County State Validation Committee", the State Validation Coordinators, and/or appropriate livestock show officials.

I, the parent/guardian and exhibitor, am verifying that I have read the "Texas 4-H/FFA Livestock Program Ethics Policy" and understand the consequences of and penalties involved for illegal, unethical, inhumane, and unfair practices in livestock competition. I am also verifying knowledge that my family and I may be prohibited from future participation in organized validation programs in the State of Texas, and could face possible criminal prosecution and/or civil penalties if implicated in any of the aforementioned acts.

ATTENTION: If livestock project(s) will be raised at a location/facility different from address provided on carbon validation form, please complete the following information. The address where the animals will be located should be indicated below and approved by the local validation committee.

Physical Address	City	Zip
Note: Only one exhibitor perform.		
Exhibitor (Printed Name)	Exhibitor (Signature)	Date
Parent/Guardian	Date	Supervising CEA or AST
Validation Chairman	Date	County