



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

2025 Livestock Skill-A-Thon

Contestant Packet



AUGUST 27, 2025

South Dakota State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD

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Registration

Pre-registration for the South Dakota State 4-H Livestock Skill-A-Thon contest may be completed in FairEntry but is not required. Participants may sign up to compete in the Skill-A-Thon contest during event registration on Wednesday, August 27, 2025 from 5:00-5:45 p.m.

SDSU Extension 4-H Youth Development appreciates the significant support provided by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources to conduct the South Dakota State Fair's 4-H Division! Currently that support is at a level that allows 4-H members to enjoy the State Fair's 4-H Division without paying participation fees. Should that support be reduced, fees will be implemented. Due to the timing of state budget cycles, this may occur with little advanced notice.

Contestants and Eligibility

Contestants must be a bona-fide South Dakota 4-H member approved by their respective county 4-H Youth Educator.

New for 2025: Contestants will compete as individuals only. No team competition will take place.

Age Divisions

Age divisions for the South Dakota 4-H program:

- Beginner: Age 8, 9, or 10 as of Jan. 1 of the current 4-H program year
- Junior: Age 11, 12, or 13 as of Jan 1 of the current 4-H program year
- Senior: Age 14, 15, 16, 17, or 18 as of Jan. 1 of the current 4-H program year

Method of Conduct - All Events

- Contestants, parents, coaches and volunteers must conduct themselves in a courteous, respectful manner, use appropriate language, exhibit good sportsmanship and act as positive role models.
- Youth participating in the State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest and/or Skill-A-Thon will be required to respect others' property and privacy rights, apply rules of safety to individuals, groups and property as well as

accept personal responsibility for their behavior.

- Illegal behaviors including: the possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs and tobacco products, stolen goods, weapons and fireworks, sexual, physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated.
- Law enforcement may be called and illegal behaviors may result in citations or arrest. Consequences may include removal from participation in the event; restitution or repayment of damages; sanctions and/or participation in future local, state, regional or national 4-H events; loss of status as a 4-H member in good standing, etc.
- Contestants should wear neat, clean, suitable clothing to uphold the image of the 4-H organization. No contestant shall wear any clothing, pins or badges that will in any way reveal his/her identity or the county that he/she represents. No hats are to be worn during the contest. Closed-toed shoes must be worn during the contest.
- All electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, pagers, PDAs, calculators, etc.) are prohibited, unless approved by event officials prior to the start of the contest for special circumstances. Contestants are advised to remove these devices prior to the start of the contest. If a competing contestant's phone should ring or if he/ she is discovered using such electronic devices during the contest, the contestant and his/her team will be disqualified.

Method of Conduct - Livestock Skill-A-Thon

- Junior and Senior contestants will be divided into groups to start the contest but will be allowed to rotate through stations at their own pace. A time limit of no more than 20 minutes for a single station may be implemented at the discretion of contest coordinators. While the contest is in progress, there is no conferring between contestants or between a contestant and anyone else except as directed by the Contest Superintendent or his/her representative. Offending contestants may be disqualified.

- Beginner contestants will follow the instructions of the contest coordinators for rotation and completion of stations. Beginner participants will be in different groups than Juniors and Seniors.

Determination of Ratings

Effort will be made to provide a complete contest consistent with the descriptions below. However, contest coordinators reserve the right to make changes based on circumstances of the event.

- Beginner: (220 points)
 - Breed ID: 10 breeds (20 points)
 - Equipment ID: 10 equipment (20 points)
 - Retail Meat ID: 5 meat products, species name only (10 points)
 - Feed ID: 5 feed ID's (10 points)
 - Quiz: 10 questions (20 points)
 - Quality Assurance: 10 questions (20 points)
 - Wool Judging: 1 placing class (50 points)
 - Hay Judging: 1 placing class (50 points)
 - Livestock Performance Problems: 10 questions (20 points)
- Junior: (290 points)
 - Breed ID: 10 breeds (20 points) and descriptions (10 points) (30 points total)
 - Equipment ID: 10 equipment (20 points) and uses (10 points) (30 points total)
 - Retail Meat ID: 10 meats, specie (10 points) and retail cut (10 points) (20 points total)
 - Feed ID: 10 feed ID's (20 points)
 - Quiz: 10 questions (30 points)
 - Quality Assurance: 10 questions (30 points)
 - Wool Judging: 1 placing class (50 points)
 - Hay Judging: 1 placing class (50 points)
 - Livestock Performance Problems: 10 questions (30 points)
- Senior: (370 points)
 - Breed ID: 10 breeds (20 points) and descriptions (20 points) (40 points total)
 - Equipment ID: 10 equipment (20 points) and uses (20 points) (40 points total)
 - Retail Meat ID: 10 meats, specie (20 points) and retail cut (20 points) (40 points total)
 - Feed ID: 10 feed ID's (20 points)
 - Quiz: 10 questions (30 points)
 - Quality Assurance: 10 questions (50 points)
- Wool Judging: 1 placing class (50 points)
- Hay Judging: 1 placing class (50 points)
- Livestock Performance Problems: 10 questions (50 points)

Contest categories are split into three divisions;

- Identification
 - Breed ID, Equipment ID, Meat ID, Feed ID
 - Tie breakers: Overall score -> Feed ID -> Meat ID -> Equipment ID -> Breed ID -> Coin Toss
- Evaluation
 - Wool Judging, Hay Judging, Livestock Performance Problems
 - Tie breakers: Overall score -> Performance Problems -> Hay Judging -> Wool Judging -> Coin Toss
- Quality Assurance
 - Quiz, Quality Assurance
 - Tie breakers: Overall score -> Quality Assurance -> Quiz -> Coin Toss

If a tie occurs between contestants for overall points, the tie breaker will be determined in the following order: Overall Quality Assurance Score -> Overall Evaluation Score -> Overall Identification Score -> Coin Toss

Contest Schedule

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

5:00-5:45 p.m. : Registration

5:45-6:00 p.m. : Contestant Orientation

6:00 p.m. : ALL Participants begin Skill-A-Thon*

**All Skill-A-Thon participants must be present at the start of the Skill-A-Thon contest to compete. Contestants will be on a rotation schedule through the Skill-A-Thon stations.*

Awards

- Top 5 contestants in each age division (Beginner, Junior, Senior) will receive recognition for Overall Individual awards.
- Top 5 Beginners, Juniors, and Seniors will receive recognition for Identification, Evaluation, and Quality Assurance divisions.

- The top 4 highest-scoring Senior's will be eligible to represent South Dakota 4-H at the National Livestock Skill-A-Thon Contest as a team. See the National Contest Eligibility section for more information.
 - Funding for this team is made possible by the Livestock Industry Trust Fund.
- Results will be announced and awards given out during the State Fair week.

National Contest Eligibility and Funding

- Contestants must be at least 14 years of age and must not have reached their 19th birthday as of January 1 of the current 4-H program year.
- All contestants must be members of 4-H in the state they are representing during the year in which the national contest is held.
- The team of qualifying individuals must be certified as the official state entry by the State 4-H Office.
- An individual is only allowed to compete in the National Livestock Skill-A-Thon contest once. If a youth member has previously competed at the National Livestock Skill-A-Thon contest in Louisville, KY, they are still eligible to compete at the state contest for awards, but will not be eligible to compete on the designated national contest team.
- If an ineligible contestant(s) places in the top 4 individuals of the Senior age division, the next highest scoring contestant(s) will be considered for the national contest team instead.
- The state winning individuals given the opportunity to compete at the national contest are funded through the South Dakota Stock Growers Association as part of the 4-H Livestock Industry Trust Fund. Funding amounts may vary from year to year.
- The State 4-H Livestock Program Manager will reach out to qualifying individuals following the state contest to confirm team members and further explain the trip details and it's funding.

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