



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

2025 State 4-H Livestock Judging Contestant Packet



SEPT. 6, 2025

Registration deadline: Sept. 2, 2025

South Dakota State University Animal Science Arena, Brookings, SD

4-H Youth Livestock Programs Coordinator

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Entry Deadline

The 2025 South Dakota State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest entry deadline is Tuesday, Sept. 2 at 11:59 p.m.

Registration

Registration for the South Dakota State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest must be completed in Fair Entry. No registration fee will apply.

A help sheet can be found on the SDSU Extension website that will assist you with the registration process.

Help Sheet: <https://extension.sdstate.edu/4honline-fairentry>

Livestock Judging participants will compete as **individuals only**. No team registration is required. Individuals not registered by Sept. 2 are eligible to participate for experience purposes but **will not be allowed to compete for awards**.

Contestants and Eligibility

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

****SENIORS ONLY**** Any senior who has judged at the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest, in Louisville, Kentucky is eligible to compete for future State 4-H individual awards. However, they are not eligible for future participation at the national level. Any senior who has previously judged at the Western National Roundup in Denver, Colorado is not eligible for future participation at the Denver contest, but is still eligible for future participation at the Louisville contest.

Age Divisions

Age Divisions for the South Dakota 4-H program:

- Beginner: Age 8, 9 or 10 on or before Jan. 1 of the current 4-H year
- Junior: Age 11, 12 or 13 on or before Jan. 1 of the current 4-H year
- Senior: Age 14, 15, 16, 17 or 18 on or before Jan. 1 of the current 4-H year and not have turned 19 on or before Jan. 1 of the current year.

The SDSU Extension 4-H Youth Development Program should be accessible to the wide diversity of youth who live in our state, regardless of their backgrounds and characteristics — including physical, mental or emotional abilities or limitations. Please make requests for any necessary accommodations for youth participating in the State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest to the South Dakota State 4-H Office prior to Sept. 1. See the guidelines for Accommodation of Children with Disabilities within this document.

The map displays the SDSU campus layout with the following details:

- Streets:** US Highway 14 Bypass, Medary Avenue, Stadium Road, Jackrabbit Avenue, College Avenue, Campanile Avenue, Student Union Lane, 8th Street, 9th Street, 11th Street, 13th Street, and Harvey Dunn.
- Buildings:**
 - Academic buildings: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200.
 - Student Union buildings: 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200.
 - Athletic fields: JACKRABBIT SOFTBALL FIELD, ERV HUETHER FIELD, WARREN E. WILLIAMSON INTRAMURAL FIELDS, JEROME J. LOHR BUILDING (SDSU FOUNDATION).
- Green Spaces:** SEXAUER GREEN, JACKRABBIT GREEN, COLLEGE GREEN, ROTUNDA GREEN, MEDAL OF HONOR PARK, AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE MUSEUM, RODEO GROUNDS 106.
- Other Landmarks:** UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION, SDSU STADIUM, UNIVERSITY POLICE, UNIVERSITY ARBOR DAY PARK 63, LOCAL FOODS EDUCATION CENTER 40, AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION RESEARCH FARMS.

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 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 will be disqualified.

Method of Conduct – Livestock Judging

- Contestants, parents and coaches are to avoid the Animal Science Arena, the morning of the contest, prior to the contest start, unless involved in the operation of the contest.
- Contestants will be divided into groups for the contest and will remain with their assigned group throughout the contest. 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 will be disqualified.**
- The Senior contest will be comprised of eight classes of livestock.
 - These classes (depending on availability) will consist of any combination of Market Beef, Breeding Beef, Market Sheep, Breeding Sheep, Market Hog, Breeding Hog, Market Goat or Breeding Meat Goat. All classes will be comprised of four animals, and the animals will be designated with numbers 1-2-3-4. At least one breeding class from each species will have performance data and a scenario included. However, contest administrators and officials will strive to include performance information and scenarios for all breeding classes, if possible.
 - Contestants will present oral reasons on four classes. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while giving oral reasons.
- The Junior contest will be comprised of eight classes of livestock.
 - These classes (depending on availability) will consist of any combination of Market Beef, Breeding Beef, Market Sheep, Breeding Sheep, Market Hog, Breeding Hog, Market Goat or Breeding Meat Goat. All classes will be comprised of four animals, and the animals will be designated with numbers 1-2-3-4. Contest administrators and officials will strive to include performance information and scenarios on all breeding classes, if possible.
 - Contestants will present oral reasons on two classes. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while giving oral reasons.
- The Beginner contest will be comprised of four classes of livestock.
 - These classes (depending on availability) will consist of any combination of Market Beef, Breeding Beef, Market Sheep, Breeding Sheep, Market Hog, Breeding Hog, Market Goat or Breeding Meat Goat. All classes will be comprised of four animals, and the animals will be designated with numbers 1-2-3-4.
 - Questions will be asked on two classes. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while completing questions.
 - A Parts Identification Quiz will be given. It will consist of any body part identification of Beef, Meat Goat, Sheep or Swine.
- Two minutes will be allowed to give oral reasons for those classes indicated as oral reason classes.
- Contestants will be allowed 10 minutes per class to make their observations, take notes and record placings.

Placings will be marked on scantrons following the conclusion of judging.

- Breeding Cattle and Market Beef may not be handled. All judging of non-reasons cattle classes will be done from a distance of 10-15 feet. Close inspections may be allowed. This will be determined after selection of classes.
- Breeding sheep and goats will not be handled as they will be loose in a pen. When handling Market Sheep or Meat Goats, contestants will stand in line and will be given 15 seconds to handle each lamb or goat individually. Lambs or goats may not be re-handled at any time.

Determination of Ratings – Livestock Judging

- Fifty points shall constitute a perfect mark for placing classes, answering questions, and presenting oral reasons.
 - If tied for overall individual, the contestant having the highest total reasons score (for beginners, questions score used) shall be listed first.
 - If tied for total reasons score, the contestant having the highest total placing score on reasons classes shall be listed first.
 - If tied for a species award, the contestant having the highest total reasons score on the species shall be listed first.
 - » If still tied, the contestant having the highest total reasons score overall shall be listed first.
- The officials' placing and class critique will be given immediately following the conclusion of the contest once all placing and reasons cards have been submitted to the scoring committee.
- Official results will be tabulated and reviewed by an assigned committee prior to public announcement.

Contests Schedule

Friday, Sept. 5

6-8 p.m. Practice Livestock Judging (Animal Science Arena)

Saturday, Sept. 6

9-9:30 a.m. All Participant Judging Registration (Animal Science Complex)
9:30-9:45 a.m. Contest Orientation
9:45 a.m. All Ages Begin Contest in Respective Locations
(oral reasons follow completion of the judging contest classes)
11:00 a.m. Lunch on your own
12:30 p.m. SDSU Ice Cream (Animal Science Complex)
1:30 p.m. Official placings, critiques and awards
(or 15 minutes after conclusion of Senior reasons)

Awards

- Top 5 contestants in each age division (Beginner, Junior and Senior) will be recognized for Overall Individual awards in Livestock Judging.
- Top five Beginner, Junior and Senior contestants will be recognized for Oral Reasons (Juniors and Seniors only), Beef Judging, Sheep/Goat Judging and Swine Judging.
- The top four highest placing, qualifying senior Livestock Judging individuals will be given the opportunity to represent South Dakota 4-H as the "All-Star" team and compete at the National 4-H Livestock Judging Competition in Louisville, KY. The next four highest, qualifying individuals will be offered the opportunity to form a team to compete at Western National Roundup in Denver, CO.
- Funding for these teams is made possible by the Livestock Industry Trust Fund each year depending on their contribution.
- Awards will be given after the conclusion of the contests along with class critiques. Location will be in or near Animal Science Arena or classrooms based on weather and other factors.
- South Dakota 4-H youth competing in the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest at NAILE may only participate in that contest for the year.
- In the event of national trips being canceled, the winning individuals will be allowed to compete to earn a national trip the following year.

National 4-H Competitive Event Eligibility

- Contestants must be at least 14 years of age as of January 1 of the current year and must not have reached their 19th birthday as of Jan. 1 of the 4-H program year in which the national 4-H competitive event is held.
- All contestants must be members of 4-H in the state they are representing during the year in which the national 4-H competitive event is held.
- The contestant(s) or team(s) of contestants must be certified as the official state entry by the State 4-H Office or by a person designated by the State 4-H Office. The individual(s) or team(s) may be selected by any procedure the State 4-H Office deems appropriate. Individual team members must be a minimum of 14-years-old at the time of the qualifying event.
- Contestants, their county 4-H Youth Program Advisor and the State 4-H Leader must certify as follows on the livestock judging entry:
 - The contestant shall not have participated in or been a member of any post-secondary team (university, college, junior college or technical school) or competed at a collegiate livestock judging/evaluation contest/ event at any level.
 - Any contestant listed on the Official Entry Form that is enrolled and/or received college credit is not eligible to participate in the National 4-H Livestock Judging contest.

NOTE: Violation of the above will result in forfeiture of any awards or recognition that has been won in the national 4-H competitive event.

Funding for National Contest Teams

The state winning teams and individuals provided the opportunity to compete at the national contests are funded through the South Dakota Stock Growers Association as part of the 4-H Livestock Industry Trust Fund. Below is an overview of the budget provided for each team.

- Livestock Judging – Co-mingled team of the top four highest placing, qualifying individuals (Louisville, KY): \$5,000
- Livestock Judging - Co-mingled team of the next four highest placing, qualifying individuals (Western National Roundup): \$2,500

The South Dakota 4-H Livestock Program Manager will reach out to team members following the state contest to confirm teams and further explain the details of the trip and its funding.