



## TEXAS 4-H/FFA LIVESTOCK PROGRAM ETHICS POLICY



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 #5).

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 bonafide 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 between the ages of 9 (or 8 and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and 19.
2. 4-H members that plan to show horses at any of the twelve district and/or the Texas State 4-H Horse Show should submit a signed copy of this Ethics Policy with their entry forms. While items 3-9, listed below, do not apply to the horse project, there are specifics on ethics in the publication Texas 4-H Horse Show Rules and Regulations (AS 3-2.043) that do apply. The Texas State 4-H Horse Show and all of the district horse shows are conducted under the rules and regulations contained in this publication and 4-H'ers are expected to comply with those rules regarding ownership, management and treatment of horses.
3. 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 dates: June 30 - Steers, October 31 - Sheep and Goats, November 30 - Hogs, to be eligible to participate at any major livestock show within Texas. This 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.
4. Exhibitors must continuously own and personally feed and care for their animal(s) throughout the entire feeding period. The feeding period begins with the specie validation date through exhibition at all shows. Prior approval must be granted by the specie specific county State Validation Committee in the event the animal will be outside the direct care of the exhibitor. The animal(s) may not be out of the exhibitors care for a period exceeding 48 hours. Exceptions may be made with approval from the specific county State Validation Committee.
5. No exhibitor may show a market animal which has been previously sold at a county, regional, or major livestock show auction or sale in which the ownership of the animal has changed hands after the state validation deadline for that specie. 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. 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.

6. 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. This includes, but is not limited to the use of graphite, air, powders, hemp, artificial hair coloring, common products such as fly spray, ointment or liniment used to the point that is irritating, (unless required to reduce edema at time of calving) or similar type products. The use of dyes, spray paint or other artificial coloring which result in altering an animal's true and natural appearance and/or color is prohibited. Adding false hair or hair-like material, fleece, or skin at any point, spot or area of the animal's body is illegal and will result in immediate disqualification.
7. 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 inhumane fitting, showing and/or handling practices or devices 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 livestock show officials.

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I 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.

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Exhibitor Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Extension Agent or  
Agricultural Science Teacher Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Validation Chairman Date