

MICHIGAN 4-H & FFA Horse Judging Contest

HANDBOOK

The 4-H Equine Educational Expo is held annually on the campus of Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan. For more information please contact Taylor Fabus at 517-353-1748, FAX 517-353-1699 or email at tenlenta@msu.edu

Entries should be made and signed only by Extension Staff, and counties need to adhere to any quotas and deadlines. Please type or print clearly on entry forms and check entries to ensure that members are in the correct age category and have entered the correct division. Staff and members are responsible for accurate and correct entries. Please give members and coaches a copy of their entry and contest rules.

Entry fees:

Counties should send all registration fees to *Account #: DN022677 subaccount 1062* (please include a copy of the transmittal form WITH entries to address below)

\$15.00 / participant / contest

(i.e., A team of 4 members = \$60.00)

Entry forms & COPY OF TRANSMITTAL FORM should be sent to:

ANS Youth Extension Office
474 South Shaw Lane
Room 1287 Anthony Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824

There are no refunds. Ages are determined by the age the participant is on January 1 of the contest year. **Counties submitting entries in the various contests are responsible for furnishing older teens and/or adults to help with the various contests.**

Eligibility rule for Horse Judging contestants: Senior members who have competed in at least one approved and authorized interstate contest (national or regional) in the same contest area, are eligible to compete again in that contest area, **however, their team may not be eligible to go on to national competition, depending on the contest they qualify for at the state level. For example, 4-H members may only participate once at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Round Up in a given contest area.**

In addition:

- 1) To participate in a national contest, no contestant may be older than 19 years of age as of January 1 of the contest year, and they must be at least 14 on January 1 of the contest year.
- 2) Contestants must **not have participated in any post-secondary coursework in the subject area or national 4-H competition**, and must not have participated in training for post-secondary competition in the subject area or national 4-H competition prior to the contest.
- 3) Teams qualifying for out-of-state competitions that have an open roster slot may have the opportunity to extend an invitation to an individual competitor (must have competed at 2017 4-H & FFA Horse Judging Contest to be eligible) from another county to join their team for the out-of-state competition. Any substitutions must be approved by State Extension Specialist.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP 4-H HORSE JUDGING CONTEST

OFFICIAL RULES

1. Objectives:

To observe and evaluate horses, develop good judgment, make accurate decisions, and defend these decisions with logical oral reasons.

2. **Eligibility:**

A. Junior Division:

- 1) Junior Age Requirements - Contestants must be at least 9 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar year, and not be more than 13 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar year.
- 2) Junior teams are not eligible for national or regional competition.

B. Novice Junior Division:

- 1) Will consist of members (all members) who have never competed in the State 4-H Horse Judging Contest. Novice teams are not eligible for national or regional competition.

C. Senior Division:

- 1) Senior Age Requirements - Contestants must be at least 14 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar year, and not be more than 19 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar year.
- 2) Eligibility rule for Jamboree Contestants: Senior members who have competed in at an approved and authorized interstate contest (national or regional) in the same contest area, may not be eligible to represent Michigan again in the same approved and authorized national contest area, depending on the contest. Individuals no longer eligible for national team competition may compete at the Jamboree as individuals in the individual judging division.

D. Novice Senior Division:

- 1) Will consist of members (all members) who have never competed in the State 4-H Horse Judging Contest (in either the Junior or Senior Division). Novice teams are not eligible for national or regional competition.

E. All Divisions:

- 1) Participants must be currently enrolled in a 4-H horse project in the Michigan county they represent and be approved by their County Extension staff person. Members are not required to own a horse or pony to compete in this contest.

F. National and Interstate Competition

- 1) All entries must be authorized by the Extension Youth Horse Specialist and/or the State 4-H Leader.
- 2) In the event that an eligible team does not have enough available members to compete in the contest, they may add other members from their county with the approval of the Equine Extension Youth Specialist and appropriate county Extension staff members. These members must have competed in the current year's competition and meet all of the eligibility rules for that contest.

3. **Number of Participants Per County:**

A. Each county may enter teams plus individuals in one or more of the following divisions:

Junior Regular Division
* Junior Novice Division

Senior Regular Division
* Senior Novice Division

**See the definition of novice division under eligibility rules.*

B. Each team can be made up of three or four members. When four are entered, the three team members with the highest scores will comprise the team total. Counties with less than three participants may enter them as individuals. All participants are eligible for individual awards.

4. **Registration:**

A. The team coach or captain should check in at the registration area prior to the start of the contest. Each participant will be assigned a number and given other pertinent items. The contest will be in progress most of the day. Participants cannot leave once the contest begins. **NO CHANGES WILL BE MADE THE DAY OF THE CONTEST.** (Only bookkeeping corrections from State Staff)

NOTE: Contestants are responsible for providing their own notebooks for taking notes. The notebooks cannot contain educational materials. They will be subject to inspection by contest officials.

5. **Class Chairpersons:**

A. An adult leader will be placed in charge of each class of horses to act as supervisor of that class, to observe the contestants, to see that the animals are properly shown and moved, and to answer any questions which do not pertain to the actual placing or instructions regarding the animal under consideration.

6. **Talking:**

A. While the contest is in progress, there **SHALL BE NO TALKING OR ANY OTHER TYPE OF COMMUNICATION** at all. This also includes the reasons preparation time in the designated area. Contestants will be required to remain seated and will not be allowed to practice their reasons aloud. Furthermore, coaches not assisting with the contest will not be permitted in the arena while classes are being placed. Any violation of these rules may result in the members card (or cards) being pulled and/or disqualification of the offending individuals or teams.

7. **Final Standings:**

- A. This shall be based upon the combined score of placings, oral reasons, and questions. Fifty points shall constitute a perfect score in each of the placing classes, and each of the sets of oral reasons. The sets of questions will have a maximum value of 25 points.
- In the Senior Regular Division, there will be eight placing classes, three sets of oral reasons, and three sets of questions for a possible score of 625 points per contestant, and 1875 points per team.

- In the Junior Regular Division there will be eight placing classes, two sets of oral reasons, and three sets of questions for a possible score of 575 points per contestant, and 1725 points per team.
- In the Senior Novice Division, there will be eight placing classes, two sets of oral reasons, and three sets of questions for a possible score of 575 points per contestant, and 1725 points per team
- In the Junior Novice Division there will be eight placing classes, one set of oral reasons, and three sets of questions for a possible score of 525 points per contestant, and 1575 points per team.
- Ties will be broken by using the following tie breakers in order: 1) Reasons score; 2) Questions score; 3) Placing score on reasons classes; and 4) Age.

8. Classes:

- A. Eight classes of four horses each will be judged. There will be halter and performance sections. The halter classes will be selected from the following breeds: Appaloosa, Arabian, Morgan, American Saddle Horse, Thoroughbred (suitable to become a hunter), Thoroughbred (suitable to become a dressage horse), POA, Paint, Palomino (Quarter Horse type), Quarter Horse, and draft horses, although final selection of breeds will depend upon availability of horses. There will be 2 halter classes in the arena at one time. Classes will be switched to opposite ends of arena after each class has been judged, so participants do not have to move. In addition, the participants performance classes to be selected from the following classes: Western Pleasure, Saddle Seat Pleasure, Hunter Seat Pleasure (Hunter Under Saddle), Hunter Hack, Western Horsemanship, English Equitation, Suitable to Become a Dressage Horse, Western Riding, Reining, Ranch Riding, and Pleasure Driving. While backing horse in performance classes, they should be lined up on center line; head to tail, only backed one time per horse.
- B. The showman of each horse in the classes will wear an appropriate number for identification purposes. All halter classes will be judged as sound of limb, eye, wind and mouth. Performance classes will be judged as seen (unsoundness to be penalized accordingly). All tack and attire is considered legal.

9. Oral Reasons:

- A. Senior and Advanced Division contestants will give oral reasons on two of the halter classes, and one of the performance classes. Novice and Junior Division contestants will give oral reasons on one of the halter classes and one of the performance classes. All contestants will answer five questions each on two of the halter classes and one of the performance classes. The contestants will not be permitted to use notes while giving reasons, but their placing cards will be returned to them during the time they are giving reasons. Approximately 2 minutes will be allowed for a set of oral reasons.

10. Questions:

- A. Contestants will be allowed to use their notes while answering the questions, but the horses will not be present.

11. Rules:

- A. Rules in 4-H Horse and Pony Project Show Rules and Regulations will be followed except

as described in rule 8B above.

12. Clothing:

- A. Contestants should not wear clothing that identifies a school or county during the contest. Hats should not be worn in the Pavilion Arena.

13. Length of Classes:

- A. Approximately 17 minutes will be allowed to place each halter class, and approximately 15 minutes will be allowed to place each performance class.

1.) Time limits for viewing horses in halter classes:

Front view	1.5 minutes
Side view	3.0 minutes
Rear view	1.5 minutes
Side view	3.0 minutes
Moving horse to view movement	4.0 minutes
Close Inspection	4.0 minutes
(2 minutes per 2 groups)	

Total 17.0 minutes

14. Group Leaders:

- A. Contestants will be divided into several equal sized groups prior to the start of the contest. Each of these groups will be supervised by two adult group leaders. Each contestant is to remain with his or her group throughout the contest, and is directly responsible to the group leaders.

15. Judging Procedure:

- A. Horses will be judged primarily from the bleachers, and will not be handled by the contestants. In halter classes, time will be provided for close inspection and to observe the horses' movement.

16. Official Placings and Results:

- A. As soon as the contestants finish giving their oral reasons, the official placing and cuts will be announced. The official county results will be announced during the 4-H Equine Educational Expo Awards Program

17. Awards:

- A. *The following awards will be given in the four contest divisions:*
- Top 10 Scoring Individuals Overall
 - Top 5 Scoring County Teams Overall
 - Top 10 Scoring Individuals in Reasons
 - Top 5 Scoring County Teams in Reasons
 - Top 2 Scoring Senior Individuals Overall
 - Norma Agnew Memorial 4-H Horse Judging Scholarships (\$250.00 and \$150.00)
 - Top Scoring Junior Regular Individual
 - Norma Agnew Memorial 4-H Horse Judging Award

18. County Volunteers:

- A. The State 4-H Horse Judging Contest is implemented with many adult and teen volunteers. These volunteers are group leaders, announcers, class chairmen, tabulators, scoring helpers, runners, etc. Counties are asked to nominate Extension staff and parents to help and list their names on the registration form. **All counties entered are expected to furnish at least 3 adults to assist with the contest. Coaches will not be assigned as group leaders.**

19. **Lunches:**

NO LUNCHES WILL BE PROVIDED FOR CONTESTANTS. TEAMS MUST PROVIDE THEIR OWN LUNCHES. Concessions will not be available for contestants!

All lunches should be packaged for each individual participant with their full name and county labeled on it for distribution by contest personnel during the contest.