

# **MICHIGAN 4-H & FFA Virtual Horse Judging Contest**

## **Official Rules**

The Virtual 4-H & FFA State Horse Judging Contest will be hosted online at [campus.extension.org](https://campus.extension.org) on Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021. For more information, please contact Taylor Fabus at [tenlenta@msu.edu](mailto:tenlenta@msu.edu)

Entries should be completed online through MSU Events Management System. Refer to provided link online.

1. Contest Objectives
  - A. To observe and evaluate horses
  - B. Develop good judgment and keen observations skills to make accurate decisions
  - C. Defend these decisions with logical oral reasons
2. Eligibility
  - A. Contestants must **not have participated in any post-secondary coursework in the subject area of national 4-H competition** and must not have participated in training for post-secondary competition in the subject area of national 4-H competition prior to the contest.
  - B. 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 2021 Virtual 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 Taylor Fabus.
  - C. Cloverbud Division
    - a. Cloverbud Age Requirements - Contestants must be at least 5 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar contest year, and not be more than 7 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar contest year.
    - b. Cloverbuds will not be scored but they will receive recognition at the awards ceremony.
  - D. Novice (Junior or Senior) Division  
Will consist of members (all members) who have never competed in the State 4-H Horse Judging Contest. Participation as a Cloverbud does not count as “previous participation”. Novice teams are not eligible for national or regional competition.
  - E. Junior Division
    - a. Junior Age Requirements - Contestants must be at least 8 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar contest year, and not be more than 13 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar contest year.
    - b. Junior teams are not eligible for national or regional competition.
  - F. Senior Division
    - a. Senior Age Requirements - Contestants must be at least 14 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar contest year, and not be more than 19 years of age on January 1 of the current calendar contest year.
    - b. Eligibility rule: Senior members who have competed in 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. **For example, 4-H members may only participate once at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Round Up in a given contest area.**

- c. **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.

G. All Divisions

Participants must be currently enrolled in a 4-H project in the Michigan county they represent. This does not have to be the county in which they reside. This can also be a secondary county to their other 4-H projects. Members are not required to own a horse or pony to compete in this contest.

H. National and Interstate Competition

- a. All entries must be authorized by the Extension Educator and/or the State 4-H Leader.
- b. 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 an unlimited number of teams plus individuals.

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.

6. Scoring

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.

- Ties will be broken by using the following tie breakers in order: 1) Reasons score; 2) Questions score; 3) Placing score on reasons classes

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, miniature horses 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, performance classes will be selected from the following: 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, Trail, Reining, Ranch Riding, and Pleasure Driving.

B. 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  
Senior Regular and Junior Regular Division contestants will have the opportunity to give oral reasons on one class. The contestants will not be permitted to use notes while giving reasons. Approximately 2 minutes will be allowed for a set of oral reasons.
10. Questions  
Contestants will be allowed to use their notes while answering the questions.
11. Rules  
Rules in 4-H Horse and Pony Project Show Rules and Regulations will be followed except as described in rule 8B above.

**It is expected that the contest is taken by individuals only. Contest questions and information are not to be a group effort.**

16. Official Placings and Results  
The official contest results will be announced during the 4-H Virtual Awards Program. Following the awards program, the official placings will be posted on our website.
17. Awards  
The following results will be recognized in the four contest divisions:  
Top 10 Scoring Individuals Overall  
Top 5 Scoring County Teams Overall

- **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

Awards will be mailed to the following, in the four contest areas:

Top 3 Scoring Individuals Overall

Top 3 Scoring County Teams Overall

*Each Cloverbud participant will be recognized during the Virtual Awards Program and will receive an award mailed.*

## **Tentative Class List**

1. Thoroughbred Geldings
2. Arabian Halter (Questions)
3. Stock-type Halter (Oral reasons for Junior Regular & Senior Regular)
4. Hunter Under Saddle
5. Western Pleasure (Questions)

6. AQHA Ranch Riding (Questions)
7. Hunter Hack
8. Western Horsemanship