



Brazos County Livestock Newsletter

April 2018 Edition

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Major Show updates
Major Show Dates
Commercial Heifer Show dates
Livestock Skill-A-Thon info.
Tag Order Deadlines
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State Fair of Texas Dates

State Fair Sheep, Goat & Swine Tag orders

It is time once again to order your tags for the State fair of Texas Sheep, Goat, & Swine show. These tags are \$20 per tag this year and orders are due to the Extension office by 5PM on April 10th

Tag order forms can be found at the following link:
<http://brazos.agrilife.org/publications/4h-publications/>

If you have any questions, please contact us at 979-823-0129

Major Show Steer & Heifer Tag Orders

It is time once again to order your tags for the 2018-2019 major show steers & Heifers. Tags are \$20 this year and orders are due to the Extension office by 5PM on April 10th.

Tag order forms can be found at the following link:
<http://brazos.agrilife.org/publications/4h-publications/>

If you have any questions, please contact us at 979-823-0129

Brazos County Commercial Heifer Show & Sale

IMPORTANT DATES:

TAG-IN: 8 am, Saturday, April 21st

PALPATION: 5 pm, Thursday, October 11th

HEIFER ARRIVAL / CHECK-IN: 5 pm, Thursday, October 25th

JUDGING RESULTS and AWARDS: 5 pm, Friday, October 26th

EXHIBITOR INTERVIEWS: Saturday, October 27th

AUCTION: 6 pm, Saturday, October 27th (meal @ 5:00)

State Fair Broiler Orders

State Fair Broiler orders are due to the Extension office by May 17th at 5pm.

You must order in groups of 25 and a max of 75 birds

You can order as a family or as an individual.

Order forms can be found at this link:

<http://brazos.agrilife.org/publications/4h-publications/>

If you have any questions, please contact us at 979-823-0129

2018-2019 Brazos County Validation Dates & Tag Orders

Steers

Major Show & County Tag orders due April 10th- tags will be \$20 per tag
Major Show & County Tag in will be June 16th and June 25th (you must attend one of these validations)
County Only Steer tag orders due September 11th- tags will be \$5 per tag
County Only Steer Validation will be October TBA (same as Commercial Steers)

Heifers

Summer Heifer validation tag orders due April 10th- tags will be \$20 per tag
Summer Heifer Validation will be June 16th and June 25th (you must attend one of these validations)
Fall Heifer Validation tag orders due September 11th- tags will be \$20
Fall Heifer Validation will be October 30th at the Brazos County Extension office
BCYLS Heifer Entries will be February TBA

Sheep & Goat

State Fair Sheep & Goat tag orders due April 10th- tags will be \$20 per tag
State Fair Sheep & Goat Validation will be June 22nd at Pearce Pavilion from 7-9am
Major Show & County tag orders will be August 15th- tags will be \$20 per tag
Major Show & County Validation will be October 29th at Expo from 5:30-7pm

Swine

State Fair Swine tag orders due April 10th- tags will be \$20 per tag
State Fair Swine Validation will be June 22nd at Pearce Pavilion from 7-9am
Major Show & County tag orders will be September 20th- tags will be \$20 per tag for major and \$5 for county only
Major Show Validation will be November 19th at Expo from 5:30-7pm
County Only Validation will be December 10th at Expo from 5:30-7pm

Broilers

State Fair Broiler Orders are due May 16th
Major Show Broiler Orders due September 11th
BCYLS Broiler Orders- TBA

Turkeys

Major Show Turkey Orders due August 15th

4-H Major Show Entry Nights- State Fair & HOT- August 2nd/ Spring Major Shows- November 1st

All tag order forms can be found on the Brazos County Extension Website:

<https://brazos.agrilife.org/publications/4h-publications/>

2018 Texas 4-H Livestock Ambassador Short Courses

Texas A&M University July 16-19, 2018 Cost: \$250

Texas Tech University/West Texas A&M University July 23-26, 2018 Cost: \$250

Selection Criteria:

- Senior age (14-18) 4-H youth that have exhibited a superior level of ambition regarding his/her livestock projects
- Students with a profound interest in animal science, animal production and advocacy
- Students have shown advanced leadership qualities and a willingness to help others
- Top 25% class rank

Application Process:

- Applicant goes to: http://tamuag.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3O9MuXE8KeGj1sh
- Student will complete the application and enter the contact information of supervising County Extension Agent
- CEA will be automatically emailed a recommendation survey
- A selection committee will review the applications and accept up to 25 participants per university
- Applications are due June 1, 2018
- Applicants will be notified by June 15, 2018 regarding application result



Major Show results for Brazos County

2018 Houston Livestock Show

Heifers

Olivia Fazzino- 4th place Simbrah
Miranda Skaggs- Reserve Division Simbrah
Canyon Wood- 7th place Brangus
Tyler Towns- 11th place Brangus
Bentley Zemanek- 2nd place Angus
Brelle Warren- 6th place Angus
Kolton Schuler- 8th place Shorthorn
Bailey Warren- 12th place ORB
Brionna Warren- 3rd place Simi
Cierra Dickerson- 1st place ARB
Lauren Hillert- 4th place ARB
Elzy Weimers-2nd place Limi

Steers

Keenan Kutzenberger- 2nd place shorthorn
Olivia Fazzino- 5th place All Other Cross
Caiden Meurer- 6th place Simbrah
Lauren Hillert- 2nd place Simbrah
Elzy Weimers- 6th place Simbrah
Kolton Schuler- 11th place ABC
Will Herd- 5th place Brahman
Kaylee Herd- 5th place Brahman
Canyon Wood- 8th place Charlaiois
Payton Williams- 4th place Gert

Sheep

Colby Allensworth- 13th place Medium wool
Clayton Ramsey – Champion Southdown
Lainey Bone- 2nd place Dorper

Goats

Courtney Thurman- Reserve Division Champion

Swine

Riley Philipello- 2nd place Berkshire
Avery Cammack- 4th place Spot

Poultry-

Dylan Outlaw- 26th place Tom turkey
Maggie Jedlicka-36th place Tom turkey
Kourtney Hopcus- 45th place Hen Turkey
Payton McGinnis- 24th place Pullets
Larry Randall- 82nd place Pullets
Samantha Jobb- 83rd place Pullets
Samuel Coufal- 96th place Pullets

2018 Rodeo Austin Livestock Show

Sheep-

Clayton Ramsey- 4th place Southdown

Brazos County Livestock Skill-A-Thon Team

Brazos County will be starting a livestock skill-a-thon team for this spring.

What is the livestock skill-a-thon?

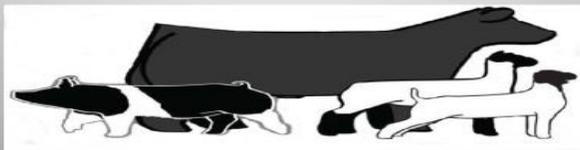
The Livestock Skill-a-thon contest tests a 4-H member's knowledge and comprehension of animal science and livestock management practices. The contest provides an opportunity for youth to gain and develop production livestock skills and life skills through a competitive environment.

We are trying something new for this project, we are going to use Facebook for our main point of contact and for all practice purposes. We have a group created that is only open to people who wish to be part of this project.

We will start after the 1st of the new year with a post that will pertain to the project, practice questions and other information. We will post a few different questions each week and then have the answers for them so everyone has a chance to answer.

So if you think this is something you would like to participate in follow this link and request to join the group. https://www.facebook.com/groups/1532499910178396/?source=create_flow

To learn more about what the Livestock Skill-A-Thon is and start looking over the material visit this link <http://texas4-h.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017-Roundup-Livestock-Skill-A-Thon2.pdf>





Recently, I came across an online thread asking, “What are the three most important things to consider when buying livestock?” This got me thinking. Even though the person posing the question was focused on the county level, I think my advice can apply to all levels of competition.

1 Who you are buying your livestock from. This by far is the MOST important piece of the puzzle, especially if you are new to showing livestock, inexperienced or haven’t exhibited this particular species before. There is SO much to learn when showing livestock. You want to make sure that the seller is going to be there to offer suggestions and advice throughout the entire project.

Will they give feeding advice? Do they want you to send them pictures of your project so they can give feedback? Can they help line someone up to clip your calf or help you fit them on show day? If it is a breeding project, will they give advice on who you should breed your heifer, gilt, ewe or doe to?

Reputation is also important. Has the seller followed up with their promises to past customers? Are they willing to back an animal if they become a non-breeder? You don’t have to necessarily ask who to stay away from, but ask who are the best to purchase from.

Keep in mind online sales are amazing because as buyers we now have access to thousands of head of livestock. However, make sure you pick up the phone before you start clicking to bid. You want to make sure the seller is the right match for you and your needs.

2 Structure It doesn’t matter what species, if they are a pink, purple or polka dotted – if that animal is not structurally to begin with, your project will never be as successful as you hope. Structure is the one thing that we can’t fix with feed or hair, and a small problem as a baby or young animal only becoming magnified as they get older. Joint supplements are designed to promote joint health, not cure structure problems.

3 It is up to you

This is where more debate comes in. I believe three is your personal preference. It could be a phenotypic trait such as muscle, balance or eye appeal. It could be breed of animal. This is especially important if you are looking for particular showing opportunities or if you plan to keep this animal in your herd to bred. If the animal is going to remain in your herd you might look at EPDs, the sire or dam.

If you follow the advice in step 1, the right seller will actually give you advice on the other things you should be taking into consideration when making your selection.

As you go out to purchase your next project keep these three tips in mind to find ultimate success.





Kevin Glaubius, Director of Nutrition and Technical Sales for BioZyme® Inc., says to start early in the heat detection and breeding process to make sure you know the signs of heat and that your heifer is bred at an ideal weight and body condition.

“Start to observe your heifer and watch for her to come into heat when she is around 750 pounds,” Glaubius said. “When they do cycle that first time, log that date on a calendar, and watch to make sure she cycles again in three weeks.” When your heifer stands to be mounted by another animal that is the most accurate sign of estrus. *Standing heat* is the most sexually intensive period of the estrous cycle. During this period, your heifer should stand to be mounted by another animal or move forward slightly with the weight of the mounting animal. If your heifer moves away quickly when a mount is attempted she is not in true estrus.

Glaubius said it is important to start the breeding process early in the heifer’s growth, while she weighs between 750-900 pounds. She should have a Body Condition Score (BCS) of 5.5 to 6. Remember, the gestation length is about 283 days or just slightly more than nine months, so take your ideal calving date into consideration while also getting your heifer bred while she is in her nutritional prime.

Twig Marston, Technical Sales Field Manager for BioZyme, stresses that it is important that your heifer calves by the time she is 24-months-old. He said that a 6 BCS is ideal for today’s show ring, and is close to ideal for breeding a first-calf heifer as well. Higher conditioned heifers with a BCS 7-8 will experience lower fertility, while heifers that are too thin will also be hard to breed, and have to be bred more often than what is idyllic.

An experienced A.I. technician should be able to get the heifer bred or “stuck” within two services. Remember, A.I. is not 100-percent successful and typically has a 60-percent success rate.

Nutritionally speaking, your heifer should be on a steady or increasing plane of nutrition prior to and during breeding season, Glaubius said. She is a growing animal, so her energy needs are still demanding.

Show heifers should be fed more moderate diets than a market steer; however, their mineral requirements are greater. Your heifer should be expected to gain 1.5 to 2.5 pounds per day.

“If your mineral system is part of your grain mixture, and heifers are fed less than steers, that can negatively affect their reproduction, as they are not getting all the trace minerals they need,” Glaubius said. “Her mineral requirements are elevated more than your steers’ that you are feeding for an end-point. You are building her to be in your herd for 12 years.”

Glaubius suggests using a full dose of [Sure Champ](#)® to top-dress your heifer’s feed. He also recommends offering [VitaFerm® Concept•Aid](#)® free-choice for show heifers to make sure they get their full mineral requirements, especially prior to breeding.

Once you have made sure your heifer’s nutritional needs have been met, you need to make sure you have found the right genetics to breed her to. Marston said the number one trait he would look for when selecting a bull to breed to a first-calf heifer is calving ease direct.

“There is enough data now in calving ease direct to make your job in sire selection easier,” he said. “Then look for other traits that will make your calves sellable, such as growth, carcass quality and structural conformation.”

If you have just one or two show heifers, and don’t have the need for a bull or have heifers of different breeds, A.I. is definitely the most efficient way to breed your heifers and allows you a wide variety of genetics to choose from. Marston said many local cattlemen can A.I. or your local semen representative might be able to suggest an A.I. technician in your area.

Both Marston and Glaubius agree there is value in having your heifer preg-checked. And once she is guaranteed safe, be sure to reduce the amount of stress you put on her for at least a week to let her embryo settle to her uterine wall.

To make sure your newly bred heifer’s stress is kept to a minimum for the first two weeks, be sure to keep her in a familiar environment and don’t comingle her with other animals or make any drastic changes in her diet for 7-10 days.

Another stress-reliever for your bred heifer is to keep her as cool as possible during the hot summer months of June, July and August. During those times, Glaubius suggests VitaFerm® HEAT™ mineral to help reduce stress, keep the heifers cool and keep their appetites healthy while growing your next potential show prospect.

Having a show heifer is a great experience. But the greater experience is making the nutritional and management decisions that will transition that heifer into a cow. This investment should pay dividends to you each year, with proper care and handling.

Selecting a Show Steer

The 4-H market steer project involves a time commitment of one to three hours per day and will generally last seven to 12 months. Proper selection, care, feeding and management of the market steer project are all production skills learned in addition to invaluable life skills. At the conclusion of the project, market steers are sold and eventually harvested for their beef. The basic information and resources needed to support the project are as follows.

Questions to Ask. To adequately address the needs of the 4-H family interested in market steers, the following questions will need to be asked:

- What are the goals of the 4-H member and family?
- Do you understand that the project is a 7 to 12 month project?
- What facilities are available?
- Which shows will you be exhibiting the project?
- Will you need assistance in locating and selecting your project?

Selection.

Classification- Today, there are as many as 16 breed and breed-cross classes in Texas shows. Personal preference is one of the most common reasons 4-H members choose a particular breed. Unlike breeding beef heifers that are eligible for show in a certain breed based on pedigreed information, market steers are placed into breed based on the classification process performed at the show. Classification of steers into a breed is based on visual appraisal by show officials. Registration papers or any other documentation of breed type are not included in the process. More detailed information on classifying guidelines can be found in the "Texas Show Steer Breed Classification" publication. Classification standards (revised in 2015) are also printed in major livestock show catalogs. When selecting a market steer, you should be confident the animal will classify.

Slick shorn versus Haired Shows- Currently, of all major shows in Texas, only Fort Worth and Odessa are haired shows. Various county shows are also haired.

Age- Market steers are normally finished (fattened) at 14-20 months of age. Earlier maturing breeds (Ex. Angus, Hereford, etc.) will finish at younger ages than later maturing breeds (Ex. Charolais, Simmental, etc.). Market steers for the winter major shows are typically born from August to October. Market steer shows held in the fall will require steers typically born April to June. Steers are normally purchased soon after the previous year's shows are completed because breeders have the next year's calf crop weaned and ready to market at that time.

Quality Considerations - Other selection criteria include structural correctness, frame size, muscle, depth of body and capacity, and overall balance and eye appeal. When selecting steers, be aware of hair and fatness which can cause the perception that the animal is of much higher quality than he really is. Learn to look past the fat and hair and look for the true muscle, structural correctness and overall quality of the animal.

1) **Frame-** Choose a moderate frame steer that will weigh between 1100 and 1250 pounds at fair time. Large frame animals require a longer time to feed out therefore, a large framed steer will not have enough fat at the time of the fair to make the Choice quality grade. A small framed steer will fatten too soon and the steer will have a poor yield grade at fair time.

2) **Muscle-** Choose a moderately thick muscled steer so that the animal will have a good yield grade. However, some very heavy muscled breeds are known for having poor marbling. This means these breeds may have a very low quality grade.

3) **Balance & Style-** Choose a steer with balance and style. There should be as much in the front quarter area as there is in the rear quarter. A deep bodied calf that is full in the flank is desirable. He should be uniform in his capacity and ruggedness from front to back.

4) **Structural Correctness-** Your steer should have nice straight rear legs with a little set to his hock that allows him to flex freely when walking. Proper set to the hock means an angle is present in the hock joint and that the joint is deep. There should be some slope to his shoulder. His pasterns should have some slope to them as well. A structurally correct calf will walk smooth and have a long stride. His feet should point straight ahead when he stands and walks. The calf needs to have a large circumference of bone to handle the additional weight when reaching a finished weight.

5) **Disposition-** When selecting a show steer it is very important that you select an animal that has a good temperament. An animal that is nervous will not eat properly therefore, he will not gain weight. Also you may not be able to show him. Most importantly you could get hurt trying to break the steer since they can not be forced to do anything.

Where To Purchase Steers- Steers can be purchased through private treaty or through auction sales. Information on breeders or other sources of steers can be found from other steer exhibitors, 4-H agents, on the internet, or show oriented magazines like "The Showbox" or "Purple Circle."

Selecting a Show Steer Continued

Validation -Steers must be validated in the month of June for all Texas major shows. Tags for state validation are ordered (one order per county for 4-H and FFA) in April through the County 4-H office. Many county or local shows require steers to be state validated for eligibility at the county level while the remaining county or local shows utilize their own market steer validation procedures.

Facilities and Equipment. Facilities need not be elaborate; just basic, functional facilities will be adequate for a successful project. A minimum of 75 sq. ft. of well ventilated and drained covered space per steer is recommended. An additional .25 acre (100 ft. x 100 ft.) is also recommended to allow the steer to exercise. Make sure that steers have adequate shade during the summer and consider installing fans for additional cooling. Access to clean, fresh water and clean feed troughs are very important in maintaining the health of the steer as well as good growth and performance. Facilities should be cleaned of manure and feed refusal daily to help maintain a good environment for the steer project. Other equipment needs may include water buckets, feed pans, brushes, combs, water hose, trimming chute, electric clippers, hot air blower, rope halters, show box, extension cord, and electric fan.

Nutrition. There are no magic feeds or supplements that make champions. Successful market steer projects are based on meeting the basic nutritional requirements of the growing animal. The basic nutrients required by market steers are water, protein, energy, minerals and vitamins. A balanced, commercially mixed feed that is 12 to 13 percent crude protein and contains 45 to 60 percent corn depending on the desired animal gain is the basis of the steer's diet. Steers should consume 2.0 to 2.5 percent of their body weight per day divided into 2 feedings (morning and evening). A feed that is consistent from bag to bag and fresh is very important in order to maintain feed consumption and steer performance. Also, make sure that a set daily feeding schedule is maintained and make any changes to the diet gradually over several days to avoid digestive problems. Be sure to monitor steer average daily gain and adjust the diet as necessary to meet the desired ending weight and fat cover.

Health. Every day that a market steer is sick is one day that the animal has not gained weight or potentially lost weight. Thus, minimizing the number of days that a steer is sick during the feeding period is important for the success of the project. Prevention is the key to any animal health program! Assume that the steer has received no vaccinations and implement a vaccination program according to your local large animal veterinarian's recommendations. Also, be sure to administer booster vaccinations as recommended on the label or as directed by your veterinarian. Deworm steers upon arrival and at least twice a year thereafter. Monitor the daily habits of your steer as well as his physical appearance. Depressed eyes, droopy ears, nasal discharge, labored breathing, a change in routine, and feed refusal are all signs of potential illness. The faster a diagnosis is made, the sooner he can be on his way to recovery. When administering drugs, always follow label instructions, administer injections in the neck region (or front elbow pocket for subcutaneous injections) according to Beef Quality Assurance procedures, and adhere to the withdrawal times before slaughter. The use of any drug in a manner other than stated on its label is regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and may be done only under the control of a licensed veterinarian. Texas livestock shows have strict policies against the illegal use of drugs and will disqualify animals if such drugs have been used.

Management. The amount of work that is put into a market steer is a direct reflection of the success of the project. Daily care of the market steer is just as important as nutrition, selection and health. Paying attention to the details is vital. Daily washing or rinsing, hair grooming, walking and showmanship practice are key aspects of successful steer projects. Hair is a competitive advantage for exhibitors that work hard at growing and grooming it. At shows where market steers are shown slick, hair and skin care is just as important as if they were shown with hair. Success is not free, it takes work to achieve it and market steers are no exception.

Rules. The Exhibitors' Handbook contains the rules for a particular show. Each show is different and the rules change from year to year. Each year take the time to review the rules of each show and keep a copy of the rules on hand while at the show. Ignorance of the rules is not a valid excuse for breaking them. One key section in all Exhibitors' Handbooks is the "Animal Health Regulations." Most major livestock shows (and some county shows) require a current set of health papers on an animal before entry onto the show grounds. Review the health requirements outlined in the Exhibitors' Handbook at least a month before the show because some tests required by the Texas Animal Health Commission take a week or more to perform.

2018 HOT Fair Updates

The 2018 HOT Fair has a new schedule for livestock so please take a few minutes to look over it and make note of the changes. The biggest change is all heifers will show on the same weekend and steers will be on a separate weekend. Sheep and Goat days have changed to end over the weekend.

More details can be found at the following link:

<https://www.hotfair.com/events/2017/livestock-show>

2018 State Fair of Texas Updates

Gilts- September 27th-September 30th

Market Goats- September 28th- September 29th

Market Lambs- September 28th- September 30th

Market Steers- October 1st- October 4th

Market Swine- Wave 1 October 1st-October 2nd Wave 2- October 3rd- October 4th

Sale of Champions- Friday October 5th

Heifers (Beefmaster, Brangus, Red Brangus, Gerts, Simbrah, Simmental, Star 5 & ARB)-
October 10th- 14th

Heifers (Angus, Char, Chi, Hereford, Limi, Maine, Polled Hereford, Red Angus, Shorthorn,
ORB)- October 17th -21st

For a more detailed schedule please visit the following website:

<https://bigtex.com/livestock/livestockshow/>

Market steer show will add a black cross division to their show

2018 Judges

Market Steers- Dan Hoge

Prospect Steers- Nick Fitzsimmons

Market Goats- Brandon Morgan

Market Sheep- Brian Riley

Market Swine- Bryan Arnold

Market Poultry- Keith Scott

**Brazos County
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Wer'e on the Web!

<http://brazos.agrilife.org/>

Upcoming Events:

Tag Order Deadlines:

Steers- April 10th

Heifers-April 10th

State Fair

Sheep, Goats, Swine

April 10th

State Fair Broilers-

May 15th

Show Dates

State Fair of Texas

- Gilts- 9/27-9/30
- Mkt Swine- 10/1-10/4
- Mkt Goat -9/28-9/29
- Mkt Sheep-9/28-9/30
- Mkt Steers-10/1-10/4
- Boilers-10/1
- Heifers

Heart of Texas Fair

- Heifers – 10/4-10/7
- Steers- 10/11-10/13
- Sheep 10/11-10/13
- Goats 10/11-10/13
- Swine 10/9-10/10

Brazos Valley Fair

October 19-21

Sandhills

TBA

Ft. Worth

January 18-February 9th

San Antonio

February 7-24

San Angelo

TBA

Rodeo Austin

TBA

Houston

February 26-March 17

BCYLS

March

Contacts

Jerod Meurer 4-H & YD Agent	Dusty Tittle AG/NR Agent	Arvita Scott 4-H & Youth Development CEP Agent	Flora Williams Family & Consumer Science Agent	Ashley Skinner 4-H Program Assistant
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Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating