

**2025 STATE RULES FOR CALIFORNIA FAIRS  
ADDENDUM I  
SUMMARY OF CHANGES FOR 2025**

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**PREFACE**

5. A fair may allow a family back-up animal, although not required to do so. The purpose of a family back-up animal is to allow siblings to share custody of a second animal. If they choose to, immediate family members may have only one (1) back-up animal per family, rather than one for each family member. The fair will determine how the entry and fees will be processed. Contact your local fair to determine if this is allowed and the procedures to follow. Family back-up animals must follow all state and local rules.
5. 6. Fair Management and/or Board of Directors may grant variances to ownership rule in the instance of deceased animals, submission of late entries and refund of entry fees. Variances may be ruled upon by F&E at the request of Fair Management and/or Board of Directors.
6. 7. F&E will distribute any corrections and additions to these rules to fairs. It is the fair's responsibility to make them available. F&E does not represent or endorse the accuracy, correctness or reliability of any advice, opinion, statement, or other information displayed by the fair in the distribution of corrections and additions to these rules. True and correct copies of all rules and any additions or corrections are available upon request at F&E during business hours, by mail or at [www.cdfa.ca.gov/fairsandexpositions](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/fairsandexpositions).
7. 8. Fairs may create "Local Rules" that may be stricter than the State Rules but that may not circumvent the State Rules.
8. 9. If a local rule is not printed in the exhibitor handbook the applicable State Rule will apply.
9. 10. Competition at the California State Fair is not governed by State Rules for California Fairs.

**GENERAL RULES FOR ALL DEPARTMENTS**

**V. PROTEST**

4. ~~Given the short duration of the fair:~~ **Time to File a Protest:**
  - a. ~~The protestor shall make every effort to file the protest prior to judging. All protests must be filed in writing within 24 hours of the time of the cause of the protest and before conclusion of fair.~~
  - a. **All protests must be filed in a timely manner, within 24 hours of the alleged rule violation. A protest can be filed prior to the fair and prior to the conclusion of the fair. Protests will not be accepted after the fair has ended.**

**ADDITIONAL DEPARTMENT RULES**

## VII. JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

**Definitions.** See also Section I, Definitions.

2. Independent Junior - ~~Exhibitor not eligible to compete in a certain category as a member of a 4-H, Grange or FFA junior organization.~~ Exhibitors not associated with a recognized association (4-H, FFA, or Grange).

### Exhibitor Age Requirements

1. FFA members may participate as members as early as entering into the seventh grade, until the end of the calendar year following the year of graduation from high school. (For example, a graduate this year is eligible until December 31 of next year.)
2. 4-H Age Requirements: The levels of membership for 4-H are age based. Each level is defined as follows:
  - a. **Primary Level:** Must be 5 years old as of December 31, 2023 2024 to exhibit at fair. Primary membership ends when members qualify as junior members. Exhibitors who are under 9 years of age on or before December 31, 2023 2024 are not eligible to compete in large animal (Beef, Sheep, Swine, Dairy Cattle, Dairy Goats, Boer Goats, Market & Fiber Goats, Horse & Llama) competitions at California Fairs.
  - b. **Junior, Intermediate, & Senior:** Must be 9 years old on or before December 31, 2023 2024. Exhibitors are eligible to compete/exhibit through December 31st of the year in which they turn 19 years of age.
3. **Grange Members** must be at least 5 years old on January 1, 2024 2025 to exhibit. They may exhibit until the end of the calendar year in which they reach age 19.
  - a. All **Grange Youth** must be 9 years old on January 1, 2024 2025 to compete in large animal (Beef, Sheep, Swine, Dairy Cattle, Dairy Goats, Boer Goats, Market & Fiber Goats, Horse, Alpaca & Llama) competitions at California Fairs.
4. **Independent Exhibitors** must be at least 9 years old by January 1, 2024 2025 to compete in large animal (Beef, Sheep, Swine, Dairy Cattle, Dairy Goats, Boer Goats, Market & Fiber Goats, Horse, Alpaca & Llama) competitions at California Fairs.
  - a. Exhibitors are eligible to compete/exhibit through December 31st of the year in which they turn 19 years of age.
  - b. Youth may be ineligible to participate as Independent if documented disciplinary action involving their project(s) has been taken against them by 4-H, FFA or Grange organizations. Length of ineligibility to be determined by Fair Management.

### Livestock and Horse Exhibits, Ownership

1. Animal and horse projects must be owned (and leased horses as specified in this document) solely by and under the exhibitor's care and management and under the

supervision of the organization in which the project will be shown as specified below. **Animal projects may NOT be shown by another person at ANY other show/jackpot regardless of the other shows' rules, within the animal's ownership period.** The official ownership date is the date shown on the receipt of sale unless the animal was bred by the exhibitor. The days are counted prior to the opening day of the fair unless the event in the case of horse shows is held separately from the Fair. Ownership must be maintained through show date(s) of fair or event. *See also VIII Livestock Department and XI. HORSE SHOW DEPARTMENT Ownership of Lease, rules 1 and 2.*

- a. Market animals: Beef - 120 consecutive days; and 60 consecutive days for swine, sheep, veal, and goats.
  - b. Breeding and feeder animals: 30 consecutive days.
  - c. All small market animals (rabbits and poultry): 30 consecutive days.
  - d. All horses and llamas: leased or owned 120 consecutive days.
- Fairs will determine the ownership period requirement for any other animal species (e.g., potbellied pigs). **Animals are not to be entered by another exhibitor at any other show/jackpot within the ownership period.**

## **Livestock and Horse Exhibits, Ownership**

### **7. Horse exhibits:**

- a. Proof of ownership or lease must be available at check-in time.
- b. Leased horses cannot be shown for conformation in the halter horse division.
- c. 4-H, FFA, Grange and Independent exhibitors may show leased horses, provided the member has responsibility for the care and management of the horse during the period of the lease; and the signed lease between owner and member, with a clear picture of a side view of the horse or some permanent identification is filed at least 120 consecutive days prior to the fair or event/horse show if held separately from the fair, at the County 4-H, FFA, or Grange office, or with a person designated by those offices. Independent exhibitors must file with the fair office. *See also XI HORSE SHOW DEPARTMENT Ownership or Lease, rules 1 and 2.*

## **VIII. LIVESTOCK DEPARTMENT**

**Definitions** (See also Section I Definitions.)

### **1. Drug –**

- a. Any substance intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, prevention, or treatment of disease; and
- b. Any substance, except food and water, which is intended to affect the structure or function of the body of any exhibit animal. **(Food and Agricultural Code Section 14202)**

## **Registered Purebred Animal Registration Certificates**

1. All animals in “registered purebred breeding animal” divisions must be registered and recorded with a United States (U.S.) breed association in the exact name of the exhibitor (owner) as declared on the entry form, except for:
  - a. Pigs, 12 months or younger, which are still owned by the breeder. Litter registrations are acceptable if recorded with their breed association and if they identify the litter by birth date, sire, dam, and ear notching; and
  - b. Animals whose breed association requires an inspector’s approval before registering. The animal cannot be more than 12 months of age on the opening day of the fair. Exhibitors may present a statement by the secretary of the association stating that the animal is eligible to be registered. This statement must identify the animal by birth date, sire, dam, and ear tag, tattoo, or notching.

## **Sheep**

1. All sheep in California require official scrapie identification issued by the USDA. Official scrapie identification (official eartags, official tattoos, official electronic identification, or official premises identification numbers) is required before transport to show, fair, petting zoo, or exhibition and/or when sheep change ownership, except:
  - a. Lambs less than 18 months of age in slaughter channels that have not lambed, kidded, aborted, or are pregnant.
  - b. Low-risk sheep (those not exposed to scrapie or to any sheep, unless low risk commercial sheep).
  - c. Castrated animals less than 18 months of age that are not for exhibition.

## **Sheep**

5. Registered Purebred Breeding Animals
  - a. Flock numbers, and not registration numbers, shall be used to identify all entries. Flock numbers and breeder’s initials, name or association prefix shall be on commercially used tags attached to the ear or tattooed in the ear for yearlings and lambs bred by the exhibitor. Lambs born from a purchased, bred ewe can bear the ear tag of the owner at the time of birth. They do not have to have original breeder’s ear tag.
  - b. An exhibitor may not use the same flock number on more than one animal during any two consecutive calendar years.

## **X. ANIMAL HEALTH RULES**

7. Drench guns are not approved for use while on the fairgrounds. Anyone found to be using any type of drench gun to administer liquids or paste into any animal without the supervision and direction of the official fair veterinarian and/or designated fair official will result in exhibit and/or exhibitor being disqualified.

## **XI. HORSE SHOW DEPARTMENT**

### **Ownership or Lease**

1. Any horse exhibited in the junior or youth division must be owned or leased by the junior exhibitor showing the horse or owned by the junior exhibitor's parent, stepparent, sibling, halfsibling, stepsibling, grandparent, step grandparent, sibling's spouse, half sibling's spouse, stepsibling's spouse, or legal guardian (as evidenced by court documents) or owned by the institution in which the junior exhibitor is enrolled as a ward. Separate legal entities, such as family corporations, trusts, or partnerships, are also authorized owners of the youth exhibitor's horse so long as all legal and equitable owners and beneficiaries of the legal entity are individuals specifically authorized by this rule. ~~"Owned" means, in addition to other legitimate methods of acquiring ownership, the bona fide legal ownership obtained for adequate consideration in reasonable relationship with the actual market value of the horse.~~
2. Horse projects must be owned or leased by and under the exhibitor's care and management and under the supervision of the organization in which the project will be shown 120 consecutive days prior to the opening day of fair or event/show if held separate from fair. The official ownership date is the date shown on the receipt of sale unless the animal was bred by the exhibitor. The days are counted prior to the opening day of the fair or event.
  - a. Leased horses cannot be shown for conformation in the halter division.
  - b. For owned horses, proof of ownership must be available at check in.  
**"Owned" means, in addition to other legitimate methods of acquiring ownership, the bona fide legal ownership obtained for adequate consideration in reasonable relationship with the actual market value of the horse.**