



January 1, 2025

To: Extension Agents, FFA Instructors, and Coaches

From: Katherine E. Carter, Extension Youth Animal Science Specialist
Megan Mallory and Brooklyn Davis, B & B Livestock Contest Chairpersons
Katie Powell, State 4-H & FFA Meats Evaluation Contest Chair
Katherine Carter, Hunter Liles, Emma Helm and Beth Sheely, B & B Club Advisors

RE: 2025 Block & Bridle Club Stockmen's, Livestock Judging, and Meat Evaluation Contests

The Block & Bridle Club at Virginia Tech has scheduled their 2025 Stockmen's and Livestock Judging contests for Friday, February 21st and Saturday, February 22nd, respectively. The Meat Judging contests will be held the following Saturday on March 1st. These contests will be held on the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg with the livestock judging and stockmen's contests held in the Alphin-Stuart Arena. The meat judging contest will be held in the Meat Science Center and Litton-Reaves Hall.

Please take time to completely and thoroughly read this letter, which includes rules, eligibility requirements, and contest content. While we gladly welcome your questions, most of the questions we receive are already answered in the information that follows. A detailed schedule with contest starting times and locations can be found on the last page of this letter. *****Please note: age divisions and/or contest divisions are being held at different times to accommodate participant numbers and alleviate the need to limit the number of teams/contestants that a Unit, Club, or Chapter can enter.**

There is no limit to the number of teams a unit, club, or chapter can enter in any contest. For Stockmen's and Livestock Judging there are NOT separate 4-H and FFA contests; participants will need to choose whether they compete as an FFA member or a 4-H member – they are not allowed to compete for both organizations. There are not separate awards or recognitions for 4-H versus FFA in the Stockman's and Livestock Judging Contests.

Please see information specific to the Meats evaluation contest for details on dual entry in that event. Out-of-state teams and individuals are invited and allowed to compete in all three contests.

All Contests - Contestant Eligibility: All contestants must be enrolled in either the 4-H unit or FFA chapter that they represent in these contests. There are no exceptions, and enrollment will be verified using 4HOnline and the State FFA enrollment records for all contestants. All members of a team must represent the same Unit, Club, or Chapter. There is no option to combine members from different Units or Chapters to facilitate a team.

Entry Fees - The entry fee is \$12 per individual in all divisions of the Stockmen's Contest and the Regular (non-reasons) divisions of the Livestock Judging Contest. Individuals competing in the Advanced divisions of the Livestock Judging contest will pay a \$15.00/person entry fee – this includes lunch for those contestants. Meats contestants who are only entering in the 4-H OR FFA contest will pay an entry fee of \$15/person and those contestants Dual-Entering as both 4-H AND FFA will pay \$20/person to cover the cost of additional awards and resources. **All entries are due no later than Monday, February 10th. Late entries will not be accepted.** Entry fees should be paid on the day of the contest and will be assessed based on the number of youth ENTERED in

the entry system. **Please do NOT submit payment when mailing your entry forms.** Payment should be brought the day of the contests. Invoices for the amount due, based on the number ENTERED, will be generated and emailed upon acceptance of entries. Acceptable forms of payment are:

- Personal, business, or school check made payable to: Virginia Tech Block and Bridle Club
- VT Hokiemark or VA 4-H Foundation Check made payable to: Block & Bridle Club
- **PLEASE DO NOT SEND CHECKS WITH ENTRY FORMS**
- Copy of your VT Hokiemark PO Paperwork
- Copy of your VA 4-H Foundation Payment Request
- Credit Card Payment THE DAY OF THE EVENT
- VTF Funds Transfer is not encouraged. Please have VTF cut and send a check directly to the VT Block and Bridle Club at 175 W. Campus Drive, 3490 Litton Reaves, Blacksburg, VA 24061

Entry Forms - Contest entry forms must be submitted online using the following links: ***Please note there are two separate links for Stockman's/Livestock Judging and Meats Weekend.

Stockman's and Livestock Judging Entries will be submitted using this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/2025-BandB-Livestock-Stockmans>

Meats Evaluation Contest Entries will be submitted using this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/2025-4HandFFA-Meats-Contest>

Directions for how to complete the entry form(s) and what information you will need to provide are included at the beginning of the form, and in the separately attached Entry Form Tip Sheet.

All contests and all contestant information will be submitted at these links. Please have the following information available for each contestant prior to beginning the entry process:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Any special dietary restrictions
- Any Assistive Services Requested (reader, interpreter, etc.)

You will only need to know how many contestants you plan to enter for each contest and the required identifying information for each child as listed above. Youth will not be assigned to teams during the entry process. That information will be provided during check-in. You will also indicate how many teams for each contest to help us prepare check-in resources for each contest. Please pre-enter all youth that want to participate. **Only pre-entered youth that have been verified as enrolled and eligible will be allowed to participate in the contests.**

IMPORTANT – Stockman's and Livestock Judging (Not Meats Evaluation): ALL AGE DIVISIONS WILL BE BROKEN AND DETERMINED BASED ON BIRTH DATE (NOT GRADE LEVEL): Contestants 13 years and younger as of January 1, 2025 will compete in the JUNIOR Division. All contestants ages 14 to 18 as of January 1, 2025 will compete in the SENIOR division. No contestant may have had their 19th birthday prior to January 1, 2025.

The link to the entry forms will also be posted to the Block and Bridle Club's website:

<https://vtblockandbridle.wixsite.com/vtblockandbridle>, the Virginia Youth Livestock Website

<https://ext.vt.edu/4h-youth/youth-livestock.html>, and on the Virginia Youth Livestock Programs Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/vayouthlivestock/>

Once complete, Please print/scan and email a copy of the Qualtrics Summary form to both of the following email addresses:

Katherine Carter – carterke@vt.edu

Livestock Weekend Chairpersons - bnblivestgoekweekend@gmail.com

You must submit the online Qualtrics form AND email a copy of the completed summary form. This will help us confirm entries and will be used to generate an invoice. Payment or proof of payment request as listed previously must be presented at check-in. Please do NOT mail payment with your entry forms.

Stockmen's Contest – The stockmen's contest is a test of general knowledge of livestock production. The 12-minute classes include:

- 20-25 question multiple choice quiz (100 points) – two 12-minute rounds will be allocated for quiz completion
- identification of feeds, equipment, breeds, and retail meat cuts (50 points each class)
 - Seniors should be prepared to identify feed usage (Feed Usage Library sent in separate attachment)
 - Retail meat ID will include species and retail cut, not wholesale cuts
- judging of hay, retail meat cuts, and classes of live animals (50 points each class)
 - The contest may feature a data scenario with pictures and performance data (50 points) in place of one or more of the live animal judging classes.
 - Senior Contestants will have a nutritive analysis and scenario on the hay judging class
- Questions about judging classes (25 points each class)
- Group exercise/team problem for senior teams that members will complete together. Please be aware that sample contest materials and previous years' quizzes can be found at the Youth Livestock Program website at: <http://ext.vt.edu/4h-youth/youth-livestock/competitions/block-bridle.html> and in the Google Drive Folder located here:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jJ72MTsJQan8F02YVRXCtwoZ_XVA3X9g?usp=share_link

Contestants are welcome to bring simple 4-function calculators for the senior team problem and quiz (junior and senior). Only simple 4-function calculators will be allowed – no cell phones or smart watches will be allowed in the contest. Contestants who are seen with or utilizing electronic devices will automatically be disqualified.

Stockmen's Contest Eligibility - Members who have previously participated in the National 4-H Skillathon contest are **not** eligible to participate in the B & B Stockman's contest as a 4-H or FFA contestant. Contest divisions and contestant eligibility are detailed in the summary table.

Stockmen's Contestant Responses: All stockmen's contest participants (junior and senior) will be scored using our Virginia Skillathon Scantron sheet. This form can be found at:

<https://www.judgingcard.com/ScanSheets/samples/UnivD-VA-Skillathon.pdf> A separate sheet with retail meat identification choices (species and retail cut) will be provided for the Meat ID station, and will be used to

complete that portion of the scantron – contestants will need to identify the species (2 pts) and retail cut (3 pts). Points are awarded for each category. Please familiarize your contestants with this form before the contest. **All contestants will need a clipboard and at least one No.2 pencil to complete the scantron sheet.** Junior and senior contestants will compete in separate divisions and separate times of the day to accommodate contestant numbers and provide an age appropriate and positive experience for all contestants.

Livestock Judging Contest – This contest will consist of eight classes of beef cattle, swine, sheep, and meat goats. Performance data may be provided for at least one breeding class in each species. Ten questions will be asked on 2 classes. Contestants may have to judge breeding or market classes of each species. Market lambs may be handled in racks by all contestants – this will be at the discretion of the officials. Meat goats could be used for either a reasons or question class.

The Livestock Judging contest will be broken into four divisions:

- Junior Regular Livestock Judging and Senior Regular Livestock Judging – **these contestants will NOT give reasons and will judge after lunch on Saturday, February 22nd**
- Junior Advanced Livestock Judging and Senior Advanced Livestock Judging – **these contestants will place classes in the morning (February 22nd) and give reasons in the afternoon at Litton Reaves (2 sets for Juniors and 4 sets for Seniors)**

Livestock Judging Eligibility - Members who have previously participated in the National 4-H Livestock Judging contest or National FFA Livestock Evaluation CDE are **not** eligible to participate under that organization in this contest, but may compete for the other organization IF their eligibility is still valid for that group.

Livestock Judging Contestant Responses - **All judging contests** will be scored using the Livestock Form#: 476-3 scantron. This form can be found at: <https://www.judgingcard.com/ScanSheets/samples/476-3.pdf> Please familiarize your contestants with this form before the contest.

Summary of Stockmen’s and Livestock Judging Contest Details

Contest Divisions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stockmen’s: junior and senior (No separate 4-H and FFA divisions) 2. Livestock Judging: junior advanced, senior advanced, junior regular, and senior regular. <u>Junior advanced and senior advanced contestants will give reasons.</u> (No separate 4-H and FFA divisions.)
Contest Eligibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ALL DIVISIONS WILL BE DETERMINED AND BROKEN ON DATE OF BIRTH 2. Junior Contestants: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ages 9 - 13 as of 01/01/2025, including 4-H youth who reach their 9th birthday by September 30, 2025 3. Senior Contestants: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ages 14 to 18 as of 01/01/2025. 4. Contestants <u>must</u> be enrolled in the chapter or unit they represent in the contest 5. No contestant can have had their 19th birthday before 01/01/2025 6. A team consists of either 3 or 4 members from the same unit or chapter – for four member teams the top three scores in each respective division will be used to calculate the team total

Meats Judging Contest – **The contest will be held Saturday, March 1st.** This will be the Virginia State Contest for 4-H and FFA members.

- The contest will be broken into separate 4-H and FFA divisions.
- Youth are allowed to dual enter and compete in both the 4-H and FFA divisions.
- This will require youth to complete additional components as required by one or both divisions.
- Dual entered youth MUST be enrolled, eligible members of both the 4-H Unit and FFA Chapter they represent.
- Contestants entered as either 4-H OR FFA will pay a \$15/person entry fee
- Contestants who are Dual-Entered, competing as both 4-H AND FFA will pay a \$20/person entry fee. All meats contestants are provided lunch.

*****Please be aware that dual entered youth may be in different age divisions for 4-H vs FFA, as 4-H divisions are determined by their birthdate and FFA divisions are determined by grade level. These contestants will be required to complete the contest components of both divisions.**

Meats Contest Eligibility: Any participant who has competed in the National FFA Meats Evaluation CDE or the National 4-H Meats Evaluation is NOT eligible to compete for that organization.

Meats Judging Contestant Responses - Contestants will complete a Scantron form for all responses to the meat judging contest. This includes quiz, placings for judging classes, answers to questions, retail cut identification, and all the additional classes that are only in the FFA contest. Please familiarize your contestants with this form. The form is available at: <https://www.judgingcard.com/ScanSheets/samples/480-4-Meats.pdf>. To maintain cleanliness of the Scantron forms, contestants will be given a recording form to complete while in the meats lab. Contestants will be given adequate time to transfer their responses to the Scantron after exiting the meats lab. Materials to be used by 4-H contestants in addition to the Scantron can be found on the 4-H Youth Livestock Program website at: <https://ext.vt.edu/4h-youth/youth-livestock/competitions/meat-contest-info.html>.

FFA Contest - Description of contest format, examples, contest materials, etc. are available in the Virginia CDE guides for the senior (https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4e58fc_2e3f0108a6b5475aad13972d1079e4ba.pdf) and junior (https://6866ef7c-009f-47ab-a1b0-a7a6d943036f.filesusr.com/ugd/4e58fc_700439c6410f407294b6d3a7a394fdb.pdf) contests. Contestants may be required to complete the beef grading portion of this contest on paper based on provided carcass measurements as enough beef carcasses may not be available.

Please remember, The National FFA Meat Evaluation and Technology CDE employs a four-person team format with no drop score, and therefore our state FFA meat judging contest will follow that system.

Classes in the judging portion of the contest can come from the following but are not limited to:

- Beef, pork, or lamb carcasses
- Wholesale cuts of beef, pork, or lamb
 - Including but not limited to: Ribs, loins, chucks, rounds, strips, and hams
- Retail Cuts of beef, pork or lamb

Contests Attire – In addition to wearing close toed shoes, contestants will be required to bring frocks, hard hats, and hair/beard nets for their own use in the meat judging contest, as we try to more closely follow the format on the national contest. Suppliers of these items are listed below:

- Koch Supplies: <https://www.kochsupplies.com/>
- UltraSource: <https://www.ultrasourceusa.com/>

National Contest Participation – The high Virginia team in the senior 4-H division will be invited to compete at the National 4-H Meat Judging Contest. That will be held at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas in October.

Information about past 4-H contests and background material useful in training and preparing teams can be found at the American Meat Science Association website at: <http://www.meatscience.org/students/meat-judging-program/national-4-h-meat-judging>.

The high Virginia Senior FFA team will be eligible to compete at the National FFA convention in Indianapolis in October. Details of that event can be found on the national FFA website.

Summary of Meat Judging Contest Details

	Junior Contestants	Senior Contestants
	4-H Contest	
Eligibility (Age on January 1, 2025 for Seniors and January 1, 2025 for Juniors)	9 through 13 Youth who will turn 9 by 9/30/25 are eligible	14 through 18
Classes		
Retail Identification	15 Cuts	30 Cuts
Quiz	Yes	Yes
Judging	5 - 6 Classes	5 - 6 Classes
Questions on Judging Class	2 Classes	2 Classes
Oral Reasons	No	1 set
	FFA Contest	
Eligibility (Current Grade in School)	Grades 6, 7, 8, or 9	Grades 9 to 12
Classes		
Identification	15 Cuts	30 Cuts
Quiz	Yes	Yes
Judging	5 - 6 Classes	5 - 6 Classes
Questions on Judging Class	2 Classes	2 Classes
Beef Quality and Yield Grading	No	Yes
Carcass Order Fulfillment	No	Team Activity
Formulation Problem	No	Team Activity

No contestant may have reached their 19th birthday prior to January 1, 2025 Youth who turn 9 years old by September 30, 2025 are eligible to compete in the Junior 4-H Division. FFA Contestants in the 9th grade may compete as a junior or a senior, but not both.

Contest Chairs

Stockmen's Contest and Livestock Judging Contest Chairpersons:

Megan Mallory

Brooklyn Davis

Meat Judging Contest Chairs:

Katie Powell

Contest Entry and Eligibility Questions

Katherine Carter, carterke@vt.edu, 540-231-2257

Extension Youth Animal Science Specialist

Hunter Liles, huntl97@vt.edu, 540-231-6345

Extension Youth Animal Science Program Associate

Lodging Information

- There are a number of hotels in the Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and surrounding areas that you can contact for reservations and lodging.

**2025 VT Block and Bridle
Livestock Educational Contests
Tentative Schedule of Events**

Schedule of Events - Subject to Change based on Entry Numbers or other unforeseen circumstances

Friday, February 21st – Stockmen’s Contests

8:00 – 9:30 AM	Registration for Jr Division Stockmen’s contest (Alphin-Stuart Arena) – Groups with Junior Contestants
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Junior stockmen’s contest (meet in Alphin-Stuart Arena)
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	Registration for Senior Division Stockmen’s Contest (Alphin-Stuart Arena) – Groups with Senior Contestants
1:30 – 4:30 PM	Senior stockmen’s contest (meet in Alphin-Stuart Arena)
Following senior stockmen’s contest	Contestants and coaches able to view stockmen’s contest classes (Alphin-Stuart Arena)

Saturday, February 22nd – Livestock Judging Contests

7:30 AM	Advanced (Reasons) Livestock Judging contest registration open (Alphin-Stuart Arena)
8:15 AM	All ADVANCED Livestock Judging contestants to the Alphin-Stuart Arena
8:30 AM	ADVANCED (Jr and Sr) Livestock judging contest begins (Alphin-Stuart Arena)
11:30 AM	Lunch for All Advanced Contestants
11:30 AM	REGULAR(non- reasons) Livestock Judging Contest registration open
12:30 PM	Transport Advanced Contestant to Main campus *Junior and Senior Reasons to be held in Litton Reaves
12:30 PM	All REGULAR contestants report to Arena
1:00 PM	REGULAR Livestock Judging Contest Begins
3:00 PM	Classes available for view by coaches
Approximately 4:00 PM	Awards ceremony for stockmen’s and livestock judging contests (Alphin-Stuart Arena)

Saturday, March 1st – Meats Judging Contest

8:30 AM	Registration Open – Emily Jane Hilscher Lounge in Litton Reaves Hall
9:30 AM	All contestants report to 1670 Litton Reaves
10:00 – 4:30 PM	Junior and Senior meat judging contests. Parking will be available in the Litton-Reaves lot. Class critiques and results to follow the contest.
Approximately 12:00 noon	Lunch

The club looks forward to hosting the extremely important events again in 2025 and look forward to having you join them in Blacksburg in February and March.