**Virginia Cooperative Extension**
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**DATE:**     June 9, 2021

**TO**:     Potential Youth Livestock Exhibitors at 2021 State Fair of Virginia

**FROM**:     Katherine E. Carter, Assistant Youth Livestock Programming Specialist

Plans are taking shape for the state youth livestock shows at the 2021 State Fair of Virginia in Doswell this fall and we hope that you will plan to join us!  After a year of uncertainty and many unknowns we are excited to move forward and begin planning for this year's state youth livestock shows.  We are still working through the details of what the exact schedule will look like, but are anticipating the schedule will be very similar to our traditional, pre-COVID, schedules with youth livestock shows spread throughout the weekend, and all exhibitors and animals needing to remain in place Friday – Sunday (October 1 – 3$^{rd}$).  We do ask that everyone remain flexible and understanding of any future adjustments that may be necessary.

The 2021 Nomination Protocol will be the same as 2020, with self-nominations and DNA sample collections.  However, there are several date/deadline changes and changes to which animals/entries require nomination.  Please read all of the information carefully, and please share with any new exhibitors, particularly those in your club or county.  All information pertaining to the fair – letters, rules, links, forms, tentative schedule - can be found on the Youth Livestock web site at www.ext.vt.edu/youthlivestock under the State Fair tab on our homepage.

***Important Nomination Updates for 2021***

- Dates: – All beef, sheep, swine and meat goats will show October  1 – 3, 2021; the second weekend of the State Fair.  We appreciate everyone being flexible as we continue to finalize the schedule details.

- Nomination of Animals -  **All of the nominations will be done using an online, self-nomination process with animal pictures, and DNA collection/submission.**
    - Step 1:  This can be done immediately - Order your DNA envelopes  and Tags (Tags for Cattle and Hogs ONLY, if needed)  https://tinyurl.com/2021SFVA-DNA-and-Tag-Order
    - Please order all of your DNA envelopes and Tag (if needed) at one time.
    - Families can order for multiple siblings with one submission.
    - All orders need to be submitted using the link above no later than FRIDAY, JULY 9$^{th}$ to allow ample time for receipt of supplies and return by the extended July 19$^{th}$ Nomination Deadline.
    - Step 2:  Directions for uploading your nomination information and returning your DNA envelopes will be included in the packet with your envelopes and tags (if ordered)  This information should be read carefully to help alleviate mistakes in the nomination process.

- Which animals require nomination, tagging, and DNA submission?
  - Beef – Market Steers, Market Heifers, Commercial/Crossbred Heifers (NOT PROSPECTS)
  - Meat Goats – Market Goats and Commercial Does
  - Sheep – Market Lambs and Commercial Ewes
  - Swine – Commercial Gilts and ALL Market Hogs (new this year:  Purebred, registered breeding gilts, showing as such, do not need to be nominated) ***Please Note:  If there are any issues with the tattoo, ear notch, or registration papers of a Registered Gilt, she may not show as a commercial gilt if she was not Nominated.

- Nomination is NOT required for the following:
  - Registered Breeding Females of ALL Species (Beef, Meat Goats, Sheep, and Swine) that plan to enter and show as a Registered Breeding Female.
    - PLEASE NOTE:  If any of these females are deemed ineligible due to problems/inaccuracies with registration papers, tattoos, or ear notches (Gilts), they are NOT eligible to transfer to the commercial division of their species.
  - Prospect Steers and Prospect Heifers
    - PLEASE NOTE:  Prospect Steers and Prospect Heifers MUST weigh less than 1000 pounds at the State Fair Weigh-In and Check-in to qualify as a prospect.  If they weight 1000 pounds or more they are ineligible to show as a Prospect and ineligible to transition to the Market Beef or Commercial Heifer Divisions since they were not nominated.

- DNA Collection/Submission – All nominated animals must have DNA (hair follicle samples) submitted at the time of nomination.  DNA envelopes and any cattle or hog EID tags must be ordered using the link above.   EXTENDED - **DNA and NOMINATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS July 19th, 2021** ( this date has been extended since previously sent out).

- Tagging – You will use the following tags as Official Identification for your nominated animals:
  > **Sheep and Goats**:  Federally Required Scrapie Tag (needs to be a plastic visual tag, not the small metal tags, from the Flock or Herd of origin)
  > **Hogs**:  **Any** USDA-compliant "840" EID Tag (these can be ordered with your DNA envelopes, if needed) – Animals should only have ONE EID Tag
  > **Cattle**:  Any USDA-compliant "840" EID Tag (these can be ordered with your DNA envelopes, if needed) – Animals should only have ONE EID Tag

**Please order your DNA Envelopes and any needed tags no later than EXTENDED – Friday, July 9th** to allow time for receipt of items and ample time to return them by the July 19th EXTENDED deadline.  One final shipment will be mailed, Saturday, July 10th.

**Nomination Deadline is July 19th at 5:00 PM.**  The system will automatically close at 5:00 pm EST. **In addition to being uploaded into the online portal, all nomination forms and DNA samples must be mailed and postmarked by July 19th to:**  Katherine Carter, Assistant Youth Livestock Specialist, 175 West Campus Dr., 380 Litton Reaves Hall, Blacksburg, VA  24061.

Updated rules, a tentative schedule, and information regarding the FairEntry Entry System will be forthcoming.  If you have questions regarding the nomination and DNA Submission protocol, please contact Katherine Carter at carterke@vt.edu.

Thank you for your patience as we continue to get everything updated and made available.