

## V - NYS 4-H HORSE JUDGING CONTEST

### Rules and Regulations

**\*\*NOTE: National rule changes will be automatically reflected in New York State 4-H educational event rules in following years.\*\***

These rules and procedures will be used to govern the conduct of the New York State 4-H Horse Judging Contest. They have been developed by the NYS 4-H Horse Education Committee, specifically for this contest, and will be subject to routine review. It may be necessary to make some last-minute adjustment in the procedures listed, but every effort will be made to maintain the intent of the procedures and the integrity of the contest itself.

#### **Dress Code:**

**A strict dress code will be enforced.** Clean, neat clothing, appropriate for the event and weather conditions will be expected. Remember, contestants are representing 4-H, Cornell, and their county and region. Shirt must have sleeves and cover midriff. No inappropriate language on clothing. Skirts and shorts must be longer than the individual's fingertips when their hands are at their sides. Contestants will be judging live horses. Therefore, NO open toed shoes will be permitted in the judging ring.

I. **Purpose** - The primary purpose of this contest is to recognize 4-H horse project members with outstanding knowledge of equine conformation and performance and also with outstanding skill in the presentation of oral explanations of their evaluation of the equines used in the contest. That this contest provides a means for the selection of individuals to represent the state in regional and national competition is of secondary importance.

#### II. **Contest Eligibility**

##### A. **Advanced** (Junior or Senior team members allowed)

1. Each county may enter two teams of not more than four (4) 4-H horse project members. Contestants must be at least nine (9) years of age before January 1 of the current year but not have been nineteen (19) prior to January 1 of the current year.
2. Each contestant will place all classes and give three (3) sets of oral reasons.
3. Team scores will be based on the three (3) contestants of each team who achieve the highest total overall scores.
4. Counties unable to field a full team may:
  - a. register youth who will compete as individuals, or
  - b. counties may combine individuals to have a full team.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If a county has a full team in a given division, they may not register additional youth in that division to compete on an individual basis. **BUT** they will be allowed to register a maximum of two (2) individuals as part of another county's team. **REMEMBER** that this team will compete under the name of the county needing to field a full team and not as a combined county

name. It is up to the counties to find members, the State 4-H office will not do this for you. All deadlines for entry forms apply for combined teams.

5. Only contestants who meet Senior age requirements are eligible for selection to the State 4-H Horse Judging Team, for the National Horse Judging event.

**B. Junior** (Junior team members only)

1. Each county may enter two teams of not more than four (4) 4-H horse project members in this division. Contestants must be at least nine (9) years of age before January 1 of the current year but not have been fourteen (14) prior to January 1 of the current year.
2. Each contestant will place a maximum of five (5) classes and give two (2) sets of oral reasons.
3. Team scores will be based on the three (3) contestants of each team who achieve the highest total overall scores.
4. Counties unable to field a full team may:
  - a. register youth who will compete as individuals, or
  - b. counties may combine individuals to have a full team.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If a county has a full team in a given division, they may not register additional youth in that division to compete on an individual basis. **BUT** they will be allowed to register a maximum of two (2) individuals as part of another county's team. **REMEMBER** that this team will compete under the name of the county needing to field a full team and not as a combined county name. It is up to the counties to find members, the State 4-H office will not do this for you. All deadlines for entry forms apply for combined teams.

**C. Novice**

1. Each county may enter two teams of not more than four (4) 4-H horse project members in this division. Contestants must be at least nine (9) years of age before January 1 of the current year but not have been fourteen (14) prior to January 1 of the current year **and** none of which

have previously competed in a State 4-H Horse Judging Contest. Youth 10 and under may compete as a novice a maximum of 2 years.

2. Each contestant will place a maximum of five (5) classes, but give no oral reasons.
3. Team scores will be based on the three (3) contestants of each team who achieve the highest total overall scores.
4. Counties unable to field a full team may:
  - a. register youth who will compete as individuals, or
  - b. counties may combine individuals to have a full team.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If a county has a full team in a given division, they may not register additional youth in that division to compete on an individual basis. **BUT** they will be allowed to register a maximum of two (2) individuals as part of another county's team. **REMEMBER** that this team will compete under the name of the county needing to field a full team and not as a combined county name. It is up to the counties to find members, the State 4-H office will not do this for you. **All** deadlines for entry forms apply for combined teams.

### III. **Entry Form**

Team preregistration will be required. Individuals do not need to be declared. The county extension 4-H office has the entry forms. Deadlines will be noted on these forms and in the State Fair information. Have three copies made:

- a. one to be mailed to the Animal Science Department.
- b. one to be presented when registration at the State event.
- c. one copy for the county files.

### IV. **Rules**

#### A. **Identification**

1. Each contestant in each division will be supplied with an identification device (tag or badge) which will contain the identification number of the contestant and the number of the group to which the contestant has been assigned.
2. Identification badges must be worn in plain sight at all times. Failure to do so will result in removal from the contest.
3. No placing cards will be accepted from contestants in the wrong groups.

4. No item of clothing may be worn which will establish the individual identity of the contestant or which will imply a direct or indirect association with a stable, a breed, a club or a county. Hats are prohibited in the judging arena.

**B. Scoring**

1. All cards will be scored on the 3-cut (3-15 points) system.
2. If a card is not properly filled out with the name or number of the class, the contestant number and the placing, or if the card is illegible, a score of zero (0) will be given to that contestant for that class.
3. Only those cards turned in at the appropriate time to the appropriate group leader will be scored. Late cards will be given zero regardless of the placing.

**C. Conduct**

1. Each contestant is responsible for the display of the I.D. tag at all times.
2. Each contestant is responsible for the completion of each card and to see that it is turned into the appropriate group leader at the appropriate time.
  - a. In the case of reasons classes, contestants are also responsible for the completion of a second card which will be returned to them by the judge(s) hearing oral reasons.
3. Each contestant is responsible for providing their own pen or pencil. Note cards will be supplied. Contestants may use their own notebooks or clipboards.
4. Following orientation and separation of the contestants into the appropriate groups, there shall be no talking of any kind among the contestants.
  - a. Only one warning will be given; at a second offense or at the first flagrant violation of the honor system, the offending contestant will be removed from the contest.
5. There will be a break following the placing of the morning competition of oral reasons. It is suggested that Advanced/Senior contestants bring lunch and to avail themselves of restroom facilities at that time. Request for permission to use restroom facilities during the placing of classes or during the reasons sessions will be discouraged.

6. All questions by contestants must be directed to the appropriate group leaders only.

**D. Awards**

1. Advanced - A money premium is provided by the State Fair to help defray team expenses in out-of-state competition and
  - a. A plaque to the members of the high scoring team.
  - b. Rosettes to the ten high scoring individuals in the contest and to the members of the five high scoring teams.
  - c. Oral recognition for the ten high scoring individuals and five high scoring teams in conformation, performance and reasons.
2. Junior
  - a. Rosettes to the ten high scoring individuals in the contest and to the members of the five high scoring teams.
  - b. Oral recognition for the ten high scoring individuals and five high scoring teams in conformation, performance and reasons.
3. Novice
  - a. Rosettes to the ten high scoring individuals in the contest and to the members of the five high scoring teams.
  - b. Oral recognition for the ten high scoring individuals and five high scoring teams in conformation and performance.

**E. Procedures**

1. Advanced entry of contestants in all divisions is required by entry deadline.
2. See the State Fair Premium Book for the time of registration.
  - a. Coaches will be given a packet for each team.
  - b. Coaches will distribute packet contents among their contestants.

- c. Contestants will complete I.D. forms and return them to the officials.
3. Orientation and an explanation will be provided.
- b. Coaches are assigned specific duties.
  - c. Contestants separated into groups and moved to ring.
4. Judging phase
- a. Two to four (2-4) halter classes are to be placed, allowing 15 minutes to place non-reason classes and 17 minutes for reasons classes, take notes, then 5 minutes to turn in cards and to shift to the next class.  
The following breeds may be judged: American Saddlebred, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred (Hunters), Appaloosa, Arabian, Paint, Pinto, Morgan, Draft Horse Breeds, and possibly by discipline, ie: Hunter in Hand class. All halter classes will be judged as sound of limb, eye, wind and mouth.
  - b. Four to six (4-6) performance classes are to be placed - groups will be assigned specific areas around the ring and groups must be maintained during the placing of these classes.  
The performance classes will be chosen from Western Pleasure, English Pleasure, Hunter Under Saddle, Hunter Hack, Western Riding, Reining, Plantation English Pleasure Walking Horse, Pleasure Driving, Stock Seat, Hunt Seat, Saddle Seat Equitation, and Saddlebred Three-Gaited and Country English Pleasure. Performance horses will be judged as seen (unsoundness to be penalized accordingly). All tack and attire is considered legal.
  - c. Contestants are then to return to Pole Barn Arena by groups where oral reasons will be heard.
5. Reasons phase will begin immediately after the judging phase is completed. Two minutes will be allowed to give oral reasons to the judge. Contestants may use notes when judging, but are not permitted to use notes while giving oral reasons.

Contestants will have 30-45 minutes to organize reasons prior to giving first set. Contestants should organize all sets during this time since there is no time length guarantee between sets.

- a. Three sets of reasons will be given by Advanced/Senior contestants - There will be three judges (or pairs of judges). Each judge (or pair) will hear all of the reasons for a particular class.
  - 1) reasons will be given on at least one conformation class and one performance class.
- b. Two sets of reasons will be given by Junior contestants - The classes will be announced.
- c. Reasons judges are to ask no questions.

- d. After reasons are completed, the contestants are excused from the Pole Barn Arena.
  - e. Spectators, coaches and parents are to remain away from the Pole Barn Arena during the reasons sessions until they are completed.
7. The exact number and kind of classes to be placed and on which reasons are to be given cannot be predicted.

#### IV. **National Contest**

- A. One team only will be selected to represent New York in the National 4-H Horse Judging contest. Team members are selected one year in advance to give youth the opportunity to practice.
- 1. The team will consist of four (4) individuals selected from among the top senior-aged individuals in the Advanced/Senior.
  - 2. It is probable that the highest four eligible individuals in the contest will be invited to participate but final selection will be based on the affirmation of eligibility, availability for additional training, availability to participate in the contest, and the interest of the contestants themselves.
    - a. If for some reason one or more of the high four eligible individuals in the contest cannot or elects not to participate on the State Team, the next highest eligible individual(s) will be invited.
    - b. A contestant declining or unable to participate on the State Team will not lose eligibility to compete in future state contests except as a result of age. The exception will be youth that have committed to represent New York on the State Team and do not fulfill their commitment after the National entry forms are mailed. They will not be eligible to qualify for the State Team in this event again.