

2026 Kansas 4-H Livestock Sweepstakes Competition Rules

These rules are for teams and individuals wishing to compete in all contests referred to as the “Sweepstakes Competition.”

See specific rules involving individuals or teams that contain individuals who wish to or who have competed at designated National 4-H Contests for Livestock (NAILE), Skillathon (NAILE), Quiz Bowl (NAILE), and Meats (K-State).

1. **Team Sweepstakes Entries & Eligibility** – Each county may receive *one* team entry into the all-around sweepstakes. Districts may enter as many teams as there are counties comprising their district (Kansas 4-H Policy 12.5.2). Counties or Districts must declare their intent to participate when submitting their registration and returning their county/district invoice. Sweepstakes teams must compete in all four livestock contests to be eligible (Livestock Judging, *Open (Sr.) Division* Meats Judging, Livestock Skillathon, and Livestock Quiz Bowl). Teams who chose to enter the intermediate division of the meat judging contest will NOT be eligible for Team Sweepstakes awards. A Sweepstakes team does not have to be made up of the same individuals for each contest area (see rule 3).

All entries must be made by August 1. Registration is completely **ONLINE** through the state 4-H office. The Cvent link for registration is provided to County Extension Agents and is to be filled out by agents. Youth must be entered by their extension unit to be eligible to participate. Fees must be mailed to 201 Umberger Hall, KSU, Manhattan, KS 66506. No refunds are available. **If the local deciding contest is hosted during a county fair that is after the August 1 due date, Extension Units are still required to submit the number of individuals/teams they plan to bring by the entry deadline. Coaches are allowed two business days after the conclusion of the local event to submit the specific names and information of participants to Lexie Hayes (adhayes@ksu.edu).** Additions can be made to the original registration until August 10, however, a late fee is required. The entry fee for each contest will be doubled. An original registration must be on file from the extension unit by the August 1 deadline to be eligible to add participants. Only substitutions are allowed after August 10. **No on-site registration is allowed.**

Contest Registration Fees:

- Livestock Judging - \$20/contestant
- Meat Judging - \$15/contestant
- Skillathon - \$15/contestant
- Quiz Bowl - \$15/contestant (\$60/team) – *must register 4-member team to participate*

****State Livestock Contest and Livestock Sweepstake registrations are final and entry fees are non-refundable. Everyone is encouraged to review the rules prior to registration.***

Note regarding District Teams:

District Teams will be numbered consecutively, dependent upon the number of teams entered by that district (ie: River Valley #1, River Valley #2, and so on) in each contest division. Team number will be matched up to determine Sweepstakes team scores if Districts have multiple teams eligible for Sweepstakes Awards (i.e.: River Valley #1 – Livestock Judging will be matched with River Valley #1 – Livestock Skillathon, Meats, and Quiz Bowl; the same would be for River Valley #2 teams). Yes, it is feasible for an individual to be on each of the Sweepstakes teams eligible in a District.

2. **Individual Sweepstakes Entries & Eligibility** – Each individual may receive one entry into the all-around sweepstakes. This must be declared at the time of entry. Please note during the registration process if the member intends to be included in the individual Sweepstakes Award tabulation. Sweepstakes individual entrants must compete in the following livestock contests: Livestock Judging, *Senior/Open Division* Meats Judging, and Livestock Skillathon. Youth who chose to participate in the *intermediate division of meat judging will be disqualified from individual sweepstakes award tabulation.* Youth may participate in the three required contests as a member of a team representing their Extension Unit, or as an individual contestant. Livestock Quiz Bowl will not be factored into the individual sweepstakes award, as it is a contest only open to teams.
3. **Team Participants** – 4-H'ers who are team members in the sweepstakes competition may be used in any combination and alternated between contests. For example, the four strongest meats judges may not be the four strongest livestock judges, in which case an Extension Unit could bring one team for each competition. Sweepstakes teams could potentially consist of up to 16 4-H'ers for a county unit, or more for a district unit.
4. **Sweepstakes Participation** – Participation in the sweepstakes competition is optional. Teams are still welcome to participate in any of the individual state contests. However, please note, awards for all contests will be presented on Sunday at the conclusion of all contests.
5. **Age Divisions** – Livestock Judging, Livestock Skillathon, and Livestock Quiz Bowl will have only one division. Meats Judging will have senior/open and intermediate divisions. *The senior/open division of the meats contest will be used in calculating the team and individual sweepstakes awards. It is intended for seniors and other youth of any age 9 and older who would like included in the sweepstakes award tabulation.*
6. **Award Tabulation** – Points will be awarded to teams and individuals based on their overall performance in each contest. Points will be awarded on the percentage of total points earned in each contest, based on the maximum score possible. Team scores for Livestock Quiz Bowl will be assigned based on placing in the Quiz Bowl Contest. Teams who do not qualify for the head-to-head competition will be ranked by team test score and assigned a team score accordingly. Sweepstake team ties will be broken as follows: Livestock Judging, Meats Judging, Livestock Skillathon, and Livestock Quiz Bowl. Individual ties will be broken as follows: Livestock Judging, Meats Judging, and Livestock Skillathon.
7. **Award Presentation** – All awards will be presented on Sunday, August 23 immediately following the conclusion of the finals for the Quiz Bowl. Belt buckles (4) will be awarded to the top sweepstakes team and top individual (1). Teams will have the option to purchase additional buckles for additional team members.

*****Special Competition Rules for individuals or teams that contain individuals who wish to or have competed at the National 4-H Livestock Judging, Livestock Skillathon, Livestock Quiz Bowl, and Meat Judging.*****

1. All individuals are eligible to compete for individual and team awards in the Kansas 4-H Sweepstakes Contest. However, not all individuals' scores will count in the four individual Kansas State 4-H Contests.
2. Individuals participating in the 2026 Kansas 4-H Livestock Judging, Meats, or Livestock Skillathon contests for which they have attended one of the above-mentioned National Contests will have their scores count for individual Sweepstakes awards only.

3. Individuals who have competed at one of the National contests mentioned above are not eligible to compete on a team during the Kansas State 4-H Competition for that specific contest. Any team competing in the State 4-H Contests containing a member or members who has previously judged in that National 4-H Contest will be disqualified from the State competition. The contests hosted during Livestock Sweepstakes weekend are considered the state qualifying contests for National 4-H and Multi-State Invitational contests. For example, if Joe Smith competed on the Kansas team at the national 4-H livestock judging contest in Louisville last year, he is not eligible to compete on a county or district team in the Kansas 4-H livestock judging contest this year. He may, however, compete as an individual. Additionally, his score will only be used in the calculation of individual sweepstakes awards. He is not eligible for categorical or overall livestock judging contest awards.
4. Continuing this year at the Kansas 4-H Livestock Sweepstakes, top ranking livestock judging individuals will be invited to practice for the chance to represent Kansas 4-H at the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest in Louisville, KY. Practices will be offered at the Kansas State Fair and through web-based technology with a K-State Animal Science graduate student. Top 4-H competitors from across Kansas who are age 14 before January 1, 2026, judging at the State 4-H Contest, held as part of the Livestock Sweepstakes contest, may have the opportunity to expand their livestock judging knowledge and skills through this partnership created between Kansas 4-H and the K-State Department of Animal Sciences & Industry. This will also provide a chance for 4-H members to learn more about Kansas State University, Animal Sciences, and Agriculture careers. Top placing teams from local Extension Units will continue to have the opportunity to travel to other National Contests/Multi-State Invitational Contests, including Aksarben, the American Royal, and the National Western Stock Show. A similar format will be used to select the “all-star” meat judging team for the National 4-H Meat Judging Contest hosted by Kansas State University during the American Royal.
5. Please refer to the Sweepstakes Guidelines and Coach’s Guide, as well as the individual contest rules, for additional details on participation in National 4-H Livestock contests.