

4-H BEEF CATTLE DEPARTMENT

4-H Beef Team

Superintendents - Cassidy Allen, Lisbon; Dana Christen, Storm Lake

SCHEDULE

Sunday, August 16

5:00 p.m. Earliest Beef can arrive

Monday, August 17

8:00 - 10:00 a.m. Sign up for Showmanship - Livestock Pavilion
8 a.m. - Noon Check-in Beef (check weights/check-in cards, t-shirts and exhibitor numbers distributed) - Livestock Pavilion
11:00 a.m. Beef must be in
1:00 p.m. Exhibitor Meeting - Cattle Barn Media Center
2:00 p.m. All substitute showmanship forms must be submitted to the superintendent
2:30 p.m. Beef Showmanship - Livestock Pavilion

Tuesday, August 18

8:30 a.m. Breeding Heifer Show - Show order: Alphabetical by breed followed by commercial heifers - Livestock Pavilion
After Show Breeding Beef released
4:30 p.m. Parade of Breeding Heifer Champions - Selection of Supreme Breeding Heifer and Bred & Owned Champion - Livestock Pavilion
6:30 p.m. Beef Skillathon Contest - Livestock Pavilion

Wednesday, August 19

8:30 a.m. Market Steer & Market Heifer Show - Show order: Alphabetical by breed followed by crossbred steers, market heifers - Livestock Pavilion
After Show Market Beef released
5:00 p.m. Parade of Market Beef Champions - Including Supreme and Reserve Heifers - Selection of Champion Steer - Livestock Pavilion
7:00 p.m. Beef must be out

Saturday, August 22

2:00 p.m. Sale of Champions - Cattle Barn Penningroth Sale Ring

ENTRY DEADLINE - JULY 1 through FairEntry (4hOnline)

RULES

1. General Livestock Rules and Regulations, 4-H General Rules and Regulations and 4-H Livestock Rules and Regulations apply in this department.
2. The entry fee is \$35 per head and must be paid with entry. **No refunds.**
Common bedding will be used in the barns for all beef cattle. The stalls will be bedded by the Iowa State Fair Maintenance staff with the fee included in the entry fee. Exhibitors will be allowed to purchase additional bedding to freshen stalls, but there will be a standard depth maintained. Top dressing is allowed.
3. An exhibitor may enter a maximum of **two** beef animals.
4. Each animal entered must be identified through the 4hOnline program.
5. Blocking chute space must be reserved for \$15 a chute with entry. Only one chute per family may be reserved. Stalls will be designated as such. No chutes will be allowed in aisles. **Counties and 4-H'ers are strongly encouraged to share chutes.** 2026 Open Class chute stickers will be honored in the 4-H Department.
Chute stickers will not be mailed to County Extension Offices or to exhibitors. Exhibitors who reserved blocking chute space on their entry form must pick up their chute sticker in the Cattle Barn Office upon arrival at the Fair. No chute stickers will be sold at the Fair.
6. Animals exhibited in the Beef Department must be housed in stalls designated by the Superintendent. All beef animals will be stalled by county groups.
7. It shall be the prerogative of the Superintendent to reduce the number of stalls assigned to a county to the number actually required. Exhibitors are encouraged to minimize the use of extension cords as much as possible. Cords used must meet safety standards. **Each county will be limited to one set of metal dividers, one at each end of the county's designated space.**
8. It is the intent that the 4-H'er take responsibility for caring for and grooming his/her own animals. If assistance is needed it must be done by a family member and/or another Iowa 4-H'er. Family members include and are limited to: parent/legal guardian, brother, sister or step-siblings.
9. Painting, dyeing and use of color agents on beef animals is not condoned by State Fair Officials. Beef projects which show evidence of this will not be permitted into the show ring. If a color or coloring agent rubs off an animal rubbed with either a towel or hand, that animal will be disqualified. Exhibitors can use colored grooming aids on hooves only. All division champions will be wiped with a towel to check for color or coloring agents prior to entering the show ring for the championship drive.
10. No artificial aides such as tail head or tail fins will be permitted. No artificial tails/switches will be permitted.
11. No icing or artificial means of cooling an animal will be allowed in the Pavilion staging area.
12. **NEW IN 2026: HORNS** - Exhibitors will be required to have horns disbudded or dehorned on all market animals. Breeding beef may not have a horn set longer than 36 inches measured tip to tip.
13. Each exhibitor may be accompanied by one person in the check-in area. This person **MUST** be an immediate family member or a current Iowa 4-H'er. The exhibitor is solely responsible for all grooming of the animal from the time they enter the check-in area to the time they exit the ring.
14. After a class has been placed in the show ring, officials reserve the right to re-inspect animals for color or sharp practices. If such is found, the animal will be barred from further championship competition and forfeit all premium money.
15. All beef animals must be on a halter at all times. Absolutely no loose beef animals will be allowed, including exercise areas in the outdoor arena.
16. No cable halters or spikes will be allowed in the show ring.
17. **NEW IN 2026:** No aerosol cans may be used in the Livestock Pavilion.
18. All 4-H Beef animals as well as show equipment must be removed from the barn by 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 19. Failure to do so will result in exhibitors forfeiting their premium money and removal of the herdsmanship placing if applicable. Members should check with the 4-H Beef

Superintendent upon arriving at the Fair if they wish to stay longer so that special accommodations may be considered.

19. **PREMIUMS AND RIBBONS** - Each entry will receive a ribbon (purple, blue, red or white) in each class. Monetary premiums will be paid to the top three entries in each class. Premiums paid will be \$40, 25, 15.
20. Ear tags with animal names, farm names or advertisements will be clipped out of the ear. Only tags bearing numbers will be allowed.
21. For both the Market and Breeding Divisions, should a first place beef animal be disqualified after winning its class, but before its respective division championship; the second and third place animals will move up to first and second in the class and compete for champion in the division. If a second place animal is disqualified, the third place animal will move up.
Should a division Market Beef Champion be disqualified after winning its division, but before selection of Grand Champion Market Steer or Market Heifer, the reserve division champion will move up to champion and compete for Grand Champion. In this case, no attempt will be made to replace the division reserve champion. If a division reserve champion animal is disqualified, no shifting upward will occur and no attempt to replace the reserve champion will be made.

**MARKET BEEF PROJECT
RULES**

1. General Livestock Rules and Regulations and 4-H General Rules and Regulations apply in this division. Also, see general rules for 4-H Beef Cattle Department.
2. Positive identification is required on all market beef. All market beef must be weighed and tagged at an official verification site, as well as had retinal images collected from nominated animals. Any evidence of tampering with the official 4-H tag will be scrutinized. In addition, all market beef must have been identified through the 4hOnline program by February 1. Entry in breed classes must follow the Iowa Junior Beef Breed Association classifications. Breed steers must have breed designated in 4hOnline by February 1 or will show as crossbred. A 4-H member is limited to ten market beef identified in 4hOnline.
3. **DECLARED WEIGHTS.** A declared weight system will be used for official weights. A weight card obtained during check-in must be filled out by all Market exhibitors and turned in by the designated time. The weight turned in will become the official weight. If weight cards are not turned in by the deadline those animals will not be eligible to show in their respective shows. Once the weight card is submitted by the deadline, no changes can be made.
Scales will be provided in the Livestock Pavilion for exhibitors to test weights upon arrival before turning in their card. These scales will also be used for show weigh-backs.
The top two animals in each class will be weighed immediately following their class to determine if they are eligible to return for division champions. Market Steers and Market Heifers not weighing within 5% of its official weight will be disqualified. All market beef are subject to be selected to be weighed.
4. All market beef are subject to mousing. Any market beef having the permanent central incisor teeth up in wear are not eligible to show. Such animals are considered as having reached an age beyond that consistent with the intent and purposes of this show.

**MARKET STEERS - DIVISION 01
SPECIAL MARKET STEER RULES**

1. Registered steers must present registration papers at check-in time (no copies or faxes). Electronic copies are allowed. Steers without necessary registration papers will be shown in the crossbred division. Tattoos will be checked. No illegible or fresh tattoos will be allowed to show. Re-tattooing at the show will not be permitted. (If steers need to be re-tattooed after February 1, contact your County Extension Office for specific instructions.)
2. The Iowa State Fair Board will appoint a committee to determine if steers exhibit sufficient characteristics of the breed. Steers that do not will be declared ineligible. If the owner of a 4-H Market Beef animal has a protest as to eligibility in a breed division as made by show officials, this protest must be filed within 24 hours after the decision is made (see also Livestock General Rules and Regulations). All expenses of proof must be paid by the party filing the protest. Blood tests of both sire and steer will be necessary.
3. All market steers must weigh 900 pounds or more. Market steers weighing less than 900 pounds regardless of breed, will be shown separately as feeder steers and will not be eligible to compete for championships. Ribbons will be awarded in the feeder steer class but no premiums will be paid.
4. Ribbons awarded in the market steer division will be purple, blue, red and white. Steers will qualify for the purple and blue award groups only if they have an average daily gain (ADG) of 2.3 pounds or more from the beginning weigh date to the Iowa State Fair weigh date. ADG formula will be (Fair weight - Beginning weight) / days on test. Exhibitors will be provided an average daily gain sticker; this must be worn on the front of the exhibitor's shirt upon entering the ring.
5. Market steers will be divided into the following divisions:

CLASS	CLASS	CLASS
● Angus	● Limousin	● Shorthorn
● All Other Breeds	● Maine-Anjou	● Shorthorn Plus
● Charolais	● Miniature Hereford *	● Simmental
● Chianina	● Polled Hereford	● Crossbreds
● Gelbvieh	● Red Angus	
● Horned Hereford	● Salers	

Within each division, classes will be made by declared weight.

* Miniature Hereford steers are exempt from ADG and the 900 pound minimum weight requirements.

Additional breeds can be shown if entry numbers permit (IJBBA approved breed rules).

6. First and second place in each class within a division will compete for Division Champion and Reserve Champion. Champion and Reserve for each division will compete for Grand and Reserve Champion Steer. Three honorable mention awards will also be presented.
7. If less than five head of one breed check-in at the Fair, all of the breed's steers will be shown in the All Other Breeds Division.
8. In the event of formal protest concerning questionable parentage of steers entered in breed divisions, the Iowa State Fair Board reserves the right to secure a blood sample from the animal and its sire and have it tested. Premiums and sale proceeds will be withheld pending the final determination of eligibility.

**MARKET HEIFERS - DIVISION 02
SPECIAL MARKET HEIFER RULES**

1. Open to all market heifers of any breed which have been weighed and tagged at an official verification site, as well as had retinal images taken from the nominated animal by February 1.
2. All breeds and crossbreeds will be shown together.
3. All market heifers must weigh 850 pounds or more. Market heifers weighing less than 850 pounds will be shown as feeder heifers and will not be eligible to compete for championship. Ribbons will be awarded in the feeder heifer class, but no premiums will be paid.
4. Ribbons awarded in the Market Heifer Division will be purple, blue, red and white. Heifers will qualify for the purple and blue award groups only if they have an average daily gain of 2.1 pounds or more from the beginning weigh date to the Iowa State Fair weigh date. See Market Steer rule #4 for ADG formula. Exhibitors will be provided an average daily gain sticker; this must be worn on the front of the exhibitor's shirt upon entering the ring.
5. First and second in each division will compete for Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Market Heifer. One honorable mention award will also be presented.
6. **Ovaries and oocytes will not be allowed to be collected from the Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Market Heifers.**

CLASS

- Market Heifers

**4-H FOUNDATION BEEF HERD
BREEDING HEIFERS - DIVISION 03
SPECIAL RULES**

1. General Livestock Rules and Regulations and 4-H General Rules and Regulations apply in this division. Also, see general rules for 4-H Beef Cattle Department.
2. All heifers shown in the breed classes will follow the breed classification requirements of the Iowa Junior Beef Breed Association.
3. All purebred and commercial heifers must be tattooed. Calfhood vaccination tattoo is not acceptable as the official tattoo.

AGAIN FOR 2026: A secondary identification method is required for all breeding beef. This can include one of the following: 1) Registration Number (if registered through a breed association); 2) Calfhood vaccination number; or 3) Official Iowa 4-H ear tag. Both the tattoo and secondary method of identification must be recorded in 4-H Online by May 15.

4. A class for commercial breeding heifers is available for non-registered breeding heifers.
5. All commercial heifers will show using declared weights.

DECLARED WEIGHTS. A declared weight system will be used for official weights. A weight card obtained during check-in must be filled out by all commercial heifer exhibitors and turned in by the designated time. The weight turned in will become the official weight. If weight cards are not turned in by the deadline those animals will not be eligible to show in their respective shows. Once the weight card is submitted by the deadline, no changes can be made.

Scales will be provided in the Livestock Pavilion for exhibitors to test weights upon arrival before turning in their card. These scales will also be used for show weigh-backs.

The top two animals in each class will be weighed immediately following their class to determine if they are eligible to return for division champions. Commercial heifers not weighing within 5% of its official weight will be disqualified. All commercial heifers are subject to be selected to be weighed.

6. Heifers shown in this division cannot be shown in any Market Beef Class.
7. All heifers to be eligible shall be born between September 1, 2024 and December 31, 2025.
8. Heifers may be entered in corresponding Open Classes provided additional entry is made on or before July 1 on an Open Class entry form, accompanied by an additional \$15 Open Class entry fee for each head. 4-H animals also entered in the Open Classes must be entered in the same name as shown on the certificate of registry. All such entries are subject to Open Class rules. **4-H entry and Open Class entry are two separate processes.**
9. Entry information (birth date, breed) and registration papers will be checked on all purebred heifers at check-in. Original registration paper **MUST** be provided (no copies or faxes will be accepted). Electronic registration papers are acceptable. Applications for registration will not be accepted. Animals whose registration papers are not approved will be shown in the Commercial Heifer Class.
10. Ear tattoos will be checked on all 1st and 2nd place class winners upon exiting the show ring.
11. Breeding heifers that have illegible tattoos or fresh tattoos will not be allowed to advance. Re-tattooing at the show will not be permitted. (If heifers need to be re-tattooed after May 15, contact your County Extension Office for specific instructions.)
12. If less than five head of one breed check-in at the Fair, all of that breed's heifers will be shown in the All Other Breed's Division.
13. Purebred classes will show from youngest to oldest by animal birthdate.

14. Breeding heifers will be divided into the following divisions:

CLASS

- Angus
- All Other Breeds
- Charolais
- Charolais Percentage
- Chianina
- Gelbvieh
- Horned Hereford
- Limousin

CLASS

- Lim-Flex
- High % Maine-Anjou
- Maintainer
- MaineAngus
- Miniature Hereford
- Polled Hereford
- Red Angus
- Red Angus Foundation

CLASS

- Salers
- Shorthorn
- Shorthorn Plus
- Simmental
- Foundation Simmental
- Commercial

15. Additional breeds can be shown if entry numbers permit (IJBBA approved breed rules).
16. **BRED & OWNED:** There will be a Bred & Owned breeding heifer class/division for all registered breed heifers. No additional entry fee is required. All Bred & Owned heifers must be registered in compliance with their respective National Breed Associations to be eligible. During check-in, exhibitors must designate the animal for eligibility and all registration papers must be presented to officials to check for the appropriate documentation that states the animal was bred by and currently owned by the 4-H exhibitor. The following requirements must be met to be eligible:
 - The 4-H Exhibitor is both the owner and the breeder on the current registration certificate.
 - The 4-H Exhibitor is the sole and continuous owner of the entry since birth.

- The 4-H Exhibitor must have owned the entry's dam at the time of conception. Eligible heifers will be noted in the show catalog, and after the completion of each breed champion selection, a champion and reserve champion bred and owned for each breed will be named based on the highest placings in each class for that breed. An overall Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Bred & Owned Female will be selected immediately preceding the Supreme Champion Breeding Heifer selections on Tuesday, August 18.
17. Entries will be placed numerically as well as in ribbon groups.
 18. In the event of questionable parentage of purebred registered beef heifers, the Iowa State Fair Board reserves the right to secure a hair/blood sample from the animal and have it tested.
 19. A Supreme Breeding Heifer Champion and Reserve Champion will be selected from the champion of each breed shown in the Breeding Heifer Show. Three honorable mention awards will also be presented.
 20. The Supreme and Reserve Champion animals from Division 3 will be expected to participate in the Parade of Champions on Wednesday, August 19. Failure to participate in the Parade of Champions will result in forfeiture of premiums.

**BEEF SHOWMANSHIP
SPECIAL RULES**

1. 4-H members must use their own animal for the Showmanship Contest.
2. 4-H exhibitors wishing to participate in the Showmanship Contest must sign up between 8:00 - 10:00 a.m., Monday, August 17.
3. The showmanship contest will be held on Monday, August 17 at 2:30 p.m. in the Livestock Pavilion.
4. Grooming is optional for the Beef Showmanship Contest.
5. Showmanship classes will be divided into four age groups: Grades 5-6, Grades 7-8, Grades 9-10 and Grades 11-12. A Champion and Reserve Champion beef showman will be selected in each division.
6. Results will be announced at the conclusion of each showmanship class and recipients will receive awards at that time. All exhibitors designated by the judge as Outstanding will receive a purple ribbon. The Iowa State Fair will provide belt buckles for the top individuals designated by the judge. An exhibitor who has previously been awarded a belt buckle is not eligible to receive another one and will receive a ribbon only.

CHAMPION BEEF MEMBERS

Offered by Iowa State Fair.....	\$750
Offered by Breed Associations	3,050
Total Offered	3,800

A cash certificate redeemable towards the purchase of a registered heifer will be awarded to the Champion Beef Member of various breeds who will be selected at a personal interview during the Fair. All 4-H, FFA and Junior Association members who exhibit a market beef or beef heifer at the 2026 Iowa State Fair are eligible to enter. Entries must be in the office of the Iowa Cattlemen's Association, 2005 Ironwood Court, P.O. Box 1490, Ames, IA 50014, 515/296-2266 by **July 1**.

CLASS

- 0501 Champion Angus Beef Member - The **Iowa Angus Association** will award a \$500 certificate toward purchase of an Angus heifer at a State Angus Sale. The award must be used in the following calendar year. The **Iowa State Fair** offers \$150 to the breed association on this heifer award.
- 0502 Champion Charolais Beef Member - The **Iowa Charolais Association** will award a \$750 certificate to be validated at the 2027 Iowa Beef Expo. The **Iowa State Fair** offers \$150 to the breed association on this award.
- 0503 Champion Chianina Beef Member
- 0504 Champion Gelbvieh Beef Member
- 0505 Champion Hereford/Polled Hereford Beef Member - The **Iowa Hereford Breeders Association** will give a \$600 certificate to apply to the purchase of a horned or polled Hereford female from any IHBA member. If the female is purchased at the 2027 Iowa Select Hereford Sale, an additional \$100 will be awarded; and if the heifer is purchased at the 2027 Iowa Select Hereford Sale from an Iowa breeder, an additional \$200 will be awarded (maximum \$800 award). The **Iowa State Fair** offers \$150 to the breed association on this award.
- 0506 Champion Limousin Beef Member - The **Iowa Limousin Association** will award a certificate for \$500 toward the purchase of a Limousin female at the 2027 State Limousin Sale at the Iowa Winter Beef Expo. The **Iowa State Fair** offers \$150 to the breed association on this award. The applicant must exhibit a Limousin/Lim-Flex heifer or steer at the 2026 Iowa State Fair 4-H, FFA or Open Limousin Show.
- 0507 Champion Maine-Anjou Beef Member
- 0508 Champion Red Angus Beef Member
- 0509 Champion Salers Beef Member
- 0510 Champion Shorthorn Beef Member
- 0511 Champion Simmental Beef Member - The **Iowa Simmental Association** will give \$500 to apply to the purchase of a Simmental heifer at the 2027 State Sale. The **Iowa State Fair** offers \$150 to the breed association on this award.

4-H BEEF CATTLE SPECIALS

Additional 4-H Beef Specials offered by the **Iowa Foundation for Agricultural Advancement** are available online at <https://www.iowastatefair.org/>.

Featherlite Trailers will donate free use of a trailer for one year to the exhibitor of the Grand Champion 4-H Market Steer.

Featherlite Trailers will donate free use of a trailer for one year to the exhibitor of the 4-H Supreme Champion Breeding Heifer.

The Third Overall Breeding Heifer will be awarded \$300 and a plaque sponsored by **Holtkamp Cattle Company**, West Point, IA.

The Fourth Overall Breeding Heifer will be awarded \$200 and a plaque sponsored by **Loonan Stock Farm**, Corning, IA.

The Third Overall Market Steer will be awarded \$300 and a plaque sponsored by **Herr Show Cattle**, Fontanelle, IA

The **Iowa Angus Association** provides awards for the Champion and Reserve Champion Angus Heifers and the Champion and Reserve Champion Angus Steers.

IOWA STATE FAIR * AUGUST 13-23, 2026 * 4-H BEEF CATTLE

The **Iowa Angus Association** will award 2/3 of the entry monies to the Champion and 1/3 to the Reserve Champion Angus Steers nominated for the Iowa Angus Association Steer Futurity. More information available at iowaangus.org/steer-futurity.

The **Iowa Beef Breeds Council** will award \$500 to the junior exhibitor of the highest ranking heifer purchased from each breed sale at the 2026 Iowa Beef Expo and exhibited at the 2026 Iowa State Fair. Heifers will be ranked at the discretion of each breed association under the following conditions:

1. The heifer must have been purchased in an Iowa Beef Expo sanctioned sale and exhibited by a junior at the 2026 Iowa State Fair.
2. Only one heifer per breed sale (12 total) will be awarded. Therefore, high and low percentage cattle will be considered for one award. Furthermore, cattle with multiple registrations may only be awarded by the breed association which sold those cattle at the 2026 Iowa Beef Expo.

The **Iowa Hereford Breeders Association** will give awards for the Champion and Reserve Champion Hereford heifers (horned, polled or combined) and the Champion and Reserve Champion Hereford steers.

The **ISF Beef Champion Supporters** will award additional premiums to the First thru Fifth place Overall Market Steers, along with all Market Steer Division and Reserve Division champions.

The **ISF Beef Champion Supporters** will award additional premiums to the First thru Third place Overall Market Heifer.

The **ISF Beef Champion Supporters** will award additional premiums to the First thru Fifth place Overall Breeding Heifers along with along with all Breeding Heifer Division and Reserve Division champions.