



Livestock Evaluation

Updates

Below is a summary of updates to the Livestock Evaluation CDE Handbook for the 2026-2027 cycle.

HANDBOOK UPDATE:

No changes

Purpose

The livestock evaluation career development event provides the opportunity to learn and apply livestock industry and production priorities through evaluating and selecting beef cattle, swine, sheep and meat goats.

Objectives

Participants in the Tennessee FFA Livestock Evaluation Career Development Event will be able to

- Make accurate observations of livestock.
- Determine the desirable traits in market and breeding livestock.
- Make logical decisions based on these observations.
- Discuss and defend their decisions for their placings.
- Understand desirable selection, production, management and marketing techniques for livestock.
- Understand and interpret the value of performance data based on industry standards.
- Select and market livestock that will satisfy consumer demands and provide increased economic returns to producers while meeting the needs of the industry.
- Proficiently communicate using the terminology of the industry and the consumer.
- Associate with professionals in the industry.
- Utilize current technology as it relates to the livestock industry.
- Develop employability skills for future agricultural career choices.

Event Rules

- Each team will be comprised of four members. All four scores will be used to determine the total team score.
- FFA official dress is required for this event.
- The top four teams from each region will compete at the state contest.
- Any participant possessing an electronic device in the event area is subject to disqualification.

Event Format

EQUIPMENT

Materials students must provide:

- Two No. 2 pencils.
- Clean clipboard

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES (600 POINTS)

Keep Cull (50 points)

Keep/cull classes: This portion will be paper based only. This may be beef, swine, sheep, or meat goats. Participants will be provided a scenario and performance data and will be required to select the four best animals from the eight using performance data. Performance criteria, when used, shall be based on current industry standards. This will be an individual event.

Livestock evaluation/placing classes (50 points/class, 300-400 points total)

Six to Eight classes of four animals each will be placed. Classes may be breeding or market animals from beef, swine, sheep or meat goat species. At least one class will include the use of production/performance data.

Oral reasons (50 points/class, 150 points total)

Three sets of oral reasons will be designated by the event superintendent at the beginning of the event. One set of reasons will be given on a production data class. Reasons will be given after all classes have been placed. Participants will be provided paper to take notes on each reason class for preparation. The use of notes during the reason presentation is strongly discouraged and students will be penalized for reading from their notes.

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Scoring

All team member scores will be used to determine final team placing.

Activity	Individual Points	Team Points
Classes – 6-8 at 50 points each	300-400	1,600
Reasons – 3 at 50 points each	150	600
Keep/cull – 1 at 50 points each	50	200
MAXIMUM POSSIBLE POINTS	500-600	2000-2,400

TIEBREAKERS

If ties occur, the following events, in order, will be used to determine individual and team outcomes:

1. Total of oral reasons.
2. Total of placing classes.
3. Total of keep/cull classes.

References

This list of references is not intended to be all-inclusive. Other sources may be utilized, and teachers are encouraged to use the best instructional materials available. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation.

- National FFA CDE Question and answers, FFA.org past class listings, performance data and scenarios
- Beef Improvement Federation, www.beefimprovement.org - resource center
- National Swine Registry, <http://www.nationalswine.com/>
- Certified Pedigreed Swine, <http://cpsswine.com/>
- National Pork Board, <http://www.pork.org/>
- Flanders, Frank, Gillispie, James R. Modern Livestock and Poultry Production. (most current edition.) Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers, 2015. ISBN 9781305483156
- Goat Handbook, <http://www.texasgoat.com>
- <https://thejudgingconnection.com/>
- www.livestockjudging.com
- Evaluating meat goats, <https://www.four-h.purdue.edu/downloads/cde/meat%20goat%20selection2.pdf>
- <http://judgingpro.com/>
- Rayfield, John S., Smith, Kasee L., Park, Travis and Croom, D. Barry. Principles of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources. (most current edition.) Tinley Park, IL; Goodheart-Willcox Publisher, 2023. ISBN 978-1-63776-096-3

Animal Science Related Careers

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| • Agricultural lender | • Geneticist |
| • Agricultural policy professional | • Herdsman |
| • Agriculture teacher | • Livestock auctioneer |
| • Animal science technician | • Livestock buyer |
| • Attorney | • Livestock judging coach |
| • Breed representative | • Nutritionist |
| • Collegiate educator | • Producer |
| • Commodity broker | • Researcher |
| • Commodity professional | • Sales and/or marketing representative |
| • Consultant | • Transportation logistics |
| • Extension agent | • Veterinarian |
| • Farm/ranch manager | |