

Livestock Management

Rule years 2027–2030 · Revision 1 · Published October 10, 2026

0. General Rules & Eligibility

Career Development Events are governed by the NAEA CDE Committee. All events follow [CDE General Rules and Eligibility](#).

Qualification for this event

District qualification	Top 20% of schools per district
Students per team	5–6
Grades	9–12
National qualifying event?	No
Timeframe	FFA Convention
Host	UNL Animal Science Dept
Event Superintendent	Dr. Bryan Reiling

1. Overview

The Livestock Management Career Development Event is a team-based competition. Teams of six (6) students will work together to complete six different species-based (beef cattle, dairy cattle, horse, poultry, sheep & goats, and swine) practicum exams that will test their knowledge regarding the scientific basis and practical application of livestock management concepts related to nutritional management, breeding, genetic and reproductive management, quality assurance and herd health management, animal behavior/welfare, and business management that includes both marketing and product evaluation.

Agricultural Education courses that align with the Livestock Management CDE include: Introduction to Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; Animal Science; Large Animal Management; and Veterinary Science.

Objectives

Nutritional Management Objectives

- Identify feedstuffs used for the current year's focal species.
- Characterize feedstuffs according to nutritional group and/or purpose.
- Calculate and/or convert dry matter content of a given feed sample.
- Evaluate and/or formulate simple rations for the focal species.
- Assign body condition scores.
- Demonstrate proper use of nutritional equipment, such as grain sampling probe, forage sampling probe, feed scales.

Breeding, Genetic, and Reproductive Management Objectives

- Interpret and use readily available genetic information for the focal species, such as EPDs and Indexes, to answer questions related to production decisions.
- Use a Punnett Square to determine possible offspring results.

- Identify anatomical parts and functions of male and female tracts of the focal species.
- Demonstrate proper use of reproductive equipment, such as obstetrical chains, artificial insemination pipette, and measuring scrotal circumference, based on the focal species and provided resources.
- Identify and characterize breeds and breed characteristics of the focal species.

Quality Assurance and Herd Health Management Objectives

- Read and interpret pharmaceutical labels.
- Calculate dosage rates using the provided label.
- Determine withdrawal dates using the provided label.
- Demonstrate locations of administration of pharmaceuticals.
- Select needle size for a given species and its size or stage.
- Identify and provide treatments for key diseases of the focal species.
- Identify parasites and suggest proper control methods.
- Answer questions about the normal body temperature, heart rate, and respiration rate of the focal species.
- Determine the vital signs of the species provided.
- Demonstrate proper use of herd health equipment, such as a stethoscope, thermometer, loading syringes, and needles.

Business Management, Marketing, and Product Evaluation Objectives

- Evaluate the product and price that are derived from the focal species.
- Determine the yield and quality of the focal species.
- Demonstrate proper use of livestock product evaluation equipment, such as meat probe/ruler, visual evaluation, pricing grid, egg candler.
- Identify anatomical parts of carcasses.
- Rank carcasses and/or cuts of meat, if applicable to the focal species.
- Estimate the value of market animals based on current markets.
- Compare financial and/or production scenarios to database information.
- Calculate basic production and financial measures of the focal species.

2. Eligibility & Team

Open to students in Grades 9–12. Teams are 5–6 students. Top 20% of schools per district advance. This event is not national-qualifying.

- Teams may have five or six students and are encouraged to have six.
- Teams with fewer than six (6) students may compete, but they are at a competitive disadvantage.

3. What to Bring

Attire

- This event takes place in the livestock arena with a sand floor, and most stations will involve some direct contact with livestock, horses, or poultry.
- Closed-toe, protective shoes or boots are typical for livestock work. Dress shoes and heels are **not** recommended.
- Jeans or work pants are recommended rather than dress pants or skirts.
- FFA Jackets and/or lab coats/jackets are recommended to distinguish teams.

Supplies

- Pen or pencil per team member
- Clipboard per team member
- All other items needed for the event will be provided, including calculators.

4. Event Format

Timing

- A. When check-in closes, instructions will be given (15 minutes).
- B. Teams will have 13 minutes to complete each station, with 2 minutes to rotate between each of the six species stations.

Format

Annual Theme/Content Rotation

The event will consist of six (6) separate species-specific stations, including beef cattle, dairy cattle, horse, poultry, sheep & goats, and swine, which will be completed as a team.

Each species station will be assigned a primary disciplinary focus. For that species, all questions, hands-on activities, and problems will be based on and/or related to the assigned disciplinary focus. See Appendix A for specific content in each focus area. Each year, the disciplinary focus will rotate through a multi-year cycle as follows:

Species Station	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Beef Cattle	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
Dairy Cattle	3	4	1	2	3	4	1
Horse	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Poultry	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Sheep & Goats	1	2	3	4	2	3	1
Swine	1	2	3	4	1	2	3

1 = Nutritional Management

2 = Breeding, Genetic, and Reproductive Management

3 = Quality Assurance and Herd Health Management

4 = Business Management, Marketing, and Product Evaluation

Team Composition and Strategy

A livestock management team will consist of six (6) individuals who may work together to answer questions, complete hands-on activities, or solve problems associated with the various species-specific stations. Although you may work together and visit as a team, please be aware that two teams will typically be present at each station at the same time. Teams may also elect to split up to effectively “divide and conquer” the various activities at each station.

5. Scoring & Tiebreakers

Team Scoring

Component	Detail	Points
Beef Cattle	Team Station	100
Dairy Cattle	Team Station	100
Horse	Team Station	100
Poultry	Team Station	100
Sheep & Goats	Team Station	100
Swine	Team Station	100
Grand total		600

Team Tiebreakers

Team tiebreakers are resolved in the order listed below.

- A. Per species: Prior to the start of the event, the faculty coordinator or event superintendent will identify a specific question or set of questions, within each species as the tie-breaker for that species.
- B. Overall: The more desirable average team RANK across all stations will win the tie-breaker.

6. Study Resources

Approved study resources

- [UNL CDE Study Materials Folder \(OneDrive\)](#) — Practice materials and examples for this CDE.
- [Livestock Management page on the Nebraska CDEs website](#) — Webinar videos and the resources needed for the event, including previous years' webinars.
- A supplementary textbook that could be used as a support resource is the **Handbook of Livestock Management** by Richard A. Battaglia.

7. After the Event

Video debriefing will be made available after the state event.

List of Appendices

- [Appendix A: Livestock Management CDE Suggested Skills/ Knowledge](#)

Appendix A: Livestock Management CDE Suggested Skills/ Knowledge

This list is simply suggested activities to prepare students for the event; the event superintendent reserves the right to add additional content and skills to the contest at any time.

A. Nutritional Management

- I. Demonstrate how to take a forage sample using a core probe
- II. Demonstrate how to use a grain sampling probe
- III. Demonstrate how to use a feed scale
- IV. Assign body condition scores to an animal
- V. Evaluate and rank feed rations for an intended use scenario
- VI. Evaluate and rank forage samples for an intended use scenario
- VII. Feed bunk evaluation

B. Breeding, Genetic, and Reproductive Management

- I. Keep/ Cull Breeding Class
- II. Reading EPDs to make management decisions
- III. Demonstrate how to properly load an AI pipette
- IV. Demonstrate how to properly put on OB Chains
- V. Demonstrate how to measure scrotal circumference using a model
- VI. Demonstrate how to take a hair or tissue DNA sample using a model
- VII. Identify proper/ improper birthing positions
- VIII. Estrus detection/ AI Scheduling

C. Quality Assurance and Herd Health Management

- I. Demonstrate how to take temperature, pulse and respiration rate
- II. Demonstrate how to administer subcutaneous injections
- III. Demonstrate how to administer intramuscular injections
- IV. Select the appropriate needle size for an intended use
- V. Select the appropriate syringe size for an intended use
- VI. Read and interpret pharmaceutical labels and calculate dosage for an intended scenario
- VII. Fill out an animal treatment record
- VIII. Proper animal restraint demonstration (using model animals)
- IX. Reading identification of animal (EID, ear notch, etc)

D. Business Management, Marketing and Product Evaluation

- I. Yield grading of carcasses
- II. Quality grading of carcasses or retail cuts
- III. Demonstrate how to measure yield grade using a meat probe
- IV. Demonstrate how to candle eggs
- V. Demonstrate how to utilize a pricing grid
- VI. Rank carcasses or cuts of meat
- VII. Calculate a break-even price on a pen or individual animal
- VIII. Demonstrate how to candle an egg
- IX. Evaluation of Milk Products

E. Horses (Business Management, Marketing, and Product Evaluation Rotation) may include:

- I. Evaluation of Structure
- II. Evaluation and Identification of Gaits of Horses
- III. Identification of colors
- IV. Placing various classes of horses (halter, reining, etc.)

Subcommittee

Standing subcommittee for this event

Name	School / Organization	Role
Ashtyn Vivion	Alliance	Chair
Dr. Bryan Reiling	UNL — Animal Science	Superintendent
Monty Larsen	UNL	Exec liaison
Kali Agler	Arlington	Member
Liz Beach	Palmyra	Member
Lisa Kemp	Wallace	Member
Samantha Lavene	Bertrand-Loomis (BerMis)	Member
Alex Meyer	St. Edward	Member
Kris Rut	Arthur County	Member
Chrisinda Scheideler-Ritz	Ord	Member
Lee Schroeder	West Point	Member

What changed — 2027–2030 rev 1 EDITORIAL

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