

## **What does showmanship mean at the county fair while watching the livestock shows?**

Showmanship is not just one class at the fair, even though it is an official class name.

Showmanship starts the day the animal is born. The exhibitor spends time, every day, with the animal. From picking out the correct feeding ration to keeping the animals clean, showmanship is a 365-day class. The exhibitors work daily on leading the animal, grooming, and correctly feeding the animal.

During the actual showmanship class at the fair, the exhibitor is asked questions about the animal, from the date of the animal's birth to how much the animal weighs to what the animal is eating, and parts of the animal. It is important for the exhibitor to watch the judge, to know everything possible about the animal, and to make the animal look its best in the ring. We say showmanship is every day, and that is truth. If the animal is fed an imbalanced ration, her coat may look dull and the judge will pick up on that. If the exhibitor has not led the animal, the animal may seem to 'fight' the halter and will not lead smoothly.

Showmanship happens in the breed and market ring as well; the exhibitor needs to show the animal to its best potential. The animals that are clean, fed correctly, and lead quietly are more likely to place better in the show ring than the animals that are not.

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