



Beef Cattle Project Guidelines

Project Goals

To aid the development of young people into responsible adults by:

- Teaching responsibility through working with animals that depend on them to provide proper feed and care.
- Teaching the value, use and management of money through its investment in animals, feed, equipment and when applicable, receiving a return on investment.
- Teaching sportsmanship and cooperation through participating in working with other members and shows.

To help young people gain an appreciation for:

- The place of livestock in agriculture and its contribution to people.
- The anatomy and physiology of a ruminant animal.
- The importance of proper growth and development of breeding and market animals.

To help young people gain skills in:

- Selecting the kind of animal that will make rapid, efficient gains and produce a high-quality product.
- Feeding animals for optimum growth and proper development, while considering health and welfare.
- Grooming and showing steers and heifers.
- Keeping accurate and detailed records.



General 4-H Requirements

1. Youth interested in enrolling in the 4-H Beef Project must become fully enrolled in the Dutchess County 4-H Program, including completing the enrollment process in 4-H Online.
 - a. This includes signing the Code of Conduct and their individual club bylaws.
2. All 4-H members are required to complete one public presentation at the club level or higher per 4-H enrollment year.
3. All 4-H Beef members must complete a project record book for each type of project they are enrolled in (i.e. DCYLS, Market, Heifer, etc.).

Ownership

- All animals must be owned OR sponsored/leased by the 4-H member/exhibitor.
- Sponsorship/lease agreements must be completed and submitted to the CCEDC 4-H Office by the January weigh-in for steers and June 1st for breeding heifers and cow/calf pairs.
- Sponsored/leased animals are permitted in accordance with the NYS 4-H policy. For regulations and policy pertinent to sponsoring/leasing beef cattle please refer to the NYS 4-H Project Animal Forms at the following link:
 - <https://cals.cornell.edu/nys-4-h-animal-science-programs/state-events/project-animal-forms>

Registration

- ALL steers with plans to be shown and sold at the Dutchess County Youth Livestock Sale (DCYLS), The Big E, or other 4-H related programs MUST be weighed at the January weigh-in. Exceptions may be made for Prospect steers.
- All animals must be registered with the CCEDC 4-H Office by the following dates:
 - Feeder steers/heifers-January Weigh-In
 - Breeding heifers & cow/calf pairs-June 1st
 - Prospect bulls/steers/heifers-July 30th
- Prospect bulls may be shown with the following limitations:
 - Animals must be born on or after January 1st of the current year



○ 4-H

member showing/working with said prospect bull must be 8+ years old

- Animals must wear nose rings or snap rings
- Animals must be shown with a halter AND ring*
 - *nursing calves under 5 months old may be shown with a halter
- Youth may register as many owned animals for their project as they would like*
 - *4-H youth may not own and lease animals at the same time
- All breed registered animals must have valid and current registration certificates to be shown in a purebred class.
 - Registration certificates should be uploaded to the 4-H Office along with 4-H registration papers.
- Any animal registered at January weigh-in, or June or July registration dates must be in the care/lease of the 4-H member from that date forward.

Dutchess County Fair Policies

- 4-H members must complete entries for the DC Fair 4-H Beef Show in ShoWorks on the required dates (determined by the Dutchess County Ag Society and CCEDC 4-H Team).
- All animals registered for the 4-H Beef Show must be stalled in the 4-H barn*
 - *exceptions are only made on a case-by-case basis with a minimum of 2 months' notice
- 4-H members are responsible for all animal care during the DC Fair. The following guidelines are set to promote 4-H member independence and assist them throughout the week:
 - Chores-
 - Parents/mentors may assist any time there is an unsafe environment or there are no other 4-H members available to assist.
 - Parents/mentors may assist with morning and evening barn chores
 - Parents/mentors may assist during show days if no other 4-H member is available
 - All 4-H members exhibiting cattle must have chores completed not later than **9:30AM** each morning of the fair. Members should be available throughout the day to care for their cattle and promote the DC 4-H Program to barn visitors. These and other barn duty requirements will be assigned and adopted by each club.



- Neglectful care of animals is a violation of the 4-H Code of Conduct and may result in removal from the 4-H Beef Shows and the fairgrounds.
- Fitting-
 - 4-H members are responsible for fitting their own animals. Parents/mentors may observe and advise as needed; any physical assistance (holding clippers, adhesives, brushes, etc.) should come from another 4-H member*
 - Assisting 4-H members may be from another county or state with valid proof that they are enrolled in an established 4-H program (i.e. valid membership card)*
 - *this applies to all classes EXCEPT the DC YLS class
- Showing-
 - Each 4-H member must exhibit their owned/leased/sponsored animal in Showmanship
 - Dress code for 4-H Beef Showmanship:
 - Black or dark solid colored pants or jeans in good repair (no holes, rips, etc.)
 - Short or long sleeve button down, collared shirt with no logos or graphics
 - Closed toed shoes or boots

Record Books

- All enrolled 4-H Beef members are required to complete a 4-H Record Book each year to be evaluated by club leaders and CCEDC 4-H Team. Record books are required whether an animal is owned/leased by the member or not. Failure to complete a 4-H Record book in consequences upheld by each clubs bylaws.

Ag & Market Guidelines*_{subject to annual review}

- The following documents are required for market animals:
 - Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI)
 - Official ID (matching registration cert if applicable) must be applied to animals prior to regulatory testing and completion of CVI.
 - Official identification includes 840 series Radio Frequency ear tags (RFID) and USDA approved tags and tattoos.



- Negative Bovine Viral Diarrhea persistent infection (BVD-PI) with date and results noted on the CVI
- Vaccination record for bovine respiratory disease complex including bovine respiratory syncytial virus, bovine virus diarrhea, infectious bovine rhinotracheitis, and parainfluenza with a product administered in a manner and time frame adequate to confer protective immunity for these diseases for the duration of the show season. The administration date and product should be documented.

The Big E 4-H Beef Program

- Dutchess County 4-H Beef members are invited to participate in the annual 4-H Beef Program held at the Big Eastern States Exposition in Springfield, MA at the end of September. This program is coordinated by a committee of select Extension individuals from each New England state and Dutchess County, NY.
- To be eligible to attend and participate in the Big E 4-H Beef Program, Dutchess County 4-H members must meet the following criteria:
 - Be a member of good standing in a Dutchess County 4-H Beef club. Good standing is determined by each club's bylaws.
 - Submit the application for participation by August 1st of the current year.
 - Attend all Big E Beef Program Committee meetings.
 - Be 12+ years old as of January 1st of the current enrollment year
 - Submit all animal registration forms (if applicable) by the required deadline
 - Animal(s) must be properly registered with their breed association or CCEDC 4-H office
 - Animal(s) must be experienced show stock and should have exhibited in at least one other location (including but not limited to: The Mid-Atlantic Beef Classic, the PCA Spring Spectacular, The Jersey Fresh Jackpot, Dutchess County Fair).
 - Members must have competed in their respective showmanship classes with an owned/leased animal for the Dutchess County Fair.
- Big E 4-H Beef Junior Leaders-
 - 4-H members may attend the Big E 4-H Beef Program without an animal as a Junior Leader. Junior Leaders must meet all the above requirements (barring animal requirements and will assist in barn duties for all Dutchess County 4-H animals present, as well as participating in the program group activities.



Dutchess County Youth Livestock Sale

- The following requirements must be met for 4-H members to be eligible for the Youth Livestock Sale (YLS) at the Dutchess County Fair:
 - Be a member in good standing with their respective club and CCEDC 4-H
 - Be 8+ years old as of January 1st of the current enrollment year
 - Attend the winter weigh-in scheduled by the Dutchess County YLS Committee
 - Adopt and abide by all rules and requirements set forth by the Dutchess County YLS Committee
 - Animal(s) must be born on or after January 1st of the previous year*
 - *sponsored/leased animals are NOT eligible to be sold in the DCYLS
 - Weight & Age-
 - Animal(s) must be 1,100 pounds or more at weigh-in on Tuesday of the Dutchess County Fair
 - Showing-
 - Up to, but no more than, 12 steers may sell in the DCYLS. All Champion and Reserve Champion animals MUST sell. All animals will be placed by a judge and sold in quality order. Only animals deemed appropriate quality for sale by the judge will sell. The judges' decision is final.
 - Youth will be allowed to sell two (2) animals in a species or division if there are not enough youth whose animals qualify for the sale. The judge will place all animals entered and youth with more than one qualifying animal will sell the higher placing animal first.
 - Steers sell by the pound
 - Commission-
 - 10% up to the first \$1,000
 - 7.5% for anything over \$1,000 per unit
 - Commission is automatically deducted from seller's check
 - Antibiotics/Drugs-
 - Any animal testing positive for drug residue will be replaced by the seller.
 - The seller will forfeit their eligibility to sell indefinitely.
 - Trucking/Transportation-
 - Trucking is secured by the DCYLS Committee



- Slaughter/Processing Fees-
 - These fees are the responsibility of the buyer; youth must pay the processor and obtain an invoice which will be submitted to the buyer for reimbursement.
 - Delivery of meat to buyer-the responsibility of the seller unless buyer requests alternative arrangements.

*see YLS documents for further information: <https://www.dutchessfair.com/participate/exhibitors-competitions/>

These guidelines have been amended and approved by the 2025-2026 Dutchess County 4-H Beef Advisory Committee as of January 12th, 2026.