

DEPARTMENT 14 - HORSES and PONIES

Events/times are subject to change.

Senior Fair Board: *Scott Dunham, Doug Marine
*denotes chairperson



Junior Fair Board: *Chairperson: Taylor Payton
*Co-Chairperson: Cali Kirkpatrick

2026 FAYETTE COUNTY HORSE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. The "Uniform Rules For Horse Shows in Ohio" (4-H 179) will govern 4-H horse shows. All members (or families) taking a horse project need to purchase a rule book and be familiar with it.
2. Mandatory for all members to follow the 4-H Equine Mandatory Helmet Use Policy in "Uniform Rules For Horse Shows in Ohio" (4-H 179).
3. All members and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign a new "Permission to Participate" form each year. New members are required to get the 191R Horses, Safety and You manual, and with a parent/guardian to view required links, *Every Ride, Every Time* and *Horses, Kids & Ethics*. After reading the manual and viewing the required links, the member and parent(s) sign the form on the inside back cover of the manual. Advisors will keep on file a copy of this signed form and each year's new permission forms. When additional family members join, they can sign the original forms after they have seen the films and read the manual. Members who are not in a horse club should turn in the permission form and a copy of the 191R form in to the Junior Fair Board Coordinator and the Senior Fair Board Horse Representatives no later than May 15.
4. Competition at the county fair show and participation in the horse activities, is limited to those enrolled in a Fayette County 4-H Club or FFA Chapter with a horse or horseless-horse project.
5. An ID sheet is to be completed for each horse, with a maximum of 5 (five) animals per member. Members of an immediate family may use the same horse with the exclusion of leased horses, but each member must complete an ID sheet for the animal. ID sheets are to be turned in by May 15, 2026 to Junior Fair Board Coordinator. Primary horse(s) (maximum of 2) of a member stay at the fair all week. Additional horses may be brought in for Horse Show on Tuesday and taken back home that day, and/or Fun Day. Standardbreds that are currently being raced may be taken from the fairgrounds as needed to race.
6. If an animal is leased, a contract to lease must be reviewed and accepted by the Junior Fair Board Coordinator and the Senior Fair Board Horse Representatives. A signed copy of the contract must be filed by May 15, 2026.
7. All members must attend a minimum of two (2) outdoor practices with their project horse(s) and be evaluated by an advisor as to their safety before going to the fair. Those in a non-horse club need to make arrangements to attend two (2) of one of the horse club's practices for this purpose. The horse clubs have the right to require more than the minimum two (2) practices. Each club will honor the other club's meetings attendance and shall be counted as a meeting.
8. Horses are over 58". Ponies will measure at or below 58".
9. Age of the exhibitor is determined as of January 1, 2026.
10. Stallions may not be shown unless they are part of a production project, and then only during the horse's first calendar year.
11. The use of any mood-altering drugs are prohibited, per the "Uniform Rules" book. (4-H 179)
12. The horse committee will deal with hardship case decisions on a case by case situation.
13. The 4-H horse shows must have a steward who will interpret and clarify rules. The steward will be the President of the Fayette County Horse Committee. Any exhibitor or family member with a grievance is to contact the steward first, not the judge. Judges' decisions about the placings are final. Poor sportsmanship on the part of the exhibitors, parents, or family members will not be tolerated.
14. Safe and legal tack is to be used at all times. Refer to the rule book for specific examples.

15. Each member is to complete a project book and, if applicable, participate in the skillathon/interview to complete their project.
16. Stall assignments will be made by the Junior Fair Board Horse Representatives.
17. Entries are due June 5. Entries submitted after June 5 must include a \$25 late fee for each exhibitor. No entries will be accepted after June 10. **Showmanship is mandatory for all members showing horses.** After all entries are received, class determinations will be made according to the number of entries per class. Age divisions may be added or deleted as needed.
18. All Exhibitors with a horse at the fair will be required to have emergency contact information on file. Each club will be responsible for making sure their members' cards are complete and turned into the Horse Committee Secretary who will make sure appropriate copies are available for Senior Fair Board Members.
19. Exhibitors must be aware of and comply with body condition score requirements in the "Uniform Rules For Horse Shows in Ohio" (4-H 179R). If your horse/pony has a body condition score of less than 4, you will not be permitted to exhibit or show your animal at the fair.
20. A mandatory meeting for all horse exhibitors will be held on Monday of the fair at noon. This is a required meeting. A member can only be excused if they make prior arrangements with an advisor or Junior Fair Board Member. For further clarification, please see the 2026 Fayette County Horse Program Guidelines. Pertinent information and show numbers will be discussed and dispersed at this meeting.
21. If a member chooses to bring multiple horses, each member will be assigned a show number.
22. It is the expectation of all 4-H Horse Club advisors to help with all activities related to the 4-H Horse Program/Show: Mock Show, Move-in Day, setting up for classes, working entry and exit gates and making sure all shows run smoothly.

Classes:

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| H1. | Yearling Production Class |
| H2. | Western Showmanship |
| H3. | Western/English Showmanship Horse/Pony 2 nd yr* |
| H4. | Western/English Showmanship Horse/Pony 1 st yr* |
| H5. | English Showmanship, Horse/Pony - All Ages |
| H6. | Easy Gaited Showmanship - All Ages |
| H7. | Overall Showmanship Class |
| | -1 st and 2 nd place winners of classes H2-H6 only. Winner represents the |
| horse | department in the Showman of Showmen Contest. |
| H8. | Hunter Under Saddle - All Ages |
| H9. | English Equitation - All Ages |
| H10. | Easy Gaited Pleasure - All Ages |
| H11. | Easy Gaited Horsemanship - All Ages |
| H12. | Walk/Trot Western Pleasure / HUS, 1 st yr* |
| H13. | Walk/Trot Horsemanship/Equitation, 1 st yr* |
| H14. | Walk/Trot Western Pleasure / HUS, 2 nd yr* |
| H15. | Walk/Trot Horsemanship/Equitation, 2 nd yr* |
| H16. | Western Pleasure / HUS, 2 nd yr - 3 gaited* |
| H17. | Horsemanship/Equitation, 2 nd yr - 3 gaited* |
| H18. | Western Pleasure |
| H19. | Western Horsemanship |
| H20. | Ranch Pleasure - All Ages |
| H21. | Ranch Riding - All Ages - Pattern B |
| H22. | Pleasure Driving - All Ages |
| H23. | Reining - All Ages |
| H24. | Trail - All Ages |
| H25. | Trail-Walk/Trot - 1 st & 2 nd yr* |
| H26. | Trail - Easy Gaited |
| H27. | Barrels - All Ages |
| H28. | Barrels - Walk/Trot - 1 st & 2 nd yr* |
| H29. | Flags - All Ages |
| H30. | Standardbred Driving Project |

**1st and 2nd year members, any age, may show only in 1st and 2nd yr. classes on Tuesday. Beginners may choose either walk-trot or 3-gaited classes, but not both.*

PLEASE NOTE: After final entries are made, classes may be added or divided per the Horse Committee.

Hi-Point awards will be given for Tuesday's show to individuals in 3 divisions: Beginner, Junior Division and Senior Division. Awards go to the rider with the highest points in each division.

VERSATILITY

All exhibitors enter the ring. They DO NOT LEAVE the ring until ALL 4 classes are done.

Examples of the 4 classes: Showmanship, Western Horsemanship, Hunter Under Saddle, Barrels Showmanship, Western Horsemanship, Western Pleasure, Barrels

After each class is done, contestants spread out in the ring and stop. Each exhibitor is to have 2 grooms. Those grooms are to already have ALL of the exhibitor's equipment and horse's equipment FOR ALL 4 CLASSES in a wheelbarrow or muck bucket or etc. Once the class is done and the exhibitors have spread out and stopped, the grooms come into the ring bringing the wheelbarrow (etc.) and go to their exhibitor. They DO NOT start changing any equipment (in order to get ready for the next class), until the announcer says OK, GO!! They only have 5 minutes to make any changes and be ready for the next class. The announcer calls the time. Once the 5 minutes is up and the announcer calls that, then the grooms leave the ring and the exhibitors go to the center and line up. If the exhibitor is not ready within that 5 minutes, they are eliminated from placing in that class, but they proceed as they would. They do not know (at that time) that they are eliminated from that class. While lined up in the center of the ring, before the next class, a judge/ring steward should walk down that line and check and ask if the exhibitor has everything ready (such as, is the saddle tight?). Safety #1. Once that is done then the exhibitors proceed to go to the rail for the next class or line up on the rail if it is a pattern class. This is how it should go for all the classes. The last class, contest class, the exhibitors can wait outside the ring once they have completed the 5 minute changes.

If a groom forgets a piece of equipment in their wheelbarrow or bucket, they MAY NOT go back to the stall or trailer to get it.

Do not read any placings from each class until ALL CLASSES are done. Bring in ALL the exhibitors back into the ring and line up. Then announce each placing from each class and then the overall placings.

Each exhibitor is to have the same 2 grooms in all 4 classes. Sign up the exhibitor with the groom's names before starting. Grooms can be parents, advisors, brother, sister or etc.

Suggest ALL grooms and exhibitors practice doing these 5 minute changes BEFORE the fair so the each know what their job is and to see if they can get it done within the 5 minutes.

The announcer is very important for this class. They can get on the mic and explain to the spectators what and how this class is run. And they can announce the name of the exhibitor and their grooms. And while they are making that 5 minute change, they can go on and on and make it fun!!

Horse Activity Schedule during Fair Week:

Monday	7 AM - All horses must be in place 10 AM - Mandatory Body Score and Safety Check 12 PM - Mandatory Horse Barn Meeting
Tuesday	8 AM - Junior Fair Horse Show
Wednesday	6 PM - Versatility Show
Thursday	9 AM - Fun Day, followed by Costume Class
Friday	4 PM - Haul Out until 4 PM, then not again until after 7 PM