

Date: February 24, 2025

To: All 4-H Beef/Dairy Beef Market, and Dairy Feeder Steer Project Members and Leaders

From: Kayla Mitchell, Program Coordinator - 4-H Youth Development

Re: 2025 Beef Project Information and Updates

This is a quick update on the events that will take place for the 2025 fair season within the beef department. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact the MSU Extension office at 269-467-5511. **Please note that the information contained in this letter is subject to change.**

NEW for 2025:

- Anyone is allowed to prepare animals for show. However, it is expected that the youth exhibitor **will actively participate** in the grooming of their project animal.
- All **breeding stock** animals must be registered at the MSU Extension office by August 1, 2025.
- Skill-a-thon and interview will be combined into one evaluation class.
- Friday night option added for fair check-in of beef/dairy beef/dairy feeder steers on September 12, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
- Cattle may be **loaded out** on Saturday, September 20 from 11:00 p.m. - 12 midnight or Sunday, September 21 at 5:30 a.m. All livestock (and those with campers) must be done moving by 11:00 a.m. September 21 per the St. Joseph County Grange Fair Board.



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Reminders:

- **Market Beef and Dairy Beef Weigh-In and Tagging:** All market steers, market heifers, dairy market steers, and carcass beef animals must be tagged on **Saturday, March 22** from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. at the fairgrounds. **Note:** scales will be available for optional weigh-in.
- Beef breeding stock **may be leased**. The 4-H Cattle Lease/Borrow Program form must be filled out and turned in with all appropriate attachments to the MSU Extension office by **August 1, 2025**.
- **Feeder Calf Tagging:** Countywide tagging and weigh-in dates will be **Tuesday, June 3** or **Thursday, June 5** at the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Calves that are not registered on either of these dates are not eligible to be shown at fair. Feeder calves must be castrated and dehorned by countywide weigh-in and weigh between **175-325 lbs**.
- **Family Tagging:** Beef exhibitors may participate in "family" tagging. Each family member must indicate on their registration form if they are participating in "family" tagging.
- **Ownership of beef animals:** Each 4-H member must remain in possession of their market beef animals after tagging and must house their animal(s) within a 25-mile radius of members home address. If an animal is determined to be housed over the 25-mile radius of the members home address and is in violation determined by the Beef Superintendent or by MSU Extension staff, that animal will be disqualified for exhibition at the St. Joseph County Fair.
- **County Bred and Raised forms** are due to the MSU Extension office by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15.
- **Live carcass weigh-in** will be **Saturday, September 6, 2025** 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
 - Carcass animals **MUST** be broke or will be disqualified at the discretion of the Beef Superintendent and/or MSU Extension staff.

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- **Beef Carcass hanging evaluation contest** will be the week of September 8, 2025, time and location TBD.
 - If a beef market animal is disqualified from the carcass contest, the member may request the animal to be shipped with other entries for butcher, the member will be responsible for all expenses of processing and animal will not be entered into the carcass contest.
- **Fair check-in** will be Saturday, September 14 from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. at the beef barn for all beef animals. This includes market beef, dairy market beef, dairy feeder steers, and beef breeding stock.
- **Evaluations System for 2025:** All market livestock exhibitors are required to complete an evaluation for each species they exhibit. These will take place on **Sunday, September 13, 2025**, starting at 2:00 p.m.
- **Dress code for Interview and Show:** Long pants (no holes, rips, or tears), Collared dress shirt or long sleeve shirt. NO Sleeveless shirts. Leather shoe/boots.
- Dairy Market Steers and Dairy Feeder Steers must be a purebred or crossbred animal of the following breeds: Holstein, Jersey, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, Guernsey, Lineback, and Dutch Belt.
- **Order of Show:**
 - *Beef/Dairy Beef Market Animals & Beef Breeding Stock Show:* Fitting & Showmanship (oldest to youngest age group), Dairy Market Steers, Market Steers (lightest to heaviest classes), Market Heifer, County Bred & Raised, Grand Drive, Breeding Stock.
 - *Dairy Feeder Steer Show:* Fitting & Showmanship (oldest to youngest age group including cloverbuds), Dairy Feeder Steers (lightest to heaviest classes), Grand Drive.
- 4-H members **may tag both a dairy market steer and a feeder steer**. Member may also bring both animals to fair. If member does bring both a market dairy steer and feeder steer to fair, only the market steer may be used as showmanship animal and the only animal sold at auction.
- **All 4-H livestock members/clubs** will be held responsible for setting up their project pen/stall and decorations before fair, as well as cleaning and tearing down their project pen/stall at the end of fair. Individuals or clubs may be assessed a \$50.00 fine for failure to do so.

Electronic Identification (EID) Tags

1. All cattle moving to a show, sale, or exhibition are required to have an official radio frequency identification device (RFID) ear tag. Michigan resident exhibitors may call CentralStar Cooperative at 1-888-203-3398 to order RFID tags at a cost of \$2.90 per tag.
2. All out-of-state cattle exhibited in Michigan shall be tagged with an official radio frequency identification device (RFID) ear tag. For residents outside of Michigan, tags can be ordered by calling Rise' with RJ Matthews Co. at 330-834-3000. It is taking 4-6 weeks to receive tags.
3. All cattle purchased in the State of Michigan, by law, must have an EID tag.

General Rules of Interest

1. There are four different types of 4-H market cattle that can be exhibited in 4-H classes at the St. Joseph County Grange Fair: *beef market steers*, *beef market heifers*, *dairy market steers* and *dairy feeder steers*. A given member may register all four types of market cattle with the MSU Extension office.
2. **Dehorning: All market and breeding stock cattle** must be clean-polled/dehorned with an allowance of 1 ½" regrowth at fair in order to be exhibited in 4-H classes at the fair.
3. Beef/dairy beef/feeder steers with physical defects (i.e. ruptured navel, abscess, etc.) will be ineligible for exhibition in 4-H/ FFA & Other Youth classes at fair.
4. Feed and water buckets/pans must be removed from the stall as soon as the animal has finished eating/drinking. Also, stalls must be cleaned daily (removing wet and manured bedding). The 4-H member is responsible for monitoring when the animal is done eating/drinking and removing buckets/pans accordingly as well as cleaning the stall(s). Failure to follow these rules may lead to "yellow/red tagging" the exhibit. If a member receives two yellow tags and one red tag his/her project animal will be sent home and all awards/premiums relating to that animal will be revoked. (See "yellow/red tag" rule in the St. Joseph County 4-H Fair book).
5. All exhibitors are required to compete in Fitting & Showmanship classes.

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Important Dates and Deadlines for the Beef Animal/Dairy Market Steer and Dairy Feeder Steer Projects

Activity or Event	Date(s) or Deadline	Special Information
Market Beef Tagging/Registration	Saturday, March 22, 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members can participate in “family” tagging, i.e. two siblings would have access to up to four animals. If participating in “family” tagging, it must be noted on <u>ALL</u> participating family members.
Dairy Feeder Steer Tagging/Registration	Tuesday, June 3, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. or Thursday, June 5, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.	
Live Carcass Weigh-in	September 6, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Fairgrounds Hanging evaluation TBD
Fair Weigh-in	September 12, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. or September 13, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Dairy Feeder calves must gain a minimum of 1.75# per day.
Evaluation	September 13, 2:00 p.m. until done	Barn #31 This is required for <u>all</u> livestock exhibitors. Sign-up at weigh-in.
Beef Cattle Show	September 16, 9:00 a.m.	Show Arena
Dairy Beef Show	September 16, 9:00 a.m.	Show Arena
Feeder Steer Show	September 16, 9:00 a.m.	Show Arena
4-H Market Livestock Sale (large)	September 18, 10:30 a.m.	2025 Sale order: Beef Cattle, Dairy Market Seers, Gallon of Milk, Dairy Feeder Steers, Hogs, Lambs
Load out from fair and Barn Clean Out	September 20, 11:00 p.m. or September 21, 5:30 a.m.	All members are required to clean their pens after loadout.