

What You Need to Know about State Horse Fair

Preparing for State Fair

1. Have a State Fair delegation meeting that includes both qualifying members AND their parents. Include the following:
 - Give every member a list of what they MUST take to State Fair
 - Feed for their horse
 - Water bucket(s) and feeder(s) for their horse
 - All tack and equipment they will need for their classes
 - Decorations specific to them (i.e. a photo)
 - Assign people to bring items the delegation can share
 - Wheel barrows
 - Rakes, shovels, etc.
 - Hoses
 - Tools
 - First Aid (for people and horses)
 - Plan your county's decorations. The county may already have everything, but determine what is needed. Know who will take the decorations to State Fair, who will put them up, who will take them down, and who will transport them back to your county.
 - Decide if your delegation wants to purchase team clothing (shirts or jackets). This is not necessary, but many counties choose to do so.
 - Be sure every member and parent receives the State Fair schedule of events and the State Horse Fair Exhibitor Handbook.
 - Have members/parents fill out health forms, code of conducts, and any official entry forms your county may require.
 - Remind all about code of conduct, sportsmanship, herdsmanship, and other expected behavior.
 - Remind parents they will be expected to volunteer. Volunteers are a necessary and critical part of the 4-H horse show, and the show cannot run without them. Each county will be assigned jobs they need to fill. The chaperone should bring the names of volunteers for each job to registration.
 - Find out where people will be staying while they are at fair. Youth must have an adult chaperone with them in the camping area or in the dorm. No one may sleep in a vehicle or trailer unless it is parked in the camping area.
 - Collect cell phone numbers for all participants and parents.
2. Every county is required to have an adult chaperone for their delegation. State guidelines request one chaperone for every 10 members. The Horse Show office requires the name of one head chaperone as a contact person. This person needs to be at State Fair for the entire event. It is recommended a county have one chaperone for performance and one for gaming.

3. Check with your veterinarian that your horse's vaccinations are up to date. If you have a couple of weeks between your county fair and state fair, it might be a good time to booster. Giving your horse a shot a day or two before State Fair will not help. It won't protect them, and it may cause a reaction that would detract from their performance.
4. The county office must submit all entries and a stall request/chaperone form.

Arriving at State Fair

- Know the schedule; arrival times are specific and it's important to come during those times. Any other arrival times must be pre-arranged through your county staff and then through the state 4-H horse staff.
- Often during heavy arrival times, there is a bit of a line as people unload horses and tack. Only so many are allowed in any given area at one time. Bring patience. The staff at the fairgrounds is good about moving people along. On that same note, be prepared to unload quickly and then park your vehicle.
- Stalls are in two locations-- the Show Barn close to the stadium arena and the Race Horse Barns near the camping area. There will be a map at the entrance and usually a state fair staff person who will let you know where your county will reside. It's NOT optional. Your county will have been assigned the stalls you requested, plus stalls for tack and feed, depending on how many youth are coming.
- Know the schedule. Exhibitors have a deadline by which they must pickup their exhibitor numbers and turn in their health form and code of conduct. **Members must check in during the scheduled registration times.** Members should go to the main stadium where the office is to pick up their exhibitor numbers as soon as possible. It is best if you send all the health forms and code of conduct forms to the state office ahead of time. If you send health forms with one person to the fair, that person needs to arrive first or near first. Contestants cannot get their numbers without the forms, and they may not ride without their numbers.
- Plan to attend the orientation meeting. The orientation meeting is critical to a positive experience at state horse fair. This is the 4-Hers opportunity to ask questions about the patterns, to learn rules specific to state fair, and to meet the people that will be providing leadership throughout their stay.
- The fairgrounds is not a place to let youth or adults wander around alone, especially after dark. Require youth and expect adults to travel in pairs or groups. Don't leave valuables locked in the back seat of your car; bring a padlock to lock your trailer tack and hitch.

Exhibiting at State Fair

Be on time for all classes. It is your responsibility to be ready when your class is called.

- **Showmanship**. Plan for a very small space. The arena will be split up into 3 small spaces, and three classes will be going on at once. When you see classes posted, be sure you understand A, B & C for each section will all be exhibiting at the same time. Exhibitors will enter in groups of 6-8. Each exhibitor will show to one judge.
- **Equitation**. Each exhibitor will have 3 judges, and thus three scores. To determine ribbon placing, all 3 scores are totaled. The three judges will be placed strategically around the arena, and they don't miss much. Exhibitors will enter in groups of 8-11 and perform rail work and a pattern.
- **Reinsmanship**. This class will have one judge and will be split according to horse or pony. Additionally, there will be practice times for drivers and specific to pony or horses.
- **Trail**. Three riders will be assigned for a 15 minute time block. Be ready to ride at the start of your scheduled time. If there is a conflict with another class, talk to the trail gate volunteer before your assigned time. This class is scheduled on two days with one judge. As in showmanship, the arena space is small. Expect a very compact course.
- **Jumping**. Exhibitors must show competence over a warm up fence before being allowed to exhibit at the state fair. Exhibitors will be allowed to walk the course. There will be one judge
- **Ground Training**. There will be one judge. The arena will be split in two with different groups showing at each end. Set up and take down of equipment should be minimal.
- **Dressage**. Ride times for dressage will be assigned according to the test you are riding.
- **Western Games**. Be ready. We do not alter the order. Exhibitors must go in their designated spot. There are lots of scratches on gaming day, so it's important to listen and pay attention.

Leaving State Fair

- STRIP your stall. Once that is done, contact the barn manager or other designated person to be sure your stall is clean. They will sign your check out form.
- Take your signed stall form to the show office, and they will give you all your score sheets from state fair and any ribbons you may not have picked up. Be sure you pick up your scoresheets. Judges don't do these for fun!
- You can stay through the last day of state horse fair (typically a Tuesday) and with arrangements, into Wednesday morning **or** you can leave when you have completed your classes.
- Be sure your chaperone knows when you are leaving. There may be participation requirements for taking down decorations or other requirements from your county.
- Have a safe drive home.