

## HORSE JUDGING CONTEST

### **I. OBJECTIVES**

- a. To learn principles of horse and pony selection and evaluation and to develop the ability to make sound decisions based on observations and to defend these decisions verbally.
- b. To learn to appraise horses and ponies visually as a part of a sound breeding and management program as well as a means of evaluation in horse shows and contests.

### **II. SUGGESTIONS FOR COUNTY AND AREA HORSE AND PONY JUDGING CONTEST**

- a. Establish, prior to December 31<sup>st</sup>, the county that will host the county or area event. Designate the chairperson of the event. He or she will need help, but someone must be the primary organizer.
- b. Make contacts for horses shortly after January 1. Receive commitments to help at this time. Follow up on these "horse suppliers" promises on monthly intervals until four weeks prior to the event; then weekly. Have judge and/or reasons takers lined up on same time schedule as horses for classes.
- c. Select from county or area horse leaders the following personnel:
  1. Announcer
  2. Timekeeper
  3. Four group leaders
  4. Horse organizer to keep classes moving and ready
  5. Card collector
  6. Card graders
  7. Registration clerks
- d. Collect the following equipment for day of event:
  1. Stop watches
  2. Portable loudspeaker
  3. Sets of numbers
  4. Rubber bands
  5. Masking tape
  6. Placing and reason cards
  7. Adding machines
  8. Tabulating paper
  9. Hormel scoring cards
- e. It is suggested there be at least three halter classes (minimum of one for reasons) and three performance classes (minimum of one for reasons).

### **III. GUIDELINES**

- a. The publication 4-H 923-W, "Conducting and Coordinating a Livestock, Dairy, or Horse Judging Contest" is available on the Purdue website. It is suggested that area events follow rules and suggestions for the state event as closely as possible in order to eliminate confusion for judging contestants and workers. For further assistance, contact Colleen Brady, Department of 4-H Youth, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907-1161 or by phone at (765) 494-8439.

#### IV. STATE CONTEST CLASSES

The following applies to the State Contest for senior 4-H, FFA, and junior contestants.

- a. Contestants shall judge at least four halter classes - consisting of both English and Western breeds plus there will be 3-5 performance classes.
- b. Halter classes may be selected from any of the following:
  1. Appaloosa
  2. Arabian
  3. Morgan
  4. Saddlebred
  5. Paint
  6. Miniature
  7. Palomino
  8. Ponies
  9. Thoroughbreds (hunter type)
  10. Walking Horses
  11. Quarter Horses
  12. Draft Horses
  13. Haflinger
- c. Performance classes will be selected from those described in the official handbook published by the Indiana 4-H Horse and Pony Program. Those performance classes most likely to be held will be: Hunter Under Saddle, English Pleasure, Western Pleasure, Pleasure Driving, Western Riding, Reining, and Hunter Hack.
- d. All halter classes will be judged on conformation, correctness of type for the breed and way of going. All halter horses will be considered sound unless otherwise announced.
- e. Performance horses should be judged on manners, ways of going and responses to the cues and aids of the rider. Performance classes will be judged as they are in regard to soundness.
- f. Each contestant will be allowed a maximum of 15 minutes on non-reason classes and 17 minutes to place and take notes on each reason class.
- g. Contestants may not touch the animals during close inspection.

#### V. ORAL REASONS

- a. Prior to the beginning of the contest, contestants will be told which classes are reasons classes; or to treat all classes as reasons classes, with the announcement of which classes will be made after the classes have been completed, and the officials have determined the most appropriate reasons classes.
- b. Contestants will be held in a waiting room to prepare their oral reasons. No reference materials will be allowed in the waiting room for the Senior 4-H or FFA divisions. Junior division contestants may have references in the waiting room. All contestants are expected to work quietly in the waiting room. Excessive noise, or disruption, as determined by the room moderator(s) will result in disqualification of the contestant from the contest.
- d. The reasons will be given orally before the judge or judges in a private room. Notes may not be used in the reasons room for any division.
- e. Two minutes will be allowed for giving reasons.
- f. Oral reasons will be given on at least two halter classes and two performance classes in the Senior 4-H and FFA divisions.

#### VI. FINAL INDIVIDUAL RANKING

- a. This shall be the combined score from the placings and the oral reasons.
- b. Fifty points shall constitute a perfect score in placing the animals.
- c. Fifty points shall constitute a perfect score for oral reasons.

**VII. GROUP LEADERS**

- a. A group leader shall be in charge of each group to move the contestants, to assist in supervising the class to see that the animals are properly shown and moved and to answer any questions which may not pertain to the actual placing and/or instruction regarding the animal under consideration.

**VIII. PROCEDURES**

- a. During registration, each contestant will be assigned to a group and remain with that group until the event is completed.
- b. Each contestant will be provided with placing cards for each class to be judged and note cards for reasons classes.
- c. Contestants in the judging event should report to the superintendent in charge of the event at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled STARTING TIME for verification of pre-registration.
- d. Only judging contestants will be permitted in the judging ring except those individuals assigned to assist with the event.

**IX. TIES (based on the three highest contestants' scores that went into making the tie) will be broken by the following criteria for each division:**

- a. **Individual rank** - If two or more contestants have the same total points score, it will be broken by total reasons score.
- b. **Team rank** - If two or more teams have a combined total points score that is the same, the tie will be broken by a combined total reasons score.
- c. If still tied for either Individual and/or team rank, the contestant or team having the highest placing score in the class(es) with the lowest total cuts, will be listed first.
- d. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest total placing score (adding together the placing scores on reasons classes) on reasons classes, will be listed first.
- e. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest single class reason score will be listed first.
- f. Ties for individuals and teams in the oral reasons category will be broken such that the contestant or team with the lower total placing score (adding together the placing scores on reasons classes) on reasons classes, will be listed first.
- g. If all of the above fail, duplicate awards shall be given.

The top ten 4-H senior teams and the top ten FFA senior teams win the opportunity to attend and participate in trips to designated national and/or invitational events.

## JUNIOR HORSE JUDGING CONTEST

- A. All general guidelines and those in the horse section apply.
- B. Contestants will judge the same halter and performance classes as the Senior 4-H and FFA divisions.
- C. Contestants will give two sets of oral reasons (one on a halter class and one on a performance class) that will count along with the placing scores in the total scores.
- D. Ties will be broken by the following criteria:  
(Teams based on the three highest contestants' scores that went into making the ties.)
  - 1. If two or more contestants or teams have the same total score, the contestant or team with the highest reasons score will be listed first.
  - 2. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest score in placing halter classes will be listed first.
  - 3. If still tied, the contestant with the most perfect placing scores (50) will be listed first, etc.

### X. REFERENCES

Indiana 4-H Horse & Pony Handbook (4-H 661)  
Purdue University Horse Judging Manual (4-H 955)  
See last four pages of this 4-H/FFA Ag. Judging Handbook.

### Video tapes from Purdue University Film Library (Order through County Extension Office.)

Refer to the Indiana 4-H Horse and Pony Web site [www.four-h.purdue.edu](http://www.four-h.purdue.edu) and select: Projects/Activities, then select Horse and Pony, for a current list of video tapes and other materials available through the film library.