

Florida Gateway Fair Youth Poultry and Rabbit Show Rules and Information

Interpretation of Rules

All questions regarding these rules shall be directed to the Florida Gateway Fair Office. The **Florida Gateway Fair (FGF)** reserves the right to interpret, amend, or add to these Rules and Regulations and to resolve any questions, disputes, or matters arising from or related to the Fair. Any violation of these rules will be reviewed and addressed by the Florida Gateway Fair on an individual basis. Decisions made by the Florida Gateway Fair shall be final.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Exhibitors must be between the ages of 4 and 18 years old and must either:
 - (i) reside in Columbia County,
 - (ii) be currently enrolled in the Columbia County School System, or
 - (iii) be enrolled in a valid homeschool program within Columbia CountyAge eligibility will be determined as of October 29, 2026. Any individual who has graduated from school or is no longer enrolled in school will not be eligible to participate in the show or sale. Exhibitors serving an out-of-school suspension on final entry day or show day will not be permitted to participate in any show or sale.
Any physical condition that may pose a safety risk to the exhibitor, other participants, or animals may result in rejection of entry or disqualification from the show or sale.
Exhibitors may be required to provide proof of Columbia County residency or proof of enrollment in the Columbia County School District or a valid homeschool program. Acceptable documentation may include a valid driver's license, utility bill, or report card.

ENTRIES AND START OF PROJECT

2. All entries must be made online at <https://showman.app/shows#/florida-gateway-youth-livestock-show-and-sale-a39e>
3. Exhibitors must register for showmanship when registering their animal if they would like to participate.
4. Registration will close at **4:00 pm on Friday, October 16, 2026**

5. There is an entry fee of \$3.00 per animal. Poultry entries are not limited per exhibitor. Rabbit entries are strictly limited to a maximum of two (2) rabbits per exhibitor. **Entries will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis up to a total maximum of twenty-four (24) rabbit entries.**
6. Poultry entries may include chickens, ducks, and turkeys. All poultry must be at least **twenty-six (26) weeks of age as of October 29, 2026** (recommended hatch date on or before April 30, 2026). Rabbit Entries may include purebred or crossbred rabbits and must be at least **twelve (12) weeks old weeks of age as of October 29, 2026**. Animals must have been owned and cared for by the exhibitor for a minimum of **sixty (60) days** before the show.
7. The exhibitor certifies that they are the sole owner of the animal being exhibited and that the animal has been properly cared for during the required ownership period. The only exception to ownership requirements will be club or chapter animals.
8. To exhibit a Laying Hen Project, the exhibitor must be a participant in the 4-H Laying Hen Spinners Club and have attended at least 3 of the project meetings to participate at fair. The project is limited to one (1) project per exhibitor, consisting of three (3) birds. The exhibitor must be 5 years old by September 1, 2026, to participate. The Laying Hen Project is managed and governed by the Columbia County 4-H program. **For more information regarding the Columbia County 4-H program, please contact UF/IFAS Extension Columbia County at 386-752-5384.** The registration fee for this project is \$5.
9. Any show failing to have 6 qualified entries by the required deadline will be cancelled.
10. Florida Gateway Fair reserves the right to reject or accept conditionally any entry of application at any time. Florida Gateway Fair may revoke premiums earned or terminate any exhibitor for just cause, and such decision shall be final.

DIVISIONS AND CLASSES

11. Entries will be classified by **Division, Breed, Color/Variety, and Class** at the time of entry. This identification must be included when entered.
12. Division is classified as:
 - a. Bantam Chicken (B)
 - b. Large Fowl Chicken (LF)

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- c. Turkey (T)
 - d. Waterfowl (W)
 - e. Rabbit (R)
13. Breed examples are:
- f. Silkie, Cochín, Brahma, Sebright, Etc.
 - g. Plymouth Rocks, Dominiques, Wyandotte's, Javas, Rhode Island Reds, Leghorns, Minocras, Spanish, Andalusians, Ancona, Etc.
 - h. Bronze, Narragansett, White Holland, Bourbon Red, Etc.
 - i. Pekin, Aylesbury, Rouen, Muscovy, Etc.
 - j. Netherland Dwarf, Mini Rex, Holland Lop, New Zealand, California, etc.
14. Color/Variety examples are:
- k. Golden, Silver, Black, White, Birchen, Etc.
15. Class is classified as:
- l. Young Male (Cockerel / Young Tom / Young Drake) *Male bird under one (1) year of age*
 - m. Old Male (Cock / Tom / Drake) *Male bird one (1) year of age or older*
 - n. Young Female (Pullet / Young Hen / Young Duck) *Female bird under one (1) year of age*
 - o. Old Female (Hen / Duck) *Female bird one (1) year of age or older*
 - p. Senior Male (Buck / Rabbit) *Male rabbit six (6) months of age and older*
 - q. Junior Male (Buck / Rabbit) *Male rabbit under six (6) months of age*
 - r. Senior Female (Doe / Rabbit) *Female rabbit six (6) months of age and older*
 - s. Junior Female (Doe / Rabbit) *Female rabbit under six (6) months of age*

ENTRANCE TO FAIR AND PARKING

16. All exhibitors must enter the Fairgrounds through the Livestock Gate on **Monday, November 2, 2026**, between **2:00 pm** and **4:00 pm** to check in their animals.
17. Exhibitors must make their own arrangements for the delivery of animals.
18. During fair week, all vehicles can enter the Livestock Gate and park in the designated parking area to care for their animals.

19. Each family will be issued one vehicle parking pass valid for vehicle entry through the livestock gate. In addition, each exhibitor will receive one exhibitor walk-in pass and two parent/guardian walk-in passes. Families with more than one exhibitor will receive one additional exhibitor walk-in pass for each additional exhibitor within the same family. Tickets will be issued during check-in.

RELEASE OF LIVESTOCK

20. Exhibitors must make their own arrangements for the pickup of animals.
21. **Animals will be released at the conclusion of the fair on Sunday, November 8th, 2026, between 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm or at the discretion of the livestock committee.** Exhibitors will not be allowed to enter the livestock gate before **4:00 pm** to pick up animals. ALL animals must be picked up no later than **5:00 pm**.

HEALTH RULES AND REGULATIONS

22. All animals must meet the State of Florida Department of Agriculture health requirements.
23. A state inspector will be present at check-in. No animals may be unloaded without approval.
24. A percentage of your birds will be examined upon arrival for any external parasites.
25. All poultry will be tested for negative pullorum typhoid through a blood test unless registered with the NPIP.
26. All rabbits must be free of ear mites, snuffles, vent disease, or weeping eyes.
27. All animals must be healthy and in sound condition, and free from external parasites or signs of disease. The superintendent reserves the right to refuse or remove any animal exhibiting illness or infestation.
28. **Contact the Florida Department of Agriculture, Animal Industry, District 4 Office at (863) 578-1863 with questions pertaining to Health Regulations and/or Rules of Exhibition.**

DISCLAIMERS

29. Florida Gateway Fair will not be responsible for any mistakes in the fair bulletin.
30. Florida Gateway Fair or any of its personnel will not be responsible for accidents or errors that may

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occur. However, every effort will be made to provide for the safety and comfort of the participants, livestock, and guests.

31. The owner or custodian of property of any kind brought to the Fairgrounds; either for exhibit or for other purposes, assumes as a condition of its admission to the grounds, all risk and/or responsibility for its loss, damage, or theft.

GENERAL

32. The Barn Superintendent will be allowed to make rules and regulations regarding the barn area for the protection, comfort and safety of all animals, exhibitors, exhibitor family members and visitors. This may include limiting public access to the barns during shows.
33. Exhibitors or their designated person must unload the animals for check-in. Florida Gateway Fair will not be responsible for any injuries that may occur to an animal during this process.
34. Misconduct or failure to cooperate with the show management by the exhibitor, parents or other persons, at any time during this project, may automatically disqualify the exhibitor and the animal(s) from this or future shows.
35. Animals entered in the Florida Gateway Fair are to be on exhibit while fair is open. Only exception is while animal is being prepped during species show day of or prior arrangement has been approved by the Florida Gateway Fair Livestock Committee or Fair Board. Penalty for not complying with this rule will result in:
 - a. 1st Offense will be a verbal warning (1 hour to correct)
 - b. 2nd Offense will result in a fine of \$500.
 - c. 3rd Offense, the animal will be sent home and exhibitor will be disqualified. Due to disqualification exhibitor will not receive premiums.
36. Exhibitors will be required to show their own animal(s) in the show. Exceptions will be addressed by Florida Gateway Fair on an individual basis. Requests for exceptions must be made in writing to Florida Gateway Fair at 164 SW Mary Ethel Lane, Lake City, Florida 32025. No parents will be allowed

in the show ring to assist their child without prior consent of Florida Gateway Fair.

37. Cages and bedding will be provided. Pails will be provided for poultry entries; however, rabbit exhibitors must provide their own feeders and waterers.
38. Exhibitors are responsible for providing their own feed for their animals.
39. All exhibitors are required to feed and care for their animal(s) twice (2x) daily for the duration of the fair. A sign-in sheet will be provided daily.
40. Exhibitors are expected to keep their exhibit area clean and presentable at all times.
41. Florida Gateway Fair will not be responsible for any items, including, but not limited to, items remaining after the conclusion of the fair. Exhibitors are encouraged to affix their name to any personal belongings brought to the fair.
42. Social Media guidelines for the Florida Gateway Fair Board, Volunteers, Leaders, Parents and Exhibitors. Ultimately you are responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks, and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects the Florida Gateway Fair & Livestock Show, its clients, exhibitors, volunteers, parents, leaders and its ability to secure the resources needed to fulfill its mission promises, may result in being disqualified from participating as a board member, volunteer, leader, exhibitor, or committee member for the Florida Gateway Fair. The impact of negative online content and negative comments shall mean loss of premium money, any awards received and disqualification from this year's Livestock Show. At the committee's discretion this could include loss of sale money and disqualification from future Livestock Shows. The Florida Gateway Fair Livestock Board of Directors reserves the right to take down and/or report any content that may be negative to the Florida Gateway Fair image or exhibitors. All actions will be determined by the Livestock Board and the Florida Gateway Board of Directors. All decisions of the committee will be final.

GROOMING, TACK, SHOW BOXES AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

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43. Exhibitors are encouraged to bring their own tack and show boxes to secure their personal belongings for the duration of the fair. Tack boxes, feed or water pails, and other personal belongings used during fair week must be removed on Sunday, immediately following the conclusion of the fair.
44. Exhibitors are expected to groom their own animal for the show. However, parents, guardians, advisors, and leaders may assist the child if necessary.

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHER

45. An official photographer will be designated by Florida Gateway Fair. Any exhibitor wishing to engage the service of this photographer may get in touch with them through the Florida Gateway Fair Office. The designated photographer is the only person allowed to take photos during scheduled events. All exhibitors and parents are required to cooperate with the photographer and refrain from violating this rule. Please respect this rule!

EXHIBITOR SHOW ATTIRE

46. Exhibitors are to wear the following attire during the shows:
 - a. Blue or black jeans (without holes) worn outside of boots
 - b. Long Sleeved, button up collared shirt tucked inside jeans
 - c. No hats or baseball caps
 - d. Belt
 - e. Boots or leather shoes – no tennis shoes, open toed shoes or flip flops

Please note that Chapter or Club Advisors may require exhibitors to wear the club official dress that complies with this dress code.

SHOWMANSHIP AND CONTEST ELIGIBILITY

47. Participants will be divided into the following age divisions:
 - a. Cloverbuds: ages 5–7 years (**NOTE: 4-year-old FGF participants will fall into this age division**)
 - b. Junior: ages 8–10 years
 - c. Intermediate: ages 11–13 years
 - d. Senior: ages 14–18 years.

48. Only exhibitors who have animals entered in the show are eligible for this contest. Any age division may be deleted or combined with another depending upon number of total entries. You must show in your age group (you cannot “move up” in any age group)

SHOWMANSHIP CONTEST

49. Showmanship is open to all Columbia County 4-H and FFA Members, and FGF registered Livestock Exhibitors.
50. Cloverbuds can participate in showmanship non-competitively to foster skills. They may receive feedback from judges and will not compete for awards.

POULTRY CONTESTS

51. Contests are available all Columbia County 4-H and FFA Members, and FGF registered Livestock Exhibitors.
52. All contest registration information will be published through official Florida Gateway Fair communications prior to the event.
53. Ribbons will be presented at the conclusion of contest judging.
54. Cloverbuds can participate in contests non-competitively to foster skills if there is an age division available for them to register in. They may receive feedback from judges and will not compete for awards.

JUDGES AND JUDGING

55. Show judging will be based on breed characteristics, condition, and overall quality as determined by the judge. The decision of the judges shall be final.
56. Showmanship will be judged on the exhibitor's ability to display their animals and themselves.
57. Any exhibitor or parent who interferes with the judging will be promptly excluded from competition; if an incident occurs after judging, the premiums awarded will be withheld.

PREMIUMS AND AWARDS

58. All show ribbons will be presented at the conclusion of judging.

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59. Cloverbuds will not compete for awards or premiums for contests. They will receive participation ribbons for each entry.
60. Premiums for the Show will be paid based on the modified Danish Judging System. Rabbit entries will receive premiums only; no overall show awards will be presented.
 - Class Champion = \$8.00
 - Reserve Class Champion = \$7.00
 - Blue Ribbon = \$6.00
 - Red Ribbon = \$4.00
 - White Ribbon = \$3.00
61. Premiums for 4-H entries will be paid based on the modified Danish Judging System.
 - Best in Show = \$8.00
 - Best in Class = \$8.00
 - Blue Ribbon = \$3.00
62. Premiums for **paid** poultry contests, such as Omelet Cooking and Egg Decorating, will be paid based on the modified Danish Judging System.
 - Blue = \$50.00
 - Red = \$25.00
 - White = \$15.00
63. Premiums will be paid as soon as possible after the close of the fair and mailed to the exhibitor at the address provided on the entry form. Any change in an exhibitor's address should be promptly reported to the Florida Gateway Fair Livestock Committee at 164 SW Mary Ethel Lane, Lake City, Florida 32025.
64. Awards will be distributed as follows:
 - 4-H Laying Hen Project Awards:**
 - a. Florida Gateway Fair Champion Laying Hen Project
 - b. Florida Gateway Fair Reserve Champion Laying Hen Project
 - Poultry Show Awards:**
 - c. Florida Gateway Fair Grand Champion Overall
 - d. Florida Gateway Fair Reserve Grand Champion Overall
 - e. Florida Gateway Fair Third Overall
 - Showmanship Awards:**
 - f. Florida Gateway Fair Champion Junior Showmanship
 - g. Florida Gateway Fair 2nd Place Junior Showmanship
 - h. Florida Gateway Fair 3rd Place Junior Showmanship
 - i. Florida Gateway Fair Champion Intermediate Showmanship
 - j. Florida Gateway Fair 2nd Place Intermediate Showmanship
 - k. Florida Gateway Fair 3rd Place Intermediate Showmanship
 - l. Florida Gateway Fair Champion Senior Showmanship
 - m. Florida Gateway Fair 2nd Place Senior Showmanship
 - n. Florida Gateway Fair 3rd Place Senior Showmanship

POULTRY CONTESTS



All Youth Poultry Contests held at the Florida Gateway Fairgrounds are officially managed and governed by the Columbia County 4-H Program.

Contests are open to Columbia County 4-H members, FFA members, and Florida Gateway Fairgrounds (FGF) registered livestock exhibitors, as specified under each contest category.

All contest pre-registrations are hosted online via Showman for ease of access. Exhibitors showing poultry can register their birds and contests simultaneously. Youth who are not bringing livestock can still create a free Showman account to enter open contests without needing animal registrations or 4-H Online logins.

Age Divisions will be classified by the 4-H program as follows:

- Cloverbud: Ages 5-7 (**NOTE:** 4-year-old FGF participants will fall into this age division)
- Junior: Ages 8-10
- Intermediate: Ages 11-13
- Senior: Ages 14-18

Pre-registration for all contests is required online by 4:00 PM on October 26th, 2026

Awards: 1st through 3rd place ribbons plus a rosette for Best Overall (where applicable).

POULTRY CONTESTS



Open Youth Contests

(Open to all Columbia County 4-H and FFA members, and FGF Exhibitors)

Egg Decorating Contest - \$5

- Two eggs per participant. Eggs will be provided at the contest.
- Youth ages 4-7 may have an adult partner.
- Contestants will have 45 minutes to decorate their eggs before the judges in a live setting.
- Any artistic medium provided may be used to decorate or color your eggs. Use your imagination and impress the judges using a choice of supplies provided at the contest.
- Entries must not include any content that is defamatory, obscene, lewd, or inappropriate.
- Entries will be judged on impression/artistic effect, originality/concept/subject matter, quality of construction, use of color, and use of material.

Omelet Cooking Contest - \$10

- Florida Gateway Fair will provide two eggs per contestant and the use of a single burner stove.
- Open to Junior: Ages 8-10, Intermediate: Ages 11-13, and Senior: Ages 14-18
- Contestants will have 30 minutes to prepare their omelets before the judges in a live setting.
- Ingredients must be prepped on site.
- The Contestants will provide their own omelet pan, mixing bowls, utensils, and other ingredients.
- Other ingredients must meet food safety standards and coolers will be checked to maintain that standard has been kept with temperatures (40 degrees and lower).
- Coolers will be checked at registration for a temperature of 40 degrees and lower.
- Omelets will be judged on nutritional quality, food safety practices, ease of preparation, taste appeal, appearance.

Poultry Poster Contest

- Posters must be educational and appropriate for division level.
- Limited to one poster per youth.
- Poster must not exceed 14" x 22".
- The focus of the poster must be poultry.
- Entries must be original for the current year and must be created by the contestant entering the exhibit.
- The back of the poster should include Name, Age, and Division.
- For the Intermediate and Senior Division, citations for sources must be included somewhere on the poster.

Egg Quality Contest

- Contestants must have six eggs in a carton, and all eggs must be from the same breed of chicken.
- Eggs must be as identical to each other in both size and color as possible.
- All eggs must be clean, with no discolorations or stains.
- Calcium deposits, irregularly shaped eggs, ridges, rough areas, or thin spots are not acceptable.
- Entries must be original for the current year and must be created by the contestant entering the exhibit.
- Cracked or broken shells will not be accepted for judging.
- Eggs must originate from the exhibitor's personal flock of chickens.
- Judging will be based on the USDA Exterior Quality Factors. Eggs will be judged on uniformity of size, shape, and color. Eggs must be brought in a carton.

POULTRY CONTESTS



Poultry Exhibitor Youth Contests

(Open to all Columbia County 4-H and FFA members, and FGF Poultry Exhibitors)

Chicken Costume Contest

- Chicken must be on exhibit at the Florida Gateway Fair.
- Youth are welcome to dress in costume as well.
- Costumes are judged by a panel of three judges.
- Categories for judging:
 - Creativity
 - Originality
 - Effort
 - Presentation

Poultry Photo Contest

- Photo must be original for the current year and of the poultry they have on exhibit at the Florida Gateway Fair.
- Photo must be appropriate for age and division.
- Photo must be 5x7 and framed.
- Photo must be taken by the exhibitor.
- Photo cannot be photoshopped in any way.
- Photo must fit into one of six categories.
 - Chicks
 - Chickens in a natural setting
 - Funny
 - Best Dressed
 - Hens
 - Roosters

Chicken Run Contest

- Chicken must be on exhibit at the Florida Gateway Fair.
- Youth will stand on one end of the run, with their chicken positioned on the other.
- The first chicken to reach its owner wins.
- We will have heats for the races in each age division, then have all winners race at the end for overall winner