



2025 Mississippi State Fair and 2026 Dixie National Junior Round-Up Special Contests

Premier Exhibitor, Steer Ultrasound, and Legislative Livestock Showdown

Reminders and Important Dates

Reminders

The rules in the current year's Mississippi State Fair or Dixie National Junior Round-Up Premium book supersede any rules published previously in a Mississippi State Fair or Dixie National Junior Round-Up Premium book or in this publication. [New rules and regulations passed by the Mississippi Livestock Council Show directors will be in brackets throughout this book.]

An official show veterinarian from the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine (MSU-CVM) will be on site during the junior livestock shows.

General Show and Animal Health Reminders

- Health certificate from a veterinarian is required to get on fairgrounds
- 60-day health record forms are uploaded in MSU livestock show check-in app used for checking in all livestock

Important Dates

Ownership of animal – Friday, August 29, 2025

- Ownership for both Mississippi State Fair/Dixie National
 - Market Steers, Market Lambs, Market Goats, Market Hair Sheep
- Ownership for Mississippi State Fair
 - Beef Breeding Animals, Commercial and Dairy Breeding Females, Commercial Beef Heifers, Market Hogs, Commercial Meat Goat Does, Wether Dams, Commercial and Registered Dairy Goats, Breeding Hair Sheep, Registered Breeding Boer Does

Entries must be submitted to county Extension office by Friday, August 29, 2025.

Classification/DNA Hair Collection Week,
September 8–10, 2025

- Monday, September 8: Hattiesburg – 8 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, September 9: Raymond – 8 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 10: Greenwood – 8 a.m.–10:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, September 10: Oxford – 2 p.m.–6 p.m.

Mississippi State Fair, Jackson – October 2–12, 2025

Ownership of animal – Monday, December 1, 2025

- Ownership for Dixie National Junior Round-Up
 - Beef Breeding Animals, Commercial and Dairy Breeding Females, Market Hogs, Mississippi Bred Barrows, Commercial and Registered Dairy Goats, Commercial Beef Heifers, Wether Dams, Commercial Gilts, Commercial Meat Goat Does, Breeding Hair Sheep, Registered Breeding Boer Does

Entries must be submitted to county Extension office by Monday, December 1, 2025.

Classification/DNA Hair Collection Week, December 8–11, 2025

- Monday, December 8: Hattiesburg – 8 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 9: Raymond – 8 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 10: Greenwood – 8 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
- Thursday, December 11: Oxford – 8 a.m.–12 p.m.

District Livestock Shows

- NW District Show, Batesville – January 15–17, 2026
- NE District Show, Verona – January 22–24, 2026
- SE District Show, Hattiesburg – January 21–24, 2026
- SW District Show, Jackson – January 20–23/Feb. 2, 2026
- Delta District Show, Greenwood – January 19–20, 2026

Dixie National Junior Round-Up, February 2–12, 2026

Premier Exhibitor Program

Written Exam, Skill-a-thon, and Interview Phases (dates/times/location subject to change)

- Meat Goat – Monday, February 2, 2026, from 1–3 p.m. – Trade Mart Building, Meeting Room A
- Lamb – Tuesday, February 3, 2026, from 12–2 p.m. – Trade Mart Building, Meeting Room A
- Dairy – Wednesday, February 4, 2026, from 2–4 p.m. – Trade Mart Building, Meeting Room A
- Swine – Thursday, February 5, 2026, from 2–4 p.m. – Trade Mart Building, Meeting Room A
- Beef – Sunday, February 8, 2026, from 8–11 a.m. – Trade Mart Building, Meeting Room A
- Dairy Goat – Monday, February 9, 2026, from 3–5 p.m. – Trade Mart Building, Meeting Room A

Rules and Regulations

- Entries for all Premier Exhibitor Contests must be postmarked by the Extension Animal and Dairy Sciences Office (send to Dean Jousan, Box 9815, Mississippi State, MS 39762) by December 2, 2025.
- Competition in this program is for senior level exhibitors only (14–18 years of age).
- The Premier Exhibitor Program is optional for exhibitors.
- The program is available for Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Lamb, Swine, Market Goat, and Dairy Goat exhibitors.
- An exhibitor must qualify an animal for the Dixie National Junior Round-Up and exhibit that animal at the Dixie National Junior Round-Up to be eligible for the Premier Exhibitor Program.
- Exhibitors may enter in more than one species. However, a separate entry will be required for each species. Entries should reflect project work for only the past three years and be species specific.
- Exhibitors are permitted to show any animal they own that has been properly entered in the Dixie National Junior Round-Up to earn points toward the premier exhibitor contest in showmanship for that species. The animal exhibited in the regular show to compete for animal quality points based on its placing in its class must be the same animal nominated on the entry form. **The animal to be shown at the Dixie National Junior Round-Up to receive points for its class placing must be declared at check-in for that species.**
- An exhibitor may win in only one species per year.

- An exhibitor may win in each species only once.
- To allow enough time to complete the contest, all participants must check in within the first hour of the contest. If conflicts exist with other shows, it is the participant’s responsibility to inform the leaders of the premier exhibitor contest of such issues to work out a way to complete the contest within the designated contest times. If an exhibitor has a conflict with a contest and a livestock show, exhibitors are required to make prior arrangements with the contest superintendent at least 48 hours prior to the contest.
- The guidelines for placing will be as follows:

Criteria	%	Points
Entry Form	5%	50
Written Exam	20%	200
Showmanship	20%	200
Animal Quality	10%	100
Skill-a-thon	30%	300
Interview	15%	150
Total	100%	1000

- In showmanship, exhibitors will receive points for entering the class and for their ranking in the showmanship class.
- The animal nominated by the exhibitor will receive points on its ranking in its individual class.
- The Skill-a-thon phase will consist of different stations relating to the species they are exhibiting. This will allow exhibitors to demonstrate their knowledge of the species they are showing.
- The Dixie National Sale of Champions promotion committee will present a scholarship to the Premier Exhibitor from each show (Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Sheep, Swine, Meat Goat, and Dairy Goat).
- In the event of a tie between competitors, it will be broken based on the higher score of the Skill-a-thon contest. If a tie still exists, it will be broken based on the written exam score followed by the interview score.
- The winner of the Dairy Premier Exhibitor Contest will be eligible to attend the National 4-H Dairy Conference in Madison, Wisconsin, provided that the 4-H’er has not been on this trip. If the winner of the Dairy Premier Exhibitor Contest has received this trip, the next highest placing exhibitor who has not attended the National 4-H Dairy Conference will receive the trip.

Ultrasound Steer Evaluation Contest

General Rules and Regulations

The ultrasound steer evaluation contest is a unique educational opportunity designed to provide participants with carcass performance information on the live animal. Real-time carcass ultrasound offers a non-invasive method for estimating economically important carcass traits in the live animal. This technology tool is currently being utilized in the beef industry to make selection decisions for seed stock, to develop ultrasound-based carcass EPDs, and to sort cattle in the feedlot into more uniform groups for optimum carcass performance.

- Participation is on a voluntary basis. Only Market Steers weighing a minimum of 1,000 pounds are eligible to compete. All steers will compete in a single class regardless of weight or breed classification. All steers that have met the qualifications to show at the Dixie National Junior Round-Up are entered in the Ultrasound Steer Evaluation Contest. Owners who do not slick shear their steers can participate in the Ultrasound Steer Evaluation Contest.
- Ultrasound measurements and weights will be taken immediately following the steer's class in the show. The procedure to obtain measurements will use any necessary oil or lubricant needed. A minimal amount of hair (at least 2 blade widths from the 10th to the 13th rib) will be clipped on the left side of the steer during the measurement process. It will be the exhibitor's responsibility to remove any residue from the hair after processing, as desired.
- Measurements will be taken to determine ribeye area, back fat, and intramuscular fat. These measurements will then be used to determine quality grade and yield grade on each animal. Placing is based upon a formula used within the industry, which calculates percent retail cuts. Only steers grading low choice or higher and yield grade 3 or less will be eligible for premiums or awards.

Legislative Livestock Showdown

Mississippi Extension agents and agricultural education teachers are asked to choose their best livestock showman in their county and work with them to invite their area

senators and representatives to the **2026 Dixie National Junior Round-Up Legislative Livestock Showdown on Monday, February 6, 2026**, during the Dixie National Junior Round-Up Livestock Show. The Junior Showman will invite their area legislators to come to the fairgrounds to learn how to show beef cattle in a special Legislative Showmanship class. After about 30 minutes of instruction, the 4-H/FFA member-coach will escort their legislator into the show ring for the showmanship class, with the legislator exhibiting the beef animal. Judges will place the show teams based on their showmanship ability. Ribbons (no premiums) will be awarded and the first-place winner in the class will receive a special award, along with their 4-H/FFA member-coach.

Rules and Guidelines

- Extension agents and agricultural education teachers need to communicate with one another to have their area Legislator contacted about the event and assign a 4-H/FFA member to coach the legislator. Only one 4-H/FFA member-coach may work with one legislator.
- Legislators may show only beef cattle.
- A special registration folder will be available in the Livestock Show office at the beginning of the DNJR for agents/advisors to register the 4-H/FFA member-coach and their legislative showman. Registration will be open until Monday, February 9, at 3 p.m.
- Legislators showing beef cattle will report to the announcer's stand in the Mississippi Coliseum around 6 p.m. on Monday, February 9, to meet their 4-H/FFA member-coach. They will then go to the holding area or barns to prepare for the showmanship class. The special class will be worked into the show schedule in the coliseum so that it will not disrupt the show that is underway. We do not want a 4-H/FFA member-coach to miss their class or drive due to the Legislative Showdown.
- Please choose a 4-H/FFA member-coach who will communicate, show patience, and provide thorough instruction with their legislator-trainee. This is a public relations effort to showcase the Mississippi 4-H/FFA Junior Livestock Program. The 4-H/FFA member-coach is always to remain with their legislator in the show ring. Please make sure they get a photo made together for publicity purposes (preferably at the backdrop curtain).

Publication 3814-8 (POD-09-25)

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Produced by Agricultural Communications.

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Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director