

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Extension and Outreach

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To: 4-H Livestock Exhibitors
From: Iowa State University Extension & Outreach 4-H Youth
Re: Livestock Identification Deadlines and County Weigh-ins

On behalf of the Iowa 4-H Program and considering the current and ongoing situation regarding the COVID-19 virus, adjustments are being made to this year's livestock identification process and county weigh-ins. We have been in contact with our partners; FFA, State Fair, and Iowa Association of Fairs to make sure we are all on the same page.

- As of today, all **county weigh-ins for meat goats, sheep and/or swine are to be cancelled**. This is for the health and safety of our 4-H families and staff. Unfortunately, that means fairs that conduct rate of gain contests will not be able to do so for the 2020 fair season. For those counties who've already had their weigh-in this spring, those contests could still occur.
- **The May 15 livestock ID deadline will be moved back to June 1**. This applies to ALL livestock that are usually identified by May 15 including: Breeding Beef, Dairy Cattle, Dairy Goat, Dog, Horse, Meat Goat, Poultry, Sheep and Swine. Rabbits will remain at the July 1 deadline.
- Tagging Procedures – we are asking county extension offices to work with families to obtain official 4-H ear tags, or if county staff are comfortable could set up on-farm tagging. We are not requiring counties to do that latter, it's just another option. Any process that is utilized should keep in mind good biosecurity practices and measures for people and animals. **Additionally, for identification purposes, we are asking all tagged animals be documented by photo that is uploaded to 4-H Online. Process will be outlined in the FAQs mentioned below.**
- Retinal Imaging – since 4-H sheep and meat goats are required to have retinal images collected for State Fair eligibility, we are hopeful that adding two weeks to the ID deadline will allow staff to collect those images, perhaps on the farm or if circumstances improve and social distancing is less of a concern, those animals could come to a central site for image collection.

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A Frequently Asked Questions document is being developed and will be posted on the 4-H Livestock website, <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/livestock>, as soon as possible. An email will also be sent to all 4-H families currently enrolled in a livestock project via 4-H Online with these changes.

We will continue to monitor and re-evaluate the situation and make additional adjustments as needed. We appreciate your understanding and want you to know we have our 4-H staff, families and youth members' absolute best interest at heart. We understand these are unprecedented times and will do everything we can to ensure youth can exhibit their livestock projects this summer.

Any questions or further information can be directed to Mike Anderson, State 4-H Livestock Specialist, at mikeande@iastate.edu.