



## **2026 Youth Cattle Working Contest Rules**

### **Section I: Overview**

The West Virginia Cattlemen's Association Youth Cattle Working Contest is a team event. Each team will consist of three participants. Teams will be required to process three head of feeder cattle through a holding pen into a chute and properly catch each animal's neck in a head gate. Each team will be responsible for the preparation and administration of various animal health products which will include at least three of the following:

- a. Growth implant
- b. Vaccines
  1. 7-way clostridial
  2. Respiratory complex (intranasal or subcutaneous)
- c. Ear tags (visual, EID, and/or medicated fly tags)
- d. Dewormer (pour-on, injectable or drench)
- e. Other products or procedures as deemed appropriate

Prior to processing cattle, each team will be given the products to be administered along with a Cattle Processing Plan (CPP) form. Each team will then need to complete the CPP which includes procedures to be completed, animal health products to be used, route and location of administration, dosage, and pre-slaughter withdrawal time. Teams will have 30 minutes to complete the CPP. ***All CPPs will be scored (and corrected if needed) and returned to each team as their turn arrives to compete at the chute.***

Teams will be sequestered away from the working chute until their turn to compete. Only teams who have completed their three head will be allowed to watch other teams compete. Coaches are not allowed to communicate with their teams after the start of the contest.

Please familiarize yourself with the CPP. All products and procedures (even those that do not involve administering a product) should be listed on the CPP.

Use of sorting sticks, flags, paddles, and hot shots will be prohibited during the contest.

First, second, and third place teams will receive awards. Each member of each of the first three teams will receive things like vaccine coolers, pistol grip repeater syringes, or similar items used in processing cattle.

### **Section II: Participants**

- A. Each team will consist of three members.
- B. Participants must be registered West Virginia 4-H or FFA members who are at least 14 years of age by September 30, 2025 and must not have had their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday before January 1,



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- C. Team members and their coaches must be Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Certified to compete. BQA certification must be completed/verified and submitted no later than March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026. BQA Certification can be completed online at the National BQA website <https://bqa.beeflearningcenter.org/> or via an instructor-led training by a BQA Certified Instructor. Contestants that do not have a current BQA certification are ineligible to compete.
  
- D. All contestants must have prior experience and have practiced on live cattle prior to competing. Additionally, all contestants must have experience in using syringes, reconstituting MLV products, and safely utilizing the various tools and equipment required for handling and management procedures. **Contest officials have the discretion to intervene when deemed necessary.**
- E. **Individual contestants may only compete on ONE team.** During the entry process, coaches do not have to assign contestants to teams. Contestant information will be entered and teams designated at contest check-in. Please enter all contestants that you wish to be eligible to participate on a team.
- F. Teams must be entered on an official entry form and provide a completed permission form, which will include each team member's parent's signature indicating their permission for their child to participate.
- G. Teams that are operating in an unsafe manner (either to humans or the cattle) will be immediately disqualified.

### **Section III: Scoring**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Possible Score (Points)</b>
Cattle Processing Plan	20
Processing Procedures	50
Handling	10
Safety	10
Time	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

- The correct procedure for administering each product will be explained to contestants prior to processing cattle.
- Teams will be evaluated on the way they handle cattle and use the handling equipment.
- Safety of the competitors and the cattle will be emphasized.
- Cattle working time will be recorded. After the CPP is approved and contestants have been given the ok to begin, timing will start. Time ends when the last animal's fourth leg/foot exits



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the headgate.

- A maximum score of 100 is possible. Ties will be broken by working time (shortest time wins). If a tie still exists, scores for the following sections will be used to break the tie in the order they appear: CPP, Handling, Safety, Clostridial Vaccine, Respiratory Vaccine, Tags, Deworming and Implants.

## **Appendix I: Guidelines for Scoring Youth Cattle Working Contest**

### **Section I: The Cattle Processing Plan (CPP)**

The CPP provides information about the health products used, where and how they are administered and the procedures completed. This document is a permanent health record for the cattle. If the cattle are sold, this document would accompany the cattle, so every cell should be completed. Do not leave information blank.

The following information is requested in the CPP and guidelines for correctly completing the CPP are as follows:

- **Date:** Contest date
- **Cattle Information:** Weight and sex (Weight will be provided.)
- **Product/Procedure:** Complete name of product as it appears on the label. Subtract 1 point if incorrect.
- **Serial/Lot #:** Serial number or lot number (if serial number is not present) for all items associated with any single product should be listed. Some products may have multiple components with different serial or lot numbers. Each one is to be listed. Missing or incorrect information will result in a ½ point deduction per product line.
- **Expiration Date of Product:** As it appears on label. In the case of insecticide ear tags, “discard after opening” or “store appropriately” should be noted. If a procedure or product does not contain an expiration date, please list “none given”. Missing or incorrect information will result in ½ point deduction per product line.
- **Content:** Content is the diseases for which the product is being given to prevent or treat. If documenting a procedure, use the content column to list the type of sample being collected or N/A if more appropriate. Missing or incorrect content will result in ½ point deduction per product line.
- **Product Type:** MLV, Combo, Killed – the product type should be listed as one of the three choices or N/A if it is a procedure or a product that does not fit one of those three categories. ½ point deduction per product line will be assessed for missing or incorrect information.



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- **Route of Administration:** Possible responses are Subcutaneous (SQ), Intramuscular (IM), Topical (T), Oral (O), Intradermal (ID), Intranasal (IN) and Ear Tag (ET). Proper administration is found on the label. When the choice of SQ or IM is given, the proper response is always SQ. Subtract 1 point if incorrect.
- **Location of Administration:** Location is to be noted on the animal illustrations which appear on page one the CPP by writing the number of the product on the designated space. Injectable products can be given only in the neck. Note that there is a right side and a left side depiction provided. Do not give more than one injectable product in the same location. Subtract 1 point if incorrect. For pour-on dewormers, draw a line with a beginning and ending point to indicate the entire region of the top line where the product is to be poured. Subtract 1/2 point if incompletely depicted.
- **Dose:** Dosing information is found on the product label. Dose provided needs to be practical based upon the instrument used to measure the dose. In other words, if a dewormer is calculated to be given at the rate of 26.4 ml, and the dosing instrument is scaled in multiples of 5 ml, then the dose given should be listed as 30 ml. You can't accurately measure the 26.4 ml dose with the instrument used, and under dosing of dewormer is a bad technique, so you would round up. Subtract 1 point if the dosage is incorrect.  
  
**Note:** *Weight of the cattle is to be used when calculating dosage(s) and will be provided by the Contest Administrators prior to completion of the Cattle Processing Plan. Dosing implements will be made available with the product during the completion of the processing plan.*  
Insecticide impregnated ear tags are often applied based on the level of protection desired. Contest officials will note whether "Adequate" or "Optimum" control is desired, and contestants should consider that prior to calculating the proper dosage for the processing map. Thus, the proper way to indicate this dose is, for example, "2 - (1 in each ear)". Subtract 1/2 point if this information is not provided in the plan.
- **Withdrawal Period:** Recorded in days and found on the product label. If there is no withdrawal required, then record a '0' in the space for that product. For insecticide ear tags, it may be stated that they are to be removed before slaughter. If so, contestants should indicate that on CPP. Subtract 1 point if the cell is left blank, or information provided is incorrect. Subtract 1/2 point if statement about ear tag removal is not included.
- **Withdrawal Date:** Calculated based on date of application and withdrawal period in days.

## Section II: Processing Procedures

The Judges Score Sheet provides specific information about each product. The judge's job is to evaluate proper use of the instrument, proper handling of the product, safe and effective delivery of the product and to determine if the product is given according to the CPP. The judge closely observes these factors



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for each calf worked by the team. Ten (10) points are available for each product. Specific guidelines for scoring each type of product are below.

- **Implants:** All implant products are to be given on the back of the ear, under the skin, with the implant deposited out on the ear and not in the softer tissue at the base of the ear. After correct administration, it should be easily palpated by gently squeezing the site between thumb and finger. If the implant product consists of multiple individual pellets, these should be deposited in a line as they appear in the product cartridge rather than in a cluster.

Implants may be applied to either ear; however, they must be administered before any insecticide tag is applied, if applicable. However, the "rib" of the ear where the ear tag is applied and where the implant is applied should differ. Points will be deducted if the ear tag button and the implant are in contact with each other. The needle of the implant gun should be disinfected after each calf, using a disinfectant dispenser, sponge wipe, or other technique. However, immersing the needle in disinfectants is incorrect as this may lead to dissolving implant pellets.

Ten (10) points would be awarded to a team that completes all these implant techniques correctly the first attempt. Each of the following will result in a deduction of two (2) points:

- implant deposited in a cluster
- needle run through the ear and implant falling to the ground
- implant not palpable on the back of the ear in a SQ location

Each of the following will result in a deduction of one (1) point:

- implant is in contact with button of ear tag
- failure to disinfect implant gun between calves

Additional point deductions are at the discretion of the judge.

- **Dewormer:** There are different methods of administering dewormers such as oral, injectable and topical. Given that both oral and topical administration devices do not allow for precise dosage, doses provided should be rounded up to the next higher amount measured with the administration device.

Orally administered products (liquid or paste) must be given in such a fashion that the calf does not spit it out. Proper technique involves getting the applicator over the top of the tongue before dispensing the product. Contestants should do this by entering the side of the mouth with the applicator and gently forcing it between the molars and over the tongue. Proper use of the applicator involves setting it to the proper dose based on weight of the cattle and also on the dose described on the label. The applicator needs to be positioned in such a way that product flows into the gun when it is supposed to "reload". Failure to do this means an incomplete dose is brought into the applicator.



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Topically applied products or pour-ons are normally applied in a line down the back of the animal from withers to tailhead. Pouring these products in a pool in a single spot is bad technique, resulting in improper absorption of the product. These products often have a safe handling warning on the label and should not be handled with bare hands. All injections should be completed prior to application of topical dewormer/insecticide.

Contestants should be familiar with various types of applicators including gun-type devices with adjustable dosing capability as well as direct applicator bottles.

Ten (10) points would be awarded to a team that completes all these techniques correctly the first attempt. Each of the following will result in a deduction of two (2) points:

- improperly measuring the dose on a squeeze-bottle applicator
- calf spitting out a dose of orally-administered product
- failure to re-administer product if the calf spits it back out
- handling products labeled as hazardous without gloves

Each of the following will result in a deduction of one (1) point:

- failure to apply the topical product from withers to tailhead
- failure to insert the applicator of an orally-administered product sufficiently far into the mouth
- failing to wait for teammates to complete injections before applying a topical product

Judges should point out errors that pose a safety risk (i.e. not wearing gloves) or that result in improper dose being applied (gun not set properly). If team fails to adjust their technique, an additional point will be deducted, and they will not be allowed to proceed without fixing the error. Additional point deductions are at the discretion of the judge.

- ***Vaccination/Injections:*** All injections should be administered according to BQA Guidelines in the "triangle" of the neck and according to label directions and the approved CPP. If a product allows either IM or SQ administration, SQ should be used.
  - Subcutaneous (SQ) injections must be administered under the skin. Either the one-handed technique (needle goes in at a very steep angle) or two-handed tenting technique are acceptable.
  - Intramuscular (IM) injections should be given in front of the scapula, above the neck vertebrae and at least two inches down from the top of the neck. All IM injections should be given deep enough to be sure they are in the muscle (depth of a 1" needle). Aspiration to be sure that the needle is not in a vessel is required.
  - Intranasal (IN) products require administration in both nostrils. The IN cannula must be replaced after each calf.
  - Vaccine rehydration may be required. Mixing needles will be provided.
  - To reload syringes, one needle should be put in the vaccine bottle and a separate needle used to give the vaccine so that a needle that has been used to give an injection is never put into the vaccine bottle.



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- If a needle is dropped, burred or bent it should be replaced.

Each of the following will result in a deduction of two (2) points:

- each injection given behind the neck, too high, too low, or too far forward (outside of the "triangle")
- each injection given using the wrong method of administration (I.e. IM instead of SQ)
- improper administration of IN product (all product in one nostril, not properly administering in nostril, etc.)
- failure to properly rehydrate and mix vaccine
- failure to change IN cannulas between calves
- needle used to give injection is used to reload syringe

Each of the following will result in a deduction of one (1) point:

- if SQ injections are given too deep so that an IM injection is erroneously given
  - using dirty, burred or bent needles.
  - failure to aspirate prior to giving IM injection Point deductions are at the discretion of the judge. Additional points may be deducted if the judge deems necessary.
- **Ear Tags:** The type of tags, insecticide or identification, will be at the discretion of the contest coordinator and the cattle owner. Tags should be placed according to label directions and in the center of the ear, between the two cartilage ribs in the ear.

Each of the following will result in a deduction of two (2) points:

- failure to use gloves with insecticide ear tags

Each of the following will result in a deduction of one (1) point:

- incorrect tag placement
- missed tag

## Section III: Handling

Scoring handling ability is somewhat subjective. Smooth, quiet, effective and efficient handling is desired; however, there are some common errors that will result in point deductions. Examples of such errors include:

- Missed head
- Failure to use or release squeeze
- Failure to use or remove bar behind calves
- Excessive roughness in moving cattle.
- Failure to use or latch crowd gate.



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Forward movement in the chute is encouraged by walking along chute from front to back, quick strokes along the top line from front to back or by gently twisting a tail. When using one of the methods requiring the handler to reach into a chute to encourage cattle movement, it must be from an elevated position where cattle may pass under safely and the handler's arm is not at risk of injury. If done correctly, it should not result in safety deductions.

Cattle turning around in the chute or alley will not result in point deductions if beyond the control of the handlers. The handler's response to the situation is a subjective way to assess the team's handling ability.

**Note:** *Contest Administrators may stop time to assist with safely getting cattle turned around. Time will begin again once the animal is turned around and/or returned to the tub/box to be reloaded in the chute.*

Each of the following will result in a deduction of two (2) points:

- rough handling
- excessive noise (yelling)

Each of the following will result in a deduction of one (1) point:

- more than one attempt to load alley
- missed head catch
- failure to use squeeze before processing
- failure to release squeeze before releasing animal

Additional points may be deducted if the judge deems necessary.

## **Section IV: Safety**

Safety of handlers and animals is of utmost importance. Any action that appears to put the handlers or cattle at risk will result in point deductions.

Each of the following will result in a deduction of two (2) points:

- any action that puts handlers/team at risk
- handler's head too close to the calf's head during tagging or implanting
- attempting to administer injections in front of the head catch (unless chute is equipped with neck extender)

Each of the following will result in a deduction of one (1) point:

- dropping tail gate on cattle

Additional points may be deducted if the judge deems necessary.



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**Section V: Time**

Teams will have 20 minutes to complete the processing of their draft of cattle and will be automatically disqualified if they exceed the time limit. Target time is less than 10 minutes. One (1) point will be deducted for each 30 seconds accrued past 10 minutes. Contest officials reserve the right to stop time to address animal/human safety concerns. Time will resume when issue is resolved.