2013-2014 TEXAS 4-H AND FFA STEER VALIDATION PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Officials of major livestock shows in Texas are participating in a program supported by Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Education Agency, Department of Agricultural Education, whereby all 4-H and FFA steers exhibited at their shows will be required to be identified appropriately with an official Texas Steer Visual/Electronic Identification (EID) Tag, tattoo, nose print and DNA Assay. A special tag set has been designed specifically for the Texas 4-H/FFA Steer Validation Program.

INSTRUCTIONS

1) A 4-H and FFA County Steer Validation Committee shall be organized in each county where steers are being fed by members of either organization for exhibit at the major livestock shows that require steers to be validated. The committee shall be composed of County Extension Agents-Agriculture and/or 4-H and Agricultural Science Teachers in the county.

If there is not a County Steer Validation Committee, the County Extension Agent is responsible for calling the first meeting to organize one. All County Extension Agents-Agriculture and/or 4-H and all Agricultural Science Teachers in the county shall be invited to this meeting. A chairman shall be selected from this group, and the number and composition of the committee will be determined at this meeting. The validation chairman MUST be present at the validation. It may be as large as the local agents and teachers deem practical; however, there may not be fewer than three members on this committee. There may be many counties wherein this committee will be all County Extension Agents and all Agricultural Science Teachers.

In counties where there are fewer than three people eligible to serve on this committee, a third member shall be selected locally. He/she must have an interest in the program and be mutually acceptable to the County Extension Agents and Agricultural Science Teachers.

The committee will make arrangements for special ear tagging tool, tattoo plier, nose print cards, ink pads, and any other equipment necessary for carrying out this program. The County Steer Validation Committee is responsible for any locally incurred expenses resulting from the administration of the Texas 4-H and FFA Steer Validation Program.

The committee will meet as a group to conduct the validation of all 4-H/FFA steers in the county.

2) Participating shows are requiring all steers to be ear tagged, tattooed, nose printed and hair samples collected for the DNA Assay between June 1 and June 30 for 2013 fall shows and 2014 spring shows. All steers must be validated at a time, place, and date determined by the County Validation Committee between June 1 and June 30. If exhibitors have conflicts which interfere with the scheduled validation day(s), alternative arrangements must be made prior to the validation in that county.
3) The Texas 4-H and FFA Steer Validation Form and the “2012-2013 Texas 4-H/FFA Livestock Program Ethics Policy” Form will be completed at the time the steer is tagged, tattooed, nose printed, and hair samples collected for the DNA Assay. The Steer Validation Committee Chairman shall double check all validation forms before submitting them to the State Coordinator. The Texas Steer Validation Form should list the county name only. Do not list FFA Chapter or 4-H Club names. Be sure to check these items:

a) make sure all possible exhibitors’ signatures have been included,
b) all information requested on the form is completed, and
c) nose print(s) and hair envelopes should be attached with a binder clip to each exhibitor’s validation form (Do Not Staple).

The “2013-2014 Texas 4-H/FFA Livestock Program Ethics Policy” Form has been included to ensure all exhibitors and parents/guardians are aware of the practices or procedures that are unacceptable and defined as being deceptive, fraudulent, unethical, and inhumane in care, fitting, preparation, and showing of all classes of livestock. Consequences of and penalties associated with these practices are noted. ORIGIgINAL forms should be returned to the State Coordinator along with all other Validation Forms.

4) Each steer validated will have hair taken for the DNA Assay identification program. Hair samples will be pulled by a member of the County Steer Validation Committee or local veterinarian at the time of validation and then put in individual DNA Assay envelopes provided for each steer. Hair samples should be placed directly in the hair envelopes and should not be attached to anything. Detailed instructions for collecting hair samples are attached. (Attachments A1 and A2)

5) Each steer will be nose printed and the nose print card will be attached with a binder clip to the hard copy (in numerical order) of the validation form with the nose print facing outward and visible. The nose print must be clear and legible. Make sure they are not smeared or blurred. In the event a nose print is not legible, you will be required to redo and provide new nose prints to my office within a three week period. Consequences may follow if this is not done so. A second nose print for the county files should be retained. The nose print card should also have the name of the exhibitor(s), county name and tattoo number, and the validation visual tag number of the steer reflected. (See example below.) A video demonstrating noseprinting technique is available on-line at http://www.youtube.com/user/AgriLifeVideo

Note: For best results use Carter’s Micropore TM(Blue Colored Ink)
Please refer to the sample validation form attached for proper placement of nose prints on the validation form.

6) The County Steer Validation Committee Chairman will send the original (white copy) and fourth (hard copy) on or before July 1, 2013, via priority/certified mail, return receipt requested to:

Dr. Darrell A. Dromgoole  
Associate Director - County Programs  
600 John Kimbrough Blvd., Suite 509  
7101 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843-7101  
(979)845-7896

The second copy (yellow) will be retained by the County Steer Validation Committee Chairman and the third copy (pink) will be retained by the supervising Agricultural Science Teacher or County Extension Agent.

NOTE: All hair samples collected for the DNA Assay must be attached to the validation form as shown on the example attachment with a binder/paper clip. Do not staple the envelope.

All forms MUST be signed by the exhibitor(s), exhibitor’s parent or exhibitor’s legal guardian, the supervising Agricultural Science Teacher or County Extension Agent, and the County Steer Validation Committee Chairman. If the Committee Chairman is the supervisor of the exhibitor(s) of the steer, another committee member will sign for the chairman.

7) The County Steer Validation Committee Chairman can retain all unused tags; however, he/she must return all unused hair sample envelopes and validation forms on or before July 1 to the State Coordinator. Hair sample envelopes and Validation Forms should be returned free of markings.

8) The County Steer Validation Chairman may retain any unused tags. These tags can be used by the Validation Committee as replacement tags. When an exhibitor requests a replacement tag and tags are available in the county, an Ear Tag Replacement Form (Attachment I) must be completed and submitted to Darrell A. Dromgoole as official notification of replacement tag.

NOTE: Tags cannot be transferred from county to county.

9) A steer may be validated in the name of two or more exhibitors, if they meet the following criteria.

➢ They are siblings, step-siblings, or legally adopted. If siblings have different last names, it must be noted on the validation form.

➢ All listed are bonafide junior exhibitors and eligible to show as junior exhibitors as stated in the stock show rule book.

➢ All permanently reside in the same county.
Any exceptions must be granted by State Steer Validation Coordinator.

When a steer is validated in the name of two or more exhibitors, the validation form should read as follows:

RIGHT: Smith, Johnnie or Smith, Susie or Smith, Joey
RIGHT: Jones, Johnnie or Smith, Susie (step siblings)
WRONG: Smith, Johnnie and Smith, Susie and Smith, Joey

***In the event that a steer is owned by two or more exhibitors, ensure that each exhibitor signs the validation form***

10) Steers will be tattooed and tagged in the left ear. The tattoo number should be inside the lower ⅓ of the ear. Place the tattoo below the last rib of the ear in the middle. It is suggested to tattoo first, then tag the steer. The tag should be placed between the middle ribs of the ear about 3/4 of the length of the ear from the tip. The visual tag number should be facing the back of the steer and the EID button must be inside the ear.

EXAMPLE:

![Diagram of tattoo and tag placement]

11) Each County Steer Validation Chairman will maintain a complete record of all steers validated in the county.

12) Steer exhibitors should be instructed to immediately notify their supervising County Extension Agent or Agricultural Science Teacher when an ear tag is lost or damaged.

13) If the tag is lost or damaged to the extent that it is no longer legible, the supervising County Extension Agent or Agricultural Science Teacher should notify the Chairman of the County Steer Validation Committee within ten (10) days for consideration of replacement.

14) The chairman will arrange for the committee to determine validity of loss. If the committee concurs, they can assign a replacement tag from their county reserve or secure a replacement tag from the State Coordinator. Process for requesting a replacement tag from the State Coordinator is as follows.
1) Submit **written** request to State Coordinator via fax, email, or regular mail from County Steer Validation Chairman.

2) Written request needs to include reason for request, county name, and exhibitor(s) name(s).

3) If tag is damaged and not lost, it should be returned to the State Coordinator along with written request for replacement as indicated on original validation.

4) Within 7 to 10 working days a replacement tag will be sent to the County Steer Validation Committee Chairman.

5) If a confirmation email is not sent back to the Chairman within those 7 to 10 working days then it is the Chairman’s responsibility to contact (979)845-7895 to assure that a tag replacement request was received.

6) If possible, tags should be replaced prior to arrival at a major show; however, if needed, tags may be replaced for $20 at major shows. No new validation tags will be issued at a major show after judging of steers begins without the steer being noseprinted and DNA hair samples taken, regardless of the Extension Agent or Ag Teacher being present.

15) If an exhibitor transfers from one county to another or from one FFA chapter to another, the county in which the steer was validated must contact the State Coordinator in writing of this transfer immediately. This notification must include a written request from exhibitor(s) or parents and indication of county they are transferring to. Copies of this correspondence should be sent to the new County Extension Agent or Agricultural Science Teacher to share with the new County’s Steer Validation Committee. Additionally, the Validation Chairman in the new county should notify the State Coordinator in writing upon receipt of the transferring exhibitor’s information.

16) All exhibitor(s) recognize his/her responsibilities for the feeding and care of the steer(s) throughout the feeding period and authorize the State Validation Coordinator and the County Steer Validation Committee the right to inspect the listed project(s) at any reasonable time during the feeding period. Any exhibitor in violation of the feeding/care rule is subject to disqualification.

17) Do NOT alter tags in **size, shape, form, or color**. If altered, the individual must purchase a replacement tag at the show or be disqualified.