

## PREMIER CARCASS SHOWS

Superintendent for Beef and Lamb Carcass Shows: Dr. Rich Knipe (#309-781-9020)

Superintendent for Swine Carcass Show: Dan Jennings (#815-218-4358)

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### INFORMATION

#### Purpose

The Illinois State Fair offers Premier Carcass Shows in both the Junior and Open Show Divisions to recognize excellence in meat quality and production.

#### Entries

All carcass show entries must be made in the specie-specific Departments for Junior and/or Open Exhibitors, and exhibitors must pay all applicable fees due for that Department.

Entries in all classes shall be made through the online fair entry system at the Illinois State Fair website. Payment must be made via credit card at the time of entry. No other type of entry will be accepted. Assistance with entries is available at the Competitive Events Office, Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. All entries must be submitted online by on or before July 15, 2026. Fees will not be refunded.

#### Deadlines and Check-in

| Species | Pens/Stalls Available                                                                                                                          | Must be in place                | Check-in & Ring Cards                      |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Sheep   | Wednesday, August 12, 8:00 a.m.                                                                                                                | Wednesday, August 12, 8:00 p.m. | Friday, August 14, starting at 9:00 a.m.   |
| Swine   | Wednesday, August 12, 8:00 a.m.                                                                                                                | Thursday, August 13, 8:00 a.m.  | Thursday, August 13, after Jr. Barrow Show |
| Beef    | Sunday, August 16 <sup>th</sup> , 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.<br>All steers must be delivered to Reel's Livestock Center in Congerville, Illinois |                                 |                                            |

#### Show Schedule

Show order is subject to change. Exhibitors should watch and listen for announcements.

##### **Saturday, August 15**

7:30 a.m. – Junior Barrow Show

8:00 a.m. – Junior Market Lamb Show

##### **Sunday, August 16**

8:00 a.m. – Open Market Lamb Show

8:00 a.m. – Open Barrow Show

#### Department Rules

1. Animals entered in the Junior and Open Premier Carcass Shows, with the exception of Beef Cattle, must be shown in the live market animal classes of the Illinois State Fair. As a result, each exhibitor must comply with the Illinois Exhibition Health Requirements; Animal Care, Drug, Testing and Welfare Policies; and General Rules of the Junior and/or Open Livestock Division as previously stated.
2. Exhibitors with Premier Carcass Steer entries must deliver those steers to Reel's Livestock Center, Congerville, Illinois between 10:00 am and 12:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 16, and load them directly on the truck for delivery to the designated packing plant. These steers will be checked in at that time.
3. Junior Show exhibitors are reminded they must adhere to the Junior Show registration and ring card distribution requirements in order to exhibit in the Junior Show. Open Show registration does not fulfill

Junior Show requirements. And, Open Show exhibitors must adhere to Open Show registration and ring card distribution requirements, including using the correct and respective entry forms.

4. Entries in all classes shall be made through the online fair entry system at the Illinois State Fair website. No other type of entry will be accepted.
5. Exhibitors are allowed two (2) entries per class in Junior and Open Premier Carcass Shows. In all cases, the Superintendents reserve the right to limit entry numbers as necessary due to limited space in designated packing plants.
6. All Junior and Open Premier Carcass animals must have been permanently tattooed, weighed locally and nominated in the name of the exhibitor. Beef cattle and swine nominations must be made by designated personnel through the official Illinois 4-H and FFA Market Animal Identification Program. Market lambs must be nominated through submission of the State Fair Lamb Carcass Nomination Form between March 15 and May 15, 2026. No metal or plastic tags will be accepted for identification purposes except for a federal 840 beef tag for steers and swine.
7. For all species, original nomination forms must be submitted by designated personnel to Shelby Carlson, University of Illinois Extension, 180 S. Soangetaha Rd, Suite 108, Galesburg, IL 61401. Exhibitors will be provided a copy of nomination forms and must present those forms to the Superintendent at the time of check-in.
8. Exhibitors are responsible for having the ears of his/her animals clean, knowing where the tattoo is, and knowing it can be read by officials at the time of check-in. Animals with illegible tattoos, unhealed tattoos or tattoos that are inconsistent with nomination papers are ineligible to show.
9. Each exhibitor will be required to complete an information form at the time of check-in for each animal participating in a carcass class. Information requested will include a) the full name and complete address of the exhibitor, b) complete and proper identification information for the entered animal, and c) class(es) in which the animal is entered. All forms must be filled out completely and legibly for payment purposes. Forms will be available during the fair from the Superintendent or the General Livestock Office in the northeast corner of the lower level of the 30 Building.
10. Only animals which meet identified birth and ownership dates, and live weight limits are eligible to participate in carcass classes. Further, only carcasses which meet designated carcass standards will receive premiums. To be eligible to participate and receive premiums and awards, the birth and ownership dates, live weight limits and minimum carcass standards identified under the Species-Specific Rules must be met.
11. All animals entered in carcass classes must be physically sound at check-in and show times to be eligible to participate in live and carcass shows. The Superintendent and his/her assistants, along with the General Livestock Superintendent, shall have full authority regarding show eligibility.
12. All carcass animals, except market lambs, will be transported to the designated packing plant for harvesting and data collection. Carcass data will be mailed to exhibitors following the State Fair.
13. All animals will be sold, except market lambs. Pay weights will be hot carcass weights as determined at the packing plant. All carcasses will be sold on grade and yield basis and priced according to similar carcasses at the point of market with normal charges for transportation, commission, etc. deducted. In the event all or any part of a carcass is condemned by the meat inspector, the payment will be reduced accordingly.

## **Species Specific Rules**

### **Steers**

14. Birth and Ownership: Steers must have been born on or after January 1, 2026, and owned by exhibitor on or before February 1, 2026.
15. Live Weight Limits: Steers must have a minimum live weight of 1,000 pounds.
16. Carcass Standards: Steer carcasses must:
  - a. Grade at least low select.
  - b. Have a yield grade lower than 4.0; and
  - c. Have a hot carcass weight of 1,000 pounds or less.

### **Barrows**

17. Birth and Ownership: Barrows must have been born on or after February 10, 2026, and owned by exhibitor on or before June 1, 2026.
18. Ear Notched and Tattooed: Barrows must have been nominated, ear notched and tattooed before they are thirty-five (35) days old.
19. Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) Certification: Carcass barrow exhibitors must have completed the YQCA Quality Assurance Certification and submit his/her certification number at the time of carcass barrow check-in. Questions may be directed to Dan Jennings at 815-218-4358.
20. Live Weight Limits: Pigs cannot weigh more than the equivalent of 1.0 pound per day of age when tattooed. Barrows weighing less than 220 pounds are ineligible to be shown at the Illinois State Fair.
21. Carcass Standards: Barrow carcasses must:
  - a. Have a minimum hot carcass weight of 170 pounds.
  - b. Have a minimum 10th rib fat thickness of 0.50 in.
  - c. Have a minimum carcass length of 30.0 in.
  - d. Meet the following tenth rib fat depth and loin muscle area requirements based on hot carcass weight:

| <b>Hot Carcass Weight (lbs.)</b>    | <b>170-189</b> | <b>190-209</b> | <b>210-229</b> | <b>230-Over</b> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Tenth Rib Fat (Max. In.)</b>     | 1.00           | 1.15           | 1.30           | 1.45            |
| <b>Loin Eye Area (Min. Sq. In.)</b> | 6.00           | 6.50           | 7.00           | 7.5             |

- e. Meet the minimum meat quality standards for:
  - i. Color score of 2.0 and less than 6.0.
  - ii. Marbling score of less than 6.0; and
  - iii. Firmness/Wetness score of 2 or 3.

*Special Note: Barrow carcasses will be placed on the basis of the pounds of lean pork gained per day on test from a healthy, visually sound pig originating from an acceptable production program. This procedure was recommended by National Pork Producers Council in 1991 (Third Edition).*

### **Market Lambs: (Wethers and Ewes are eligible)**

*Special Note: Market Lambs will be evaluated on the basis of ultrasound analysis at the Fairgrounds. Market Lambs will not be harvested, and exhibitors will retain ownership. However, there may be buyers with trucks available to exhibitors wishing to sell their market lambs privately. A \$15.00 processing fee for Market Lambs in the Premier Carcass Show will be assessed to cover the cost of ultrasound analysis. This fee is assessed upon entry in the class.*

22. Birth and Ownership: Market lambs must have been born on or after January 1, 2026, and owned by exhibitor on or before May 15, 2026.
23. Live Weight Limits: Market Lambs must have a minimum live weight of 85 pounds.
24. Carcass Standards: Market lamb carcasses must:
- Have a minimum hot-carcass weight of 45 pounds.
  - Have at least 0.10 inch of fat cover at the rib eye.
  - Have a quality grade of low choice or better.
  - Have a maximum USDA Yield Grade of 3.99; and
  - Meet the following rib eye area requirements:

| Hot Carcass Weight (lbs.)      | 45-50 | 51-55 | 56-60 | 61-65 | 66-70 | 71-75 | 76-80 | 71-85 | 86-90 | 91+ |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Minimum Rib Eye Area (Sq. In.) | 2.3   | 2.4   | 2.5   | 2.6   | 2.7   | 2.8   | 2.9   | 3.0   | 3.1   | 3.2 |

*Special Note: For market lambs, no percent retail yield adjustment will be made for rib-eyes larger than 4.0 square inches. Further, final placing will be based on adjusted retail yield per day on feed.*

## Premiums Offered

### Junior Carcass

*\* Premiums will be pro-rated according to participation and pay up to 20 places:*

| Species     | Junior     | Land of Lincoln |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| Beef Cattle | \$2,199.00 | \$1,415.00      |
| Sheep       | \$721.00   | \$470.00        |
| Swine       | \$2,470.00 | \$1,190.00      |

### Open Carcass

*\* Premiums will be pro-rated according to participation and pay up to 20 places:*

| Species     | Open       | Land of Lincoln |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| Beef Cattle | \$7,180.00 | \$2,760.00      |
| Sheep       | \$1,057.00 | \$1,025.00      |
| Swine       | \$1,868.00 | \$2,250.00      |

## CLASSES

| Species                | Junior Class<br>Junior Land of Lincoln                 | Open Class<br>Open Land of Lincoln                   |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Steer Premier Carcass  | See Division 0106 of the Junior Beef Cattle Department | See Division 0212 of the Open Beef Cattle Department |
| Lamb Premier Carcass   | See Division 0716 of the Junior Sheep Department       | See Division 0815 of the Open Sheep Department       |
| Barrow Premier Carcass | See Division 0504 of the Junior Swine Department       | See Division 0612 of the Open Sheep Department       |