

# CITRUS COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION 2026 OPEN AND YOUTH HORSE SHOW RULES & REGULATIONS

## Refer to:

Livestock General Rules & Regulations  
Citrus County Fair Livestock Schedule and Livestock Addendum  
IAFE and National Code of Showing Ethics



1. **A. Open Exhibitors** accepted from all Florida counties. The horse must be registered with the Citrus County Fair. Incomplete entry forms will not be accepted. Open entry form and fee (non-refundable) per class per Exhibitor must be in the fair office no later than 5:00 pm the second Friday in December prior to the March Fair. Postmarked or metered mail will not be accepted after this date.

### **Pee Wee In-Hand Trail**

**Ranch Classes**-Boxing, Calf Roping, In-Hand Trail, Ranch Riding, and Riding Trail

**Speed Event Classes**-Barrel Racing, Key Hole, Pole Bending, and Stake Race

**Late registration fee** per Exhibitor will be taken up to the Monday prior to show.

**B. Youth Exhibitor** must be from eight (8) to eighteen (18) years of age as of September 1st prior to the March Fair to participate in the show and must register with the Citrus County Fair.

Youth entry form and fee (non-refundable) per class per Exhibitor must be in the fair office no later than 5:00 pm the second Friday in December prior to the March Fair. Postmarked or metered mail will not be accepted after this date.

**Ranch Classes**-Boxing, Calf Roping, In-Hand Trail, Ranch Riding, and Riding Trail

Ages Jr 8-10 years Intermediate 11-13 years Senior 14-18 years

**Speed Event Classes**-Barrel Racing, Key Hole, Pole Bending, and Stake Race

Ages Jr 8-12 years Senior 13-18 years

**Showmanship** Ages Jr. 8-10 years Intermediate 11-13 years Senior 14-18 years

**C. Exhibitor** must leave their horse at the fairgrounds for the duration of the show as determined by the Livestock Committee and/or the Horse Show Superintendent. This is a day show only. ***Exhibitor and horse will not be allowed to leave the fairgrounds until their area is clean.***

2. **Exhibitors in Open and Youth Classes** may only register two (2) horses combined.

Stallions are not allowed to be shown. Showing uncastrated horses past December 31st of the year of their birth is prohibited.

Horses must be immunized before participating in the show. Vaccines must be administered enough in advance for adequate immunity to be developed. Approximately 30 or more days for most vaccines.

Vaccines: Equine Encephalomyelitis (Eastern, E.E.E., and Western W.E.E.), tetanus, influenza, West Nile, and in some cases, rhinopneumonitis.

**Equine Infectious Anemia (Coggins) test must be negative and current (within the past 12 months) at the time of the show.** Original Coggins papers must be presented with the horse to inspecting personnel before the horse will be allowed to compete. The horse's name and description must be the same as those on the Coggins and entry form.

### 3. **ELIGIBILITY OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS AND HORSES**

Youth Exhibitors must own or lease at least one horse by the registration date and start date for the record book. The Exhibitor must be responsible for the care, feeding, grooming, and training of the horse.

More than one youth may exhibit a single horse. However, the horse may only be shown by a single Exhibitor in each class: Junior 8-10 years, Intermediate 11-13 years, and Senior 14-18 years.

Speed Events classes are: Junior 8-12 years, and Senior 13-18 years.

If a horse is leased, a Lease Agreement must be attached to the entry form.

4. Youth Exhibitors must turn in a completed official record book at check-in.
5. The Livestock Committee and/or Horse Show Superintendent reserves the right to alter or modify any class procedures, obstacles, patterns, or rules for safety concerns, show facility restrictions, or other mitigating circumstances.
6. The Livestock Chairman and/or Horse Superintendent reserves the right to refuse an Exhibitor entry into any class or event if deemed that entry is unsafe for the Exhibitor and/or other Exhibitors or horses. Any activity or situation deemed unsafe will be stopped and may result in disqualification from that class.
7. The P.A. system is used to help the show run smoothly and is only a courtesy. It is the responsibility of the Exhibitor to know when they are required to be in the make-up area or arena. Not hearing or understanding gate calls, etc., is NOT an excuse for missing an order of work, heat, or class.
8. The judge's decision is final and may not be protested.
9. Exhibitors must wear an SEI\* or SEI/ASTM\* approved safety equestrian helmet with fastened chin harness in all classes and all warm-up and make-up areas. Additionally, appropriate footwear and approved helmets must be worn with a harness fastened at all times when mounted. This pertains to the entire show grounds from arrival until departure. Failure to comply may result in disqualification. \*(SEI—Safety Equipment Institute, ASTM—American Society of Testing and Measures.)
10. Exhibitor numbers must be worn on the Exhibitor's back or attached to the saddle pad on both sides. Failure to comply will result in disqualification from said class.
11. The show will be held on the date scheduled, barring a natural catastrophe. The Exhibitor's parent or guardian is responsible for determining if the Exhibitor is able to safely compete. In the event of inclement weather, the Livestock Committee and/or Horse Show Superintendent reserves the right to stop or cancel a class in progress due to storm, accident, or other emergency (i.e., lightning storm). If it is a class in which horses compete together (i.e., pleasure class or heat), when class is resumed it shall be held in its entirety, and no consideration will be given to the performance during the original session. If it is a class in which horses' compete individually (i.e., horsemanship), when the class is resumed, it will be continued from the point stopped unless the class is rescheduled for another day, in which case it will be started from the beginning with no consideration given to the performance during the original session.
12. A horse or Exhibitor shall not be assisted beyond the plane of the arena gate.
13. Lunging is not permitted in warm-up areas where a class is staged.
14. If an Exhibitor or a person on behalf of an Exhibitor is guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct or misbehavior while on the show grounds, they may be suspended from participating in future classes and/or shows.  
Citrus County Fair Open and Youth Horse Show Rules continued
15. Assistance or coaching of an Exhibitor while competing in a class may warrant penalties or disqualification. Electronic communication devices are not allowed on the Exhibitor while in the class.
16. The Judge and/or Horse Superintendent may check the appointments of any horse/rider combination throughout the show. The judge may disqualify an Exhibitor for inappropriate appointments or equipment.
17. Judges have the authority to excuse any horse that is lame. Obvious lameness is consistently observable at a trot under all circumstances; marked nodding, hitching, or shortened stride; minimal weight-bearing in motion and/or at rest; and/or inability to move.

**18.** The Judge and/or Horse Superintendent have the authority to require the removal or alteration of any piece of equipment which, in their opinion, is unsafe, tends to give an unfair advantage, or is deemed inhumane. Inhumane treatment of a horse at any time on the show grounds will result in disqualification, dismissal, and suspension from further participation in classes.

Bits deemed too severe may be prohibited by a Judge and/or Horse Superintendent. Wire curbs, regardless of how taped or padded, are not allowed. Absolutely no rigid materials permitted under the jaws, regardless of how padded or covered.

**19. Showmanship**

**A.** Exhibitor will individually perform a given pattern. Exhibitors will be judged on individual skills and execution of the pattern. Personal appearance of the Exhibitor: neat, clean, well-groomed, attentive, and courteous.

**B.** Equipment is to be clean and properly adjusted:

Halters only. Fancy halters will not be given preference over good working halters.

Lead ropes may not have a chain, except Showmanship. Nosebands may not be of rawhide or be inflexible (like a bosal).

Lead must be carried in both hands at all times, and it must not be wrapped around either hand. It is acceptable to either figure-8 or loose coil the excess lead in the opposite hand.

Whips, crops, or bats are not permitted.

**C.** Any horse severely underweight will be excused from the show.

**20. Ranch Classes**

**A.** A Class consists of pattern work, which is ridden individually. For each maneuver, the horse is judged on the quality of its gait, response to the rider, and manners.

**B.** Uses of hands: Only one hand may be used on reins, and hands must not be changed. Reins may be held in any manner considered humane and safe.

**21. Riding Trail**

**A.** The Class is designed to show the horse's ability to navigate and cope with various situations and obstacles encountered in everyday work and to show a horse's ability to perform these obstacles with a willing attitude.

**B.** The judge has the right and duty to alter the course in any manner and may remove or change any obstacle deemed unsafe or non-negotiable before the start of the Class.

**C.** Use of hands: only one hand may be used on reins, and the hand must not be changed except to work with an obstacle. Reins may be held in any manner considered safe and humane.

**D.** The judge may ask an Exhibitor to move on to the next obstacle if the horse/rider is unable to complete the maneuver in a reasonable time or if the judge deems that the Exhibitor is, or will be, in an unsafe situation. The judge may also ask the Exhibitor to move on after a third refusal at an obstacle. The judge may excuse an Exhibitor from the arena after the second obstacle with three refusals (0 score).

Citrus County Fair Open and Youth Horse Show Rules continued

**22. Calf Roping**

**(A)** This is a judged event with a two-minute time limit. There will be a 30-second warning given prior to the end of the run. The rope must be thrown, and the Exhibitor may rebuild and throw an unlimited number of loops. Credit will not be given for additional loops after a successful catch of any part of the horse. The honda on the rope must have a breakaway design. Ropes may not be tied hard and fast to the saddle horn.

**B.** Horse and Exhibitor must start from an entrance gate opposite where ten (10) calves/yearlings are held as a herd, with each bearing a number 0-9. A random draw will be used to select the calf to be roped, which will be announced when the horse enters the arena gate.

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**C.** The Exhibitor should make a desired catch, position their horse in an appropriate manner, and dally up. A desired catch is defined as one in which the animal is roped, and the rope comes tight in front of the animal's shoulders. A catch of any other part of the animal will be considered legal, but the Exhibitor will receive a penalty. The judge will signal the end of the run when the calf breaks free from the honda.

**D.** Exhibitor will be eliminated for any of the following.

- Running into or over cattle
- Schooling
- Whipping or hitting the horse with a rope
- Thrown from the horse
- Falling to the ground
- Losing the rope
- Bucking
- Roping the wrong cow
- Roping more than one cow with the same loop
- Excessive running of cattle
- Dismounting

### **23. Cow Boxing**

**A.** The Exhibitor, upon receiving a cow in the arena, will hold the cow at the prescribed end of the arena for 50 seconds, demonstrating the ability of the horse and the Exhibitor to control the cow. Time begins when the gate closes behind the cow. A whistle or horn will signal the completion of 50 seconds.

**B.** Boxing the cow - The Exhibitor will face the cattle entry gate and signal for the cow to be turned into the arena. The cow will be controlled on the entry end of the arena for a sufficient amount of time to demonstrate the horse's ability to "hold" the cow. If the cow does not immediately challenge the horse, the Exhibitor will aggressively move in on the cow to demonstrate the horse's ability to drive and block the cow on the entry fence.

**C.** The Judge may blow the whistle at any time during the work. One whistle to terminate the work, two whistles to award a new cow. If the judge feels that the Exhibitor is out of control, endangering themselves and/or their horse, the judge may terminate their work, and a score of 0 will be given. In the case of an emergency (such as a person falling into the arena or part of the arena falling apart), the judge will blow two whistles for a second time.

**D.** Judging ends when the whistle blows.

**E.** This is not a fence-turn class. If the Exhibitor loses control of the cow, the Exhibitor should not chase up the side of the arena and do a fence turn however, they should attempt to return the cow to the desired end of the arena in a quiet manner.

**F.** Exhibitor will be dismissed or scored 0 for any of the following:

- Turn tail
- Leaving the work area before time expires
- A horse that is out of control
- Running cow into the back fence with force
- Use of two hands on the reins
- Bloody mouth
- Balking
- Schooling between cows when a new cow is awarded
- Abuse
- Lameness
- Fall of horse or Exhibitor

## **24 Speed Events**

- A.** Strictly timed events. The Exhibitor is allowed a running start. Timing begins as soon as the horse's nose crosses the starting line and will stop when the horse's nose passes over the finishline.
- B.** Horse must be under the control of the Exhibitor upon entrance and exit of the arena or stopping area, and promptness in entering the arena is expected. The horse or the Exhibitor will not be assisted once inside the arena past the plane. Failure to comply will result in being disqualified.
- C.** An electric timer will be used for official time.
- D.** Times will be announced after each run.
- E.** A run-off will be held for all ties.
- F.** Strings, rubber bands, or other material to tie feet or legs and using any material to affix the Exhibitor to any part of the saddle is prohibited.
- G.** A rerun will not be given to any Exhibitor if handicapped by failure of personal equipment or an accident to the horse or rider.
- H.** Loss of helmet from the head while in the arena will result in disqualification.
- I.** Failure to follow or complete the course will result in disqualification.
- J.** Touching a barrel (s) or pole (s) with hands is allowed.
- K.** Striking a horse in front of a cinch with anything other than the open hand is a disqualification. Striking the horse with anything, including hand, in front of the throat latch is disqualifying.

## **25. YOUTH HORSE AWARDS & PREMIUMS; RIBBONS WILL BE AWARDED 1st -6th**

1st \$10.00 2nd \$5.00 3rd \$4.00 4th \$3.00 5th \$2.00 6th \$1.00

**RANCH CLASSES** - Boxing, Calf Roping, In-Hand Trail, Ranch Riding, and Riding Trail

**SPEED EVENTS** - Barrel Racing, Key Hole, Pole Bending, and Stake Race

Youth Class winners will receive awards

A belt buckle will be awarded for High Point Exhibitor for ranch classes and speed events.

A trophy will be awarded to Reserve High Point Exhibitor for ranch classes and speed events.

## **OPEN HORSE AWARDS & PREMIUMS; RIBBONS WILL BE AWARDED 1st - 6th**

1st \$10.00 2nd \$5.00 3rd \$4.00 4th \$3.00 5th \$2.00 6th \$1.00

Open Class winners will receive awards

High Point Exhibitor will receive a belt buckle for ranch classes and speed events.

A trophy will be awarded to Reserve High Point Exhibitors for ranch classes and speed events.

## **YOUTH SHOWMANSHIP IS A PERCENTAGE OF ENTRY FEES COLLECTED:**

PAYOUT FOR RIBBONS WILL BE AWARDED 1st - 6th

**1st 25% 2nd 20% 3rd 17% 4th 15% 5th 13% 6th 10%**

A belt buckle will be awarded for first place in each age group of Showmanship.

**26.** Exhibitors are encouraged to participate in the optional Horse Skill-a-Thon during Fair Week. The age for Skill-a-Thon and record books will be determined by age on September 1st, prior to the March Fair.

**27.** Failure to comply with these rules and regulations will subject the Exhibitor to disqualification and removal from the project or Fairgrounds.