2026 Fort Bend County Fair
Residue Avoidance Rules & Guidelines

Attention: Use of Drugs

The use by non-veterinarians* of animal drugs or other substances in any manner other than in accordance with the labeling approved by the FDA is a violation of federal law. Exhibitor and exhibitor's parents and/or guardians agree that:

1. They are absolutely and completely responsible persons for the care and custody of their animals.
2. The Fort Bend County Fair shall be entitled to disqualify an exhibitor whose animal tests positive for any drug, even if the exhibitor and the exhibitor's parents and/or guardians are innocent of any wrongdoing and did not administer the drug.
3. The drug test results of the testing laboratories are final and binding upon the exhibitor and the exhibitor's parents and/or guardians. Even if the source of the drug is unknown, the Fort Bend County Fair shall be entitled to disqualify the exhibitor.

***Abuse of the extra-label privilege by veterinarians is unethical and is subject to serious consequences such as license revocation.**

Animal/Exhibitor Disqualification:

1. To foster fair competition, to provide a level playing field, and to protect the safety of food, the showing of unethically fitted livestock, livestock of any ineligible age for exhibition in the class entered, and/or animals being administered unapproved drugs is strictly prohibited.
2. Additionally, any animal that has been administered a drug that is FDA-approved for its species is subject to disqualification if that animal tests positive for that drug upon arrival at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. All animals must remain free and clear of all drug and chemical residues while on showgrounds.
3. Any exhibitor found in violation of the Fort Bend County Fair residue avoidance policy is subject to disqualification, revocation of payment, and suspension from any future participation in any Fort Bend County Fair Livestock Show. Further, any infraction resulting in disqualification may affect scholarship eligibility.

Disqualification/Condemnation of Animal:

"The Fort Bend County Fair practices a Zero Tolerance policy on all residue violations." The Fort Bend County Fair reserves the right to condemn and/or disqualify any animal, either live or slaughtered, found in violation of these Drug Testing Rules and the exhibitor will forfeit all auction sale and/or premium money if the animal is disqualified. If an animal(s) is disqualified, the class placing will not change. A disqualified exhibitor may forfeit all rights and privileges to exhibit livestock in the future at the Fort Bend County Fair.

FDA/USDA Unapproved Drug Use:

The showing of any animal that has been administered during its life any quantity of any unapproved drug, chemical, or medication is strictly prohibited. Such drugs include, but are not limited to, any diuretic, unapproved growth stimulant, or other unapproved medication. Unapproved means not approved by the FDA and/or the USDA for slaughter animals including animals that may be destined for human consumption.

FDA/USDA Approved Drug Use:

If an animal has been administered a drug that is FDA approved for its species, sufficient time must have passed so that the animal does not test positive for that drug upon arrival at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. Animals must remain free and clear of all drug and chemical residues while on showgrounds. Please note that elimination time (the time it takes for no drug residue to be found in the system) is generally longer than the labeled withdrawal time for most approved drugs.

Drug Certification Agreement:

The exhibitor and parent/guardian certify that the entry has not been administered or that the exhibitor and parent/guardian do not have any knowledge that this entry has received any substance not approved by the FDA and/or the USDA for food animals. Furthermore, the exhibitor and parent/guardian certify that this entry is free and clear of ALL drug and chemical residue withdrawal and elimination time periods. All exhibitors must complete and submit the Junior Market Certification Form to be eligible to show.

Drug Testing:
During the collection of blood, feather, fecal, hair, and urine samples, the Exhibitor or substitute exhibitor AND the designated responsible adult (parent/guardian) ***must be present at all times***. Exhibitors found in violation of this rule are subject to disqualification. ***ALL GRAND AND RESERVE CHAMPIONS WILL BE DRUG TESTED with a minimum of one other animal per class. All draws will be posted prior to the show.***

Why is it important to drug test livestock projects?

- To protect the safety of the food supply
- To foster fair competition

What is my responsibility as a County Extension Agent (CEA), Agriculture Science Teacher (AST), parent/guardian or exhibitor?

- KNOW THE RULES before you enter any livestock show. For the Fort Bend County Fair, these rules can be found at www.fortbendcountyfair.com/p/livestock
- Also, please note, when you sign the entry form, that is required for entry, you are agreeing to have read and to abide by all rules.

What are the Fort Bend County Fair residue avoidance rules?
In short, the Fort Bend County Fair maintains a **Zero Tolerance** policy which means if positive results are reported, we have an obligation to investigate in order to determine what circumstances led to this result.

- **Zero Tolerance is based on the elimination period, rather than the withdrawal period.** There is a difference between the withdrawal and elimination periods. The withdrawal period is the amount of time that must pass for consumed products to safely enter the food chain. The elimination period refers to the amount of time it takes for all residue to be eliminated from an animal's system. For most drugs, the elimination period is longer that the withdrawal period.
- **Unapproved drugs are prohibited.** Unapproved means not approved by the FDA and/or USDA for slaughter animals that may be destined for human consumption. **This includes the use of all products that are not FDA-approved including, but not limited to, any diuretic, unapproved growth stimulant, or other unapproved medication meant for human usage.**
- **Another important point to remember is that products labeled "all-natural" that are not FDA approved may contain ingredients that can result in a positive test. It is your responsibility to know what ingredients are included in products labeled as "all-natural."**

What are the best practices for a show animal that falls sick, ill, or injured leading up to the show?

- **Consult with your veterinarian.** First and foremost, consult your veterinarian. Do not administer any medications before visiting with your veterinarian. As a part of this conversation, make certain that both you and the veterinarian are aware of the show rules. Carefully consider the amount of time prior to arrival at the show and assume that the elimination period is longer than the labeled withdrawal period. From there, you, your family, your supervising CEA / AST, and your veterinarian should discuss options before making the best decision.
- **Make an informed and the best decision possible.** The utmost priority should be the animal's welfare. The welfare of the animal should always take priority over competition. This could result in leaving the animal project at home.
- **Document all treatment records.** If the animal is treated with an approved drug and withdrawal times are observed, maintain an official record of treatment from the veterinarian, including the date of administration and dosage.

If my livestock project receives a positive test, am I automatically banned for life?
No, not necessarily. Each case is handled on an individual basis. Exhibitors found in violation are offered an opportunity to explain the details of their case in a formal appeal hearing. Penalties range from withholding premiums to a lifetime ban, depending on the drug that was used and the circumstances surrounding the use. If/When the exhibitor becomes eligible to show, they shall be subject to an automatic drug test. Should the exhibitor's project test positive a second time, the exhibitor will be permanently prohibited from showing at the Fort Bend County Fair.

What are some common types of drugs that I may be penalized for?

- **Antibacterial Therapeutic Medications –** Used to treat infection, these compounds don't create a competitive advantage but can create food safety concerns if not used according to label directions. Many are only FDA-approved for particular species, meaning that extensive research has been conducted regarding the proper dosage and type of administration to be efficacious in that species as well as the withdrawal time that is necessary for meat products to be safe for human consumption. Please note any exceptions for the use of these compounds in breeding animals below
- **Non-Antibiotic Therapeutic Medications –** Inclusive of anti-inflammatories, antipyretics, diuretics, and anesthetics, these medications can result in a competitive advantage by altering the physical appearance of the animal and/or concerns with food safety. Some are available over the counter and others can only be legally sourced and administered through prescription by a licensed veterinarian. Many are only FDA-approved for a particular species and use in any other species without a prescription by a veterinarian is illegal.
- **Beta-agonists –** Originally developed as bronchodilators in humans, larger dosages have a growth-promoting effect in animals and result in increased muscle and decreased fat. The only beta-agonist that is currently FDA-approved and commercially available for use in livestock production is ractopamine, which is labeled for use in market cattle and market swine with a zero-day withdrawal (i.e. research indicates that meat products are safe for consumption at any time during the feeding period). The use of beta-agonists in species for which they are not FDA-approved or commercially available creates concerns with food safety and/or competitive advantage. Please note any exceptions to the use of beta-agonists below.

Market Animals:

Ractopamine Hydrochloride (Optaflexx™ and Paylean®)

The Fort Bend County Fair will not be testing for the presence of ractopamine hydrochloride in market steers (Optaflexx™) or market barrows (Paylean®). Exhibitors who choose to use these products are expected to follow all label directions. The Show will not tolerate the presence of ractopamine hydrochloride in entries other than market steers or market barrows.

Ractopamine Hydrochloride (Topmax™)

THE FORT BEND COUNTY FAIR WILL NOT TOLERATE THE PRESENCE OF RACTOPAMINE HYDROCHLORIDE (Topmax®) IN MARKET POULTRY. Though FDA-approved for use in market turkeys, ractopamine is not commercially available for this use. The FBCF reserves the right to use feather testing to detect performance-enhancing drugs, including Ractopamine, in poultry.

Zilpaterol Hydrochloride (Zilmax®)

THE FORT BEND COUNTY FAIR WILL NOT TOLERATE THE PRESENCE OF ZILPATEROL HYDROCHLORIDE (Zilmax®) IN THE URINE OF MARKET STEERS. The FBCF will not tolerate the presence of Zilpaterol Hydrochloride (Zilmax®) in any other market species or breeding animal. The FBCF reserves the right to use the new hair testing that is now available to detect performance-enhancing drugs in market lambs and goats.

Breeding Animals:

Antibacterial Therapeutic Medications

The Fort Bend County Fair will not be testing for the presence of antibiotics/antibacterials that have been FDA-approved for the species and class of breeding animal in which they are administered. Exhibitors who use these compounds are expected to consult with their veterinarian and follow all label directions.