SHOWMANSHIP 2020

2020

WHAT IS SHOWMANSHIP?

The meaning of showmanship is to show how well you and your animal work together. It includes all the hard work that exhibitors put into their project from the first day they purchase their animal. Showmanship is defined as the ability to present your animal to the best of its genetic ability and involves knowing the basic skills of the show ring, while bringing attention to the animal's strengths and minimizing the animal's weaknesses. Many factors enter into the equation for a successful showman including halter breaking, nutrition, time at home, skill of the showman, and daily care and grooming. All of the hard work done throughout the project will be worthwhile on show day! Successful showmen start as soon as their animal is purchased or within two weeks after weaning. It is important that their animal begins to build trust as the halter breaking process begins. This is safer and less stressful for both the trainer and the animal and will ensure that the animal is ready for the show. Spend time with your animal to get the calf use to you. A good way to do this is during feeding. Just sit or stand in the pen while your animal eats. Remember this process takes patience and time. Start halter breaking early. Here are some helpful hints to assist the initial gentling and halter breaking process.

- Place the calf in a small pen, where it can become familiar with you.
- Nylon rope halters 1/2 inch to 5/8 inch diameters work best and are generally easiest to use and are less stressful to the animal.
- Adjust the halter so the nose piece is about 2 inches below the eye.

- Tie the calf to a sturdy place at their chin height with minimal halter length to minimize the amount of force they have to pull back. This reduces the chances of the animal getting tangled in the rope or a broken halter.
- While the calf is tied up (for no longer than 15 to 20 minutes), brush the calf and talk to it allowing the calf to get use to you. Never leave a tied animal unattended! Playing a radio will allow the calf to get use to noises and human voices and also helps calm the animal.
- The first few times you lead the calf, lead them in a place they want to go such as to feed or water. Voice rewards are very important and allow the animal to become more comfortable with you.
- Use a small pen to prevent the calf from escaping the handler while leading for the first few times. Gradually move to larger pens as your calf is leading better.
- When releasing an animal, never, never let them get away from you. Once an animal gets away they think they can repeatedly do it. Stay calm without jerking the halter away.
- Practice makes perfect-introduce your animal to the show stick and show halter well in advance of your show. Your animal needs to be trained how to set its feet properly and walk with a show halter. Have another person handle your calf while you hold the halter so the animal learns to remain calm under the judge's close evaluation.

TRAINING YOUR CALF WITH THE LEAD STRAP

The halter should be properly placed on the calf's head with the lead strap on the calf's left side. The halter strap that crosses over the muzzle or nose should be between the eyes and the nose. You must use a nose lead to break and show bulls. This provides better control and increased safety for you and other exhibitors.

When leading, you should be on the calf's left side with the halter in your right hand. Your hand should be knuckle-side up with your smallest finger nearest the calf, three to six inches from the animal's head. With show halter, this is usually at the chin, so wrapping the chain with vet wrap might be helpful for a younger showman. When stopped with an animal, place your hand so your thumb is in the air. Your wrist is stronger this way and provides greater control of the animal.

The strap length should be enough for control but not long enough to touch the ground where it could be stepped on. If the calf is spooked, you should have two hands on the strap. Never wrap the halter strap around your hand or fingers as this could cause serious injury.

Your calf should now be trained to lead and stand correctly. Observe where you are going in the show ring and occasionally look back to see if your calf is walking in a straight path. Walk at a moderate pace and straight ahead with the calf's head even at your side. When practicing, get your animal used to someone walking up to them and around them.

GROOMING: DO'S AND DON'T

Arrive on time. Don't be late!

Be well groomed "do your hair." Don't wear a hat, or have "hat or bed head."

Wear official 4-H / F.F.A. (if required) white shirt/ blouse. Don't wear a T-shirt or ill-fitting shirts or "hoodies."

Wear clean dark trousers or jeans. Don't wear shorts or ill-fitting pants.

Wear hard soled shoes or boots. Don't wear tennis shoes, sandals, or flip flops.
Have a well-groomed animal. Don't come in with a wet animal.

CLEANLINESS AND GROOMING

Hair and switch: should be clean and free of stains.

Hide: clean and free of dust and dandruff.

Legs and hooves: clean and halter clean and properly adjusted.

A. Hair handled in a manner best suited to the individual calf.

B. Hooves trimmed and shaped so that the animal can stand straight; trimming done early enough so the animal's feet are not sore and so the animal has had time to adjust.

C. Horns (if present) curved, shaped, and polished.

D. The switch may be left natural, fluffed, ratted, or formed at twist height.

E. The addition of natural or synthetic hair or hair-like materials should be discouraged and severely discounted in a showmanship contest.

F. Animals groomed with compounds, which rub off color should receive lowest possible ribbon placing or disqualification

CLIPPING

A. Major clipping should be done about one week before a show.

B. Head clipped on polled or dehorned market calf, never clipped on horned animal but may be trimmed and cleaned up, if necessary. Head clipped from ears forward and over top of poll, if desired. Ears or eyelashes never clipped. Hair blended from clipped to unclipped part.

C. Head of polled breeding heifer clipped unless breed custom dictates. Head of horned breeding heifer not clipped.

D. Tail clipped from a point above the twist upward to the tail head. Tail head never clipped but hairs trimmed and area from clipped to unclipped parts blended.

SHOWING AN ANIMAL

Parading and Changing Positions

A. Calf led from left side; lead strap held in right hand from 1 to 2 feet from a head and at height of calf's poll. Extra length of lead strap balanced between left and right hands or carried in the form of several large folds in right hand. Extremely short lead straps may not require folds. Exhibitor never leads calf while walking backwards.

B. Backward pressure applied with the lead strap and by pressing on the point of shoulder to back calf out of line.

C. Halter should be properly adjusted and show stick of suitable length.

D. Calf also may be moved out of line by leading forward, then back through the line.

Calf led in clockwise direction when necessary to parade it or move it to a different line.

F. About 6 feet of space maintained between exhibitor's calf and next calf in front.

Posing in the Ring

A. When pulled into line, showman keeps calf in position at least 3 feet from calf to the left.

B. Exhibitor faces calf and holds lead strap in left hand while showing.

C. Calf stands alert with head up, back level, and legs placed squarely under the body.

D. Show stick used to place calf's hind feet. Either show stick or exhibitor's feet used to place calf's feet front.

E. Exhibitor keeps whereabouts of judge in mind and has calf in position when judge looks at him.

F. Proper to let calf relax and brush or comb calf when judge is at other end of the ring.

G. Exhibitor posing calves in a location to block judge's view of other animals should be severely discouraged.

COOPERATION WITH JUDGE

A. Awareness of position of judge maintained but not made obvious.

B. Exhibitor does not obstruct view of judge.

C. Calf maneuvered into improved position for benefit of judge's inspection before but not during inspection.

D. Exhibitor steps aside, if the judge desires front view inspection.

MERITS

A. Brings calf into the ring promptly.

B. Recognizes quickly and corrects faults of calf.

C. Works quickly, but not abruptly.

D. Alert and responsive to judge's and ringmaster's requests.

E. Not distracted by people, activities, and objects outside ring.

F. Shows calf, not himself/herself.

G. Does not leave ring until released by ring official.

H. Displays a courteous and sportsmanlike attitude while at the show.

I. Gives prompt answers to questions related to 4-H /F.F.A. beef project (e.g., age, breed, nutrition, pregnancy status, performance, and carcass value).