



**MANATEE COUNTY FAIR 2025**  
**Rabbits**

**FAIR LIVESTOCK DIRECTOR: Jim Parks/Danielle Carothers**  
**AREA SUPERINTENDENT: Sue McGonegal**

**Failure to complete the on-line registration and check in, will result in disqualification.**

**SCHEDULE**

- Mandatory Check In**      **Saturday, October 26, 2024, 9am to 1pm, Cook/Powell Arena**
- Exhibitor (Cloverbuds included) and parent or legal guardian must be present even if the exhibitor is 18
  - FFA advisors & 4-H club leaders, with chapter animals, must attend the mandatory check in.
  - Rabbits for entry into the 2025 Manatee County Fair must be present

All exhibitors must turn in or complete the following:

- Health affidavit and breeders' information
- Rabbit inspection and class identification for registration
- Notarized MCF Exhibitor Liability/Photo Release
- MCF Code of Conduct form
- Sign up for meat pens
- Sales contract (if applicable) signed by the exhibitor and parent or legal guardian (even if exhibitor is 18 years old)

- On-line registration**      **October 26, 9am Oct 27, 2024, midnight**
- Go to Youth Ag Exhibits (manateecountyfair.com) then click on ShoWorks to complete on-line registration/purchase passes
  - Entry Fee \$5.00 per rabbit and \$10.00 for meat pen entry due at time of online registration.
  - Exhibitor Pass \$30.00 due at time of initial registration. Extra family member passes (limit 4) may be purchased for \$25 each on or before October 27<sup>th</sup>, midnight.


**FFA/4-H Club**      **Animal Exhibitors must be named/assigned by December 1, 2024**, on the Club/Chapter Declaration form and emailed to vquattlebaum@manateecountyfair.com.

**Fair Check-In**      **Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 2-6pm, Cook/Powell Arena, Carry in gate 9**

<b>Rabbit Show</b>	<b>Thursday, January 16, 2025, 6pm,</b> Cook/Powell Arena
<b>Rabbit Showmanship</b>	<b>Friday, January 17, 2025, 6pm,</b> Cook/Powell Arena
<b>Youth Steer Judging</b>	<b>Saturday, January 18, 2025, Registration 7:30am, Start 8am,</b> Mosaic Arena Breakfast afterwards for participants
<b>FNGLA Horticulture Challenge</b>	<b>Saturday, January 18, 2025, 9:30-11am</b> in front of the Mosaic Arena
<b>Rabbit Meat Pen Sale</b>	<b>Saturday, January 18, 2025,</b> following the Steer Sale Mosaic Arena
<b>Rabbit Check-out</b>	<b>Saturday, January 18, 2025, 8pm</b>
<b>Youth Goat &amp; Swine Judging</b>	<b>Saturday, January 25, 2025, Registration 7:30am, Start 8am,</b> Mosaic Arena Breakfast afterwards for participants
<b>Awards Ceremony</b>	<b>Saturday, January 25, 2025, 7:30pm,</b> Mosaic Arena

## RABBIT RULES & REGULATIONS

1. All exhibitors must be a *bona fide* member of a Manatee County 4-H Club or FFA Chapter, which is related to your project. No one who has graduated from High School will be eligible to show.
2. All Exhibitors must be in good standing with their respective clubs to exhibit at the Manatee County Fair. All exhibitors will show in the 4-H Club or FFA Chapter in which they registered their animals.
3. All Exhibitors, with the exception of cloverbuds, at the Manatee County Fair must have completed **one class of ethics training** to exhibit at the Manatee County Fair. **The exhibitor is responsible for keeping their ethics number.** If the exhibitor loses their number, they will need to retake the class. Exhibitors are not required to take the class in Manatee County, as the training is sponsored by the Florida State Fair. Classes are offered throughout the state. **Manatee County will offer an Ethics Training on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at 8:00am.** Exhibitors will be required to sign up for the class at <https://floridastatefairag.com/ethics/> **All ethics numbers must be submitted to [vquattlebaum@manateecountyfair.com](mailto:vquattlebaum@manateecountyfair.com) no later than December 1<sup>st</sup> to be eligible to show.**
4. No exhibition of a rabbit by anyone less than 5 years of age (as of September 1st) will be allowed. Exhibitor age as of September 1, 2024, will determine the class of showmanship in which the exhibitor will show. (Cloverbuds, ages 5-7, Juniors ages 8-10, Intermediates ages 11-13, Seniors ages 14 and up.) 4-H Clover Buds may register 1 animal that will be an exhibit only entry. They can participate in a showmanship class and receive a participation ribbon.
5. At Final check-in, Exhibitor and animal must be together for animal to be checked in. **A parent or legal guardian must be present to complete all required documentation.** The Manatee River Fair Board encourages parents to be involved in their child's 4-H and FFA Projects.
6. **\*\* Exhibitors are not allowed to change animals after the initial check-in.\*\***
7. Liability: Each exhibitor must assume all liability in case of death or injury to his or her animal until removed from the Fairgrounds property, In the case of sale pens it becomes the liability of the buyer once it leaves the Fairground property.
8. Food and Drink are not allowed in the animal areas.
9. **Showmanship** - FFA members must show in Official Dress and 4-H members are required to wear white long sleeve button down dress shirts, black pants (No Denim Blue Jeans!) during the shows and sale. No hats allowed during the show and sale. **Show Day** - Exhibitors may wear club or fair T-Shirt.

10. No Substitute exhibitors are allowed unless there are extreme reasons and granted permission by the Manatee County Fair Livestock Committee.
11. All Exhibitors participating in their respective showmanship areas must utilize only the animal that was registered under their name.
12. All record books must be up to date and checked in to the designated committee at time of final check-in to be eligible to show in the Manatee County Fair. If you have a sale pen it **needs to include a copy of three (3) of the letters that were written to prospective buyers with their names and addresses.** 4-H club and FFA chapters must also submit a record book.
13. All livestock must follow Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) State Health Guidelines and must be transported to the Manatee County Fair in accordance with those guidelines.
14. On-site inspections of any livestock may be made by authorized agents of the Manatee River Fair Association at any time, after registration, until Fair check-in.
15. All Rabbit's must be housed in Manatee County from the time of registration until fair. Any exceptions must be  approved by the MRFA Livestock Committee prior to registration by filling out an Animal Housing Appeal Form and submitted to the fair office for the Livestock Committee to review for an approval, once approved Exhibitor will be notified. Any animal found not to be housed in Manatee County will be disqualified.
16. Use of drugs not in compliance with manufacturer's label as to dosage, time limitations and show regulations is prohibited. The use of any calming agent on animals during the Fair or the possession of same by an Exhibitor (4-H or FFA member) or anyone assisting said member with his or her animal is prohibited. Violation of this provision shall disqualify the animal from competition and any awards or premiums, including sale price of animal, shall be forfeited. If medical treatment is deemed necessary, the exhibitor or parent must notify the Rabbit Livestock Director and/or Barn Superintendent, prior to administering treatment to the animal in any way. See rule #20
17. All animals are subject to being examined and urine or blood tested for any drug usage at any time. Refusal by the Exhibitor (4-H or FFA member) to submit their animal to such examination or test will result in immediate disqualification. See rule #20
18. Upon disqualification, pursuant to Paragraphs No. 16 and 17 the affected animal shall immediately be removed from the Fairgrounds. Disqualification may result in forfeiture of premiums, awards, add-on's and including sale premiums.
19. **Any graphics or wording** in the barn or displayed on the panels deemed inappropriate by the Livestock Committee will be removed.
20. All entries must be the bona fide property of the exhibitor or have been in foster care of the exhibitor for at least 90 days prior to day of showing, proven by certificate showing Proof of Ownership, or Proof of Foster Care by Exhibitor affidavit, with appropriate signatures releasing the care of the animal and continuing supervision for the duration of project by both owner of animal and 4-H/FFA Club leader.
21. Each exhibitor will be limited to a maximum of five (5) rabbit entries per exhibitor, 4-H Club or FFA Chapter. Only youth can bring rabbit to the Judge's table. One entry is one buck, one doe, or one meat pen entry (3 rabbits of same breed and variety) of any breed. **\*Due to limited space and pen availability, the number of entries may be limited at the Area Superintendent or designee's discretion.\***
22. No rabbits under 3 months of age at time of application, except for Rabbit Meat Pen entries.

23. Ear tags must be legible and may not change after the initial registration or animal will be disqualified.  
★
24. CARE OF ANIMALS: Animals are to be fed and watered by exhibitor upon arrival. Each exhibitor will be responsible for feeding his or her own rabbits and cleaning cages daily. **Failure to feed & water your rabbits daily will result in the loss of premium monies and awards.**
24. HANDLING OF EXHIBITS: Only those persons authorized by show officials or the owner may handle rabbits without written permission from the owner unless the owner is present.
25. MANDATORY CLEAN-UP: Clean up and change over starts at 8:00pm, during rabbit release. Any exhibitor failing to help with the clean-up will forfeit all prize and premium monies.
26. No does with litters, or pregnant does of more than (2) weeks will be accepted. Does showing signs of pregnancy will be palpated.
27. Any individual rabbit or meat pen that is obviously a crossbreed which does not conform to a breed standard will not be accepted. **Any spayed or neutered rabbits will not be accepted.**
28. Any animal found to be ill, diseased, or insect infested will be removed and sent home immediately.
29. Judging will be by the Danish System. Rabbits will be shown by breed, then by varieties within each breed, in the following order: Senior Bucks, Senior Does, (when applicable) Intermediate Bucks, (when applicable) Intermediate Does, Junior Bucks, Junior Does. Meat Pen entries will be judged at judge's preference. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to move their rabbit to the judging table and back to its cage after judging.
- Ribbons for Rabbit judging will be presented for each of the following: Best in Show, 1<sup>st</sup> Reserve, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Reserve.
30. The following classes will apply to the Rabbit Show:
- Class 4 -Small breed rabbits such as Holland lops, Netherlands dwarfs, mini rex, Polish ect. CLASS 4 – Senior Buck (age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 6 months or older)
- Class 4 – Senior Doe (age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 6 months or older) CLASS 4 – Junior Buck (age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 6 months or younger) CLASS 4 – Junior Doe (age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 6 months or younger)
- Class 6- Large breed rabbits that take longer to mature such as Californians, Lops(English or French, New Zealand, Silver Fox Ect...)
- Class 6 – Senior Buck (age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 8 months or older) CLASS 6 – Senior Doe (age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 8 months or older)
- Class 6 – Intermediate Buck age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 6 mo. to 8 months or older) CLASS 6 – Intermediate Doe age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 6 mo. to 8 months or older) CLASS 6 – Junior Buck (age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 6 months or younger)
- Class 6 – Junior Doe (age of rabbit DAY OF SHOW – 6 months or younger)
31. Rabbit Showmanship: Rabbit Showmanship is not mandatory. At Rabbit Check-In, a sign-up sheet will be available to reserve your approximate time to make your Showmanship presentation. Rabbits shown in the following classes: Age of Exhibitor on September 1, 2024, Senior 14-18 yrs., Intermediate 11-13 yrs., and Junior 8-10 yrs, and Cloverbuds 5-7 yrs. Trophies will be presented for 1<sup>st</sup> Place in Showmanship for each age division of the Exhibitor. Rosettes will be presented to 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> place winners for Showmanship for each age division. A trophy will be presented for the Best Meat Pen. This is judged on Thursday during rabbit judging and not Friday during showmanship.

32. The Livestock Committee and Area Superintendent reserves the right to refuse entry for health or appearance reasons if the entry does not comply with the rules and regulations of the Rabbit Show. All rabbits will be judged on soundness, evidence of care, freedom from dirt, disease, and parasites.
33. The Manatee County Fair will not be responsible for loss by accidents, fire, theft, escape or providential destruction. All possible care will be taken in receiving, cooping, feeding, caring for and returning animals.
34. Failure to follow the above rules or the general rules of the Manatee River Fair Association Youth Livestock Show will result in disciplinary action up to expulsion from the barn, disqualification from the show, removal from the sale and possible loss of premiums or awards.
35. Premium money must be picked up within 90 days of the end of the fair or it will be forfeited.
36. ***Final Interpretation and intent of these rules will be vested in the Manatee River Fair Board Livestock Committee. This includes, but is not limited to, violating the code of conduct and all previous rules. The Manatee River Fair Association has the right to "No Trespass" and disqualify any exhibitor or individual.***

### **Rabbit Meat Pen Rules**

- At Final check-in, Exhibitor and rabbit sale pen must be together for animals to be checked in.
- A pen consists of 3 rabbits of the same bred and variety.
- If any exhibitor wishes to sell a steer or swine, they may also sell ONE meat pen of EITHER rabbits, poultry, or laying hen. If any exhibitor does not have a steer or swine to raise and sell, they may sell a maximum of Two (2) pens but not the same group one (1) Poultry meat pen, one (1) Poultry laying pen or one (1) Rabbit meat pen. Each exhibitor must write a minimum of three (3) letters to prospective buyers for each pen intended for sale. Copies of these must be turned with your record book at the final check-in.
- **It is up to each individual exhibitor to locate or breed their own meat pen rabbits.** The Manatee County Fair does not provide rabbits for exhibitors or give refunds if you were unable to locate rabbits.
- Some of the more common meat pen rabbits include, New Zealand, Florida White, American chinchilla, Flemish giants, Silver Fox, Champagne d'Argente Californian.....
- Any meat pen project must have exhibitor in possession of brood animal at least 100 days prior to day of showing. The maximum age of a meat rabbit allowed is 70 days.
- Each rabbit must weigh a minimum of 3.5 pounds and a maximum of 5.5 pounds by the final fair check in
- Each Meat Rabbit must be tattooed so it may be identified. We will not be having a tattoo date. It is the meat pen exhibitor's responsibility to have the pen tattooed by final check in date.

### **SALE FOR MEAT PENS**

- a. All Exhibitors of sale animals must be present at the rabbit barn to move your animal to Mosaic Arena for the auction and to be present during the sale. A sale order will be determined prior to the sale. Anyone who is late for their entry's sale will be moved to the end of sale. Failure to show up will result in a no sale and the participant will be required to take the rabbits back. A signed sales

agreement provided by the Manatee River Fair Association, Inc. will be required, or the entry will not be presented for auction. Pictures of buyers and sellers will be taken at the auction.

- b. All Exhibitors are responsible for recruiting their own buyers. Exhibitors must complete a Record Book and copies of three (3) buyer's letters in the Record Book.
- c. Exhibitors must ensure meat is delivered to their buyer.
- d. Exhibitors with saleable animals must present buyer with a thank you card and plaque if applicable. It is strongly suggested as a thank you that you give a gift or a gift basket when you get your **Buyer's verification card signed by the Buyer or Buyers representative. The signed verification card must be turned into the Fair office to pick up their sales check prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>, to be eligible to exhibit a project at the next Manatee County Fair.** Sales proceeds will not be distributed until payment is received from Buyer(s). **If a Buyers card is found to be forged the Exhibitor will be banned from participating in the Manatee County Fair Livestock programs.**
- e. The Manatee River Fair Association will only handle add-ons totaling \$25.00 or more. Add-On form can be printed from Manatee County Fair's website ([manateecountyfair.com](http://manateecountyfair.com)) under Livestock Records. Add-ons must be received by February 15, 2025.
- f. Saleable animals including Steers, Swine, Beef Breeding, Rabbit Exhibit animals, Meat pens and Poultry Layer or Meat Pens will have six percent (6%) of each exhibitor's sale price and any add-ons deducted by the Fair Association to help defray expenses.

### **Exhibitor and Parent Security Passes**

Exhibitors will be required to make a one-time purchase of a \$30 Exhibitor Security Entrance Pass that will give unlimited access for the ten days of the fair. Families will be allowed to purchase (4) additional Security Entrance Passes at \$25 each which also gives unlimited access to the fair.

Only one gate 8 parking pass per family will be issued for the time their animals are on exhibit, NO EXCEPTIONS. Parking is on a first come basis.

Passes can be purchased when you register your animal on-line through ShoWorks  
If not purchased by October 27, 2024, additional family member passes will be \$30 each with same limits as above at the Livestock Office starting on Saturday, January 11, 2025, at 9:00am.

**\*\*THERE WILL BE NO REFUNDS ON PASSES\*\***

### **Animal Pick-up/Drop-off & Parking**

Any Vehicle without proper parking pass or in an unauthorized area will be towed at owners' expense

1. Vehicles blocking Gate 1 or 9 will be towed at the owner's expense.
2. Exhibitors may use Gate 9 in the morning before 9AM when coming to feed and water animals.
3. There will be no parking along the south end of the arena or around Cook Arena at any time!
4. Essentials may be dropped off and then vehicles will proceed to the livestock parking area.

Areas around the arena & barns are for drop-off and pick-up only.

### **Manatee County Fair Website**

Rule books and record books are posted and may be printed from ([manateecountyfair.com](http://manateecountyfair.com)) Please check the web page periodically to see if there are any updates that pertain to your livestock area. Registration paperwork for all animal areas is located on the Fair website.

## QUESTIONS

If you have a question about your entry into the Manatee County Fair, please follow the chain-of- command as listed below:

**1<sup>st</sup>** – Contact your **ADVISOR/CLUB LEADER**; if they are unable to answer your question,

**2<sup>nd</sup>** – Contact **AREA SUPERINTENDENT –Rabbits, Sue McGonegal** (941) 812-5425  
and if she is unable to answer your question,

**3<sup>rd</sup>** – Contact the **FAIR LIVESTOCK DIRECTOR – Rabbits, Jim Parks** (941) 713-2858  
**Danielle Carothers** (941) 592-5525