General Rules and Guidelines

GENERAL

THERE WILL BE NO PARKING INSIDE THE FAIRGROUNDS STARTING THE EVENING OF AUGUST 8TH THROUGH THE MORNING OF AUGUST 16TH. VEHICLES MUST BE OFF THE FAIRGROUNDS BY 9PM. ALL OTHER RULES AND GUIDELINES ARE EFFECTIVE SATURDAY AUGUST 8TH, 2026 AT 6PM.

Only entries from the five counties of Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau will be accepted.

Animal registrations need to be submitted by July 1, 2026.
Non-Animal registrations need to be submitted by July 1, 2026.
There will be NO late registrations accepted. Payment for all entries must be submitted at the time of registration. NO ENTRY FEES WILL BE REFUNDED.

Exhibitors will be charged an entry fee of $1.00 for every classes entered. Exhibit tickets will be issued upon arrival. Special rules are given in each division. Please review department, section, and/or class rules for additional entry guidelines.

Every article or animal upon the fairgrounds will be under the control of the Executive Committee, and every precaution will be taken for their safekeeping but the association will not be responsible for any damage or loss that may occur, and upon this condition entries are received. No unregistered house hold pets will be allowed to be marketed on the fairgrounds.

Dogs camping on the fairgrounds must be kept on a leash no greater than 6 feet in length, under the immediate control of a responsible person and shall not be allowed to disturb any fairgrounds visitors or animals. DOGS MUST BE KEPT IN CAMP AREA OR DESIGNATED DOG AREAS AND BE KEPT ON A LEASH. Service dogs are allowed. The handler of any dog shall immediately remove all droppings and deposit in trash receptacle on fairgrounds.

Minors under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs will be reported to the Sheriff's Department and prohibited from returning to the fairgrounds. Additional sanctions may be imposed by the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council. Refer to Code of Conduct Policy in the 4-H section of this Premium Book.

Trailers, tents, RVs, and buses must acquire their parking spot from the Camp Host before parking.

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ALL CAMPER VEHICLES MUST BE PARKED IN NORTH CAMP PARKING LOT OR IN DESIGNATED SIDE LOTS. THERE IS NO PARKING IN PATRON PARKING LOT. Any vehicles NOT in designated areas will be towed at owner's expense.

The fairgrounds are private property operated by a private entity.

There will be no open carry of firearms or carrying of fixed blade knives permitted on grounds.

The fairgrounds are a drug free zone. There will be zero tolerance for the use of any illicit drug including recreational and medical marijuana. Any violator will be immediately removed from property.

Fighting will not be tolerated and can result in being removed from fairgrounds in addition to a one year ban.

NO BIKES ARE ALLOWED ON FAIRGROUNDS.
Kids wandering around after 11pm (curfew) will have consequences.

Violation #1: Escorted back to camp.
Violation #2: Parking lot clean up detail.
Violation #3: Parents and child will have a meeting with the Executive Fair and Executive Livestock Council Boards.

JUDGING
No animal or article deemed unworthy shall be awarded a premium. Where there is but one exhibitor in a class, the animal or article may be awarded any award the judge deems appropriate.

Exhibitors having questions regarding placing should check with the Division Superintendent as soon as the judging is completed.

No exhibitor, unless in the presence of the respective Superintendent, will discuss any placing with the respective judge.

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS:
An exhibitor compelled to bring a complaint regarding conflict of interest of the judge, disqualification of an exhibit or exhibitor; exhibitor or superintendent's behavior, or eligibility of an exhibit shall make formal protest in writing to a Fair Board Executive Committee Member no later than 10 days following the end of fair. All protests shall be referred to a special committee which shall review the protest with interested parties and give parties an opportunity to submit evidence.

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Protest reports shall be made to the fair board for final decision on the protest 14 days following date protest issuance. The party against whom the protest was filed shall have the right to read the statement of protest. Exhibitor may file appeal to the Department of Agriculture within 45 days of filing the initial complaint if the exhibitor is not satisfied with the association's action.

The Department of Agriculture shall have 60 days after receipt of any appropriately filed appeal to investigate the complaint, and shall issue a finding of fact and notice of department action and any recommended actions for the association.

Ribbons and rosettes will be awarded for all places as listed for each class, unless otherwise specified.

EXHIBITS: NON-ANIMAL
Non-livestock exhibits will be received Saturday, August 8, 2026 between 10am to 2pm. Evelyn Heim Building - 10am to 2pm. Tanner Building - 12pm to 6pm. Please check department rules for exceptions and other instructions.

In no case shall any article be brought upon the grounds and placed upon exhibition except by and at the expense of their authorized agent.

EXHIBITS: ANIMAL
Please refer to individual departments and sections for additional rules and guidelines.

Exhibitors aged 5-7 years old are required to be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult in all show rings in order to participate in the class.

RFID tags are required for all Beef projects & Swine projects & (4-H identification tags are required for all market projects.) Scrapies tags are required for sheep and goats.

Animals will be received Saturday August 8th, 2026, 6:00am to 3:00pm (please refer to your species specific time and will remain on the grounds until Sunday, August 16, 2026 at 6:00am (poultry department refer to department rules). Animals will not be permitted to leave early without appropriate arrangements. Exhibitors will forfeit the premium awarded if animals are removed before times slated. Exercise, feeding, and cleaning times for animals shall be before 9:00am and between 4:00pm and 6:00pm. All barns will be closed by 10:00pm. All barns and animal pens must be ready for public viewing by 9:00am daily.

An accredited veterinarian shall be on-call during the fair. Any individual services and/or disbursement of medication provided by the veterinarian shall be the responsibility of the individual.

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Sawdust bedding will be furnished for all animals, with exception of fiber animals or waiver by veterinarian. Exhibitors are required to furnish all feed and supplies.

Stalls and pens will be provided for animals and assigned in the order of application. All beef and dairy animals will be secured by a neck tie, and secured by a nylon rope or chain to a secured pipe.

Hay nets/ hay bags will be allowed at the discretion of the barn superintendent. If it poses as a threat to the safety and wellbeing of the animal, the hay net/bag will be removed and returned to the owner. This applies to goats and horses.

Animals occupying stalls and pens must be appropriately entered in the judge's book of the section and shown in competition.

Due to Bio Security, there will be no animals allowed off the trailer until they are inspected by the Superintendent.

Any prescriptions written pertaining to care of, special treatment or use of equipment to feed or supply water to any animal on the fair grounds during the week of fair will be written on an individual basis. No group/family/farm prescriptions will be accepted, i.e. each horse, steer, chicken, etc will have its own individual prescription for care.

Copies of registrations, statement as to breeder, feeding and management of stock will be required from all exhibitors.

All exhibitors must be neat and cleanly dressed and must put the stalls, pens, and floors in a neat and tidy condition by 9:00am daily. Tack will be kept out of walkways. Infractions of these rules or other barn rules directed by the Superintendent in charge may result in dismissal of the exhibitor and their animal from the fairgrounds.

All Animals entered for exhibition must be placed in the department prior to 3:00pm on Saturday, and if not so placed, the owners will forfeit all rights to exhibit or compete for premiums unless relieved from such results or forfeiture by order of the Superintendent of the department in which they are entered.

4-H market animals to be sold in the auction must be weighed on assigned scales only. Market livestock exhibitors are prohibited from entering NWMI Fair if the exhibitor has entered any 4-H market animal at any other fair in this calendar year.

Any animal suspected of being on tranquilizers or other drugs may be subject to testing at the direction of three or more members of the NWMI Livestock Council and NWMI Fair Board.

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The NWMI Fair may perform livestock testing by an "at random" or "for cause" selection process by following these steps:

1. The initial complaints in writing must be received by the fair board detailing complainant's reason for requesting testing.

2. A written reply from the exhibit owner regarding their response to the complaint must also be received by the fair board.

3. The fair board will review the case and may, at their discretion, request a licensed veterinarian to collect a sample of urine, blood, tissue or other specimen for testing. If the fair board requests a sample be collected, it will be done within 12 hours of the complaint being received by the fair board.

The Northwestern Michigan Fair reserves the right to disqualify any animals, either alive or slaughtered, wherein the exhibitor/owner of the animal entered into competition refuses to allow the animal to be tested, or the drug test is positive for substances not approved by the Food and Drug Administration, the United States Department of Agriculture or the Michigan Department of Agriculture. This includes, but is not limited to diuretics, steroids, repartitioning agents, tranquilizers, and analgesics. Exhibitors will notify the fair veterinarian before administering any medications to any animal brought in for competition. The exhibitor will forfeit auction privileges, premiums, and awards. Other animals will not be moved up in placing.

Michigan Department of Agriculture 2026 Health Requirements for Livestock Exhibited In Michigan

All livestock exhibitors must be in compliance with the animal health requirements as defined by the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development.

Exhibitors may access requirements at:

https://www.legislature.mi.gov/Laws/MCL?objectName=MCL-ACT-466-OF-1988

OPEN CLASS SWINE EXHIBITS

Animal Exhibits Registration Deadline:
JULY 1, 2026

OPEN CLASS SWINE EXHIBITS

DEPARTMENT 9 - SWINE

Superintendent - Todd Brown

Asst. Superintendent - Tony Saxton

DEPARTMENT RULES:

• Please be sure to read through all the general rules at the beginning of this book.

• Registrations must be submitted by July 1, 2026. Late registrations will not be accepted. No exceptions.

• The superintendent(s) reserves the right to adjust or arrange classes as numbers see fit.

• All swine for exhibition must be free from infectious and contagious diseases.

• All swine must be vaccinated for Circovirus, Erysipelas, Swine Influenza, and Mycoplasma with booster given 21-28 days following initial vaccination. Vaccinations must be completed at least 60 days before August 8, 2026.

• Exhibitors must be 5 years of age or older. Age computed from January 1st of the current year.

• Exhibitors 5-7 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult in the show ring.

• Swine arrives between 6 am and 10:30am on Saturday, August 8, 2026. Swine will weigh in on Saturday as they unload.

• 840 Tags are required.

• A certificate of registration will be required and must be supplied to qualify for entry.

• No swine shall be presented for exhibition purposes that have originated from any garbage feeding premises or that are in a quarantined area for the prevention of the spread of vascular exanthema; or if quarantine is on the premises for any reason.

• Swine will be penned with 4-H animal, or if only exhibit 4-H Club. If the open exhibit is not associated with a 4-H Club, pen placement will be determined by the superintendent.

• PREMIUM: Exhibitors will receive rosette ribbons for their appropriate placing of 1st through 6th places unless otherwise specified. First place recipient will receive a premium of $7.00.

SECTION 1: REGISTERED BREED

Exhibitors placed 1st-6th in each class awarded ribbons. Exhibitors 5-7 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult in the show ring. Exhibitors must have complete control of their swine.

1. December, January or February born Registered Purebred (with breeder papers) Barrow or Gilt

2. Grand/Reserve Champion Registered December, January or February Purebred Gilt & Purebred Barrow - Exhibitors are determined by the judge. You do not need to register for this class. Rosette awarded to winner.

4-H SWINE EXHIBITS

Animal Exhibits Registration Deadline:
JULY 1, 2026

4-H SWINE EXHIBITS

DEPARTMENT 12 – 4-H SWINE

Species Chair – Mary Lynn Robertson

Assistant Species Chair - Mary Ann Wilsey, Kim Franke

SECTION 1: 4-H SWINE MARKET

• Classes are determined by weight and the Species Chair reserves the right to arrange classes as numbers see fit.
• Exhibitor's animals are placed in each class at the discretion of the judge.
• Ribbons will be awarded to the top 6 in each weight division..
• In the final placings, Grand & Reserve Champions and exhibitors placed 3rd - 6th receive rosettes and those placed 7th-15th receive straight ribbons.
• Final placing determines the auction line-up.

1. Market Swine
2. Grand & Reserve Champion Market Swine – Exhibitors are determined by the judge. You do NOT need to register for this class. Rosettes are awarded to winners. The Grand Champion also receives a medal.

SECTION 2: 4-H SWINE SHOWMANSHIP

• 4-H age is used as a guide to arrange classes. Species Chair reserves the right to split or combine classes as the numbers see fit. In some cases, exhibitors may be moved based on their experience if necessary to accommodate class sizes.
• Exhibitors placed 1st – 6th in each class receive rosette ribbons.

1. Swine Showmanship: Ages 18-19
2. Swine Showmanship: Age 17
3. Swine Showmanship: Age 16
4. Swine Showmanship: Age 15
5. Swine Showmanship: Age 14
6. Swine Showmanship: Age 13
7. Swine Showmanship: Age 12
8. Swine Showmanship: Age 11
9. Swine Showmanship: Age 10
10. Swine Showmanship: Age 9
11. Swine Showmanship: Age 8
12. Cloverbud Swine Showmanship: Ages 5-7
    Exhibitors will receive a Cloverbud ribbon.

13. Grand & Reserve Champion Swine Showmanship – Exhibitors are determined by the judge. You do NOT need to register for this class. Rosettes are awarded to winners. The Grand Champion also receives a medal.

NWMI FAIR REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Paper registrations are no longer accepted.

Please follow the link on our website or scan the QR code to complete registrtion.