



Good ethics — the only way to win at fairs

Youths throughout the state prepare to exhibit their 4-H and FFA projects at county fairs and the state fair in July and August.

Junior livestock shows and youth exhibitors are premier programs to help young people learn the proper methods of raising and exhibiting livestock and to learn about real-world agriculture. Lessons learned and skills gained through these projects are extremely valuable and can last a lifetime.

With problems that have occurred at large livestock shows and fairs in neighboring states, a group of professionals became concerned Wyoming could be at risk for similar problems. At one recent large national livestock show, 17 market lambs were disqualified for illegal injections.

To meet the challenge, a group of University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service (UW CES) 4-H educators and fair managers started a statewide program several years ago to educate 4-H members, 4-H leaders, and others that using good ethics is the only acceptable way to win at junior livestock shows and fairs in Wyoming.

Junior livestock show ethic proponents teach that:

- Exhibitors can win without cheating, and winning by cheating is not winning.
- Animals should never be mistreated or abused and, if mis-



treatment is witnessed, exhibitors or leaders must step forward and stop that action.

- Only approved livestock drugs should be used in treating animals, and all withdrawal times must be adhered to.
- Animals should never be given illegal drugs or illegal steroids.
- Contaminating meat with illegal substances is a violation of state and federal laws.
- Exhibitors cannot pick and choose which fair rules to obey at any livestock show. Exhibitors must abide by a rule even if they don't like it.
- Exhibitors and their parents should never criticize officials or judges. All that is asked of a judge is their opinion, and that is all that will be given.

- By having a livestock project, it is the responsibility of the youths to feed, train and prepare that project for a livestock show – not parents or a professional fitter.
- It is unethical to dye an animal with any color other than the natural color of that animal.
- It is unethical to physically or surgically alter an animal.
- It is important adult leaders practice good ethics and that they walk the walk, not just talk the talk.

Good ethics teach honesty, values, character, and skills that should last a lifetime.

For additional information on teaching good junior livestock show ethics, contact Fremont/Wind River Area CES Educator Ron Cunningham in Lander at (307) 332-1044 or roncc@uwyo.edu.

Exhibitors responsible for supplying safe product to consumer

As 4-H and FFA members prepare their animals for county fairs and respective junior livestock sales, it is important they understand they are like any other livestock producer – they supply meat to consumers as a part of the food chain.

Junior livestock members must understand they are responsible for supplying a safe and wholesome product to whoever buys their animal (steer, lamb, pig, goat, or other animal).

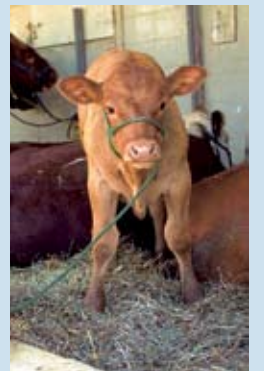
“For the most part, it has been assumed youth exhibitors follow production and best-management practices that would ensure a safe and wholesome product, and in almost all instances this has been the case,” says Wayne Tatman, University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service (UW CES) livestock educator serving Goshen, Platte, and Laramie counties. “However, we need to make sure our 4-H members understand and adhere to practices regarding injection sites, drug withdrawal times, feed additives, bio-security issues, and best-management practices.”

To ensure 4-H members are aware of their responsibilities, UW CES educators will provide training to 4-H youths through a meat quality assurance program. CES 4-H program associates recently received initial training and resource materials and will begin developing a program for their own counties.

The program is designed to be taught in three levels, with everyone completing the first level. Levels two and three, designed for increasingly older youths, provide an option for young people to either attend the training or take a test over that material to show they understand that part of meat quality assurance.

“I think it is a great step in the right direction,” says Tatman. “Our young livestock producers need to understand their responsibilities and expectations as producers.”

For more information, contact a local extension 4-H program associate or Tatman at (307) 532-2436 or wtatman@uwyo.edu.



Insurance can protect Wyoming producers from risk exposure

Insurance is one effective tool for ag producers to manage their risk exposure.

In addition to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program crops, insurance options are available for forages, certain types of livestock, and rangeland. Knowing which insurance policies fit a specific operation can help producers better plan for the coming production year.

All federal crop insurance products operate in about the same manner: the producer pays a premium to insure crops or livestock against some type of loss. The loss can be yield-based (such as weather disasters), price-based (caused by changes in market prices), or a combination of the two. These are available as either individual or group policies.

Yield-based contracts utilize a producer's actual production history (APH). This history is based on four to 10 years of a producer's production records for the crop. If a producer has enough years of acceptable yield

data, APH yield is calculated as the simple average. Indemnities are paid where actual yields are lower than the production guarantee.

Multiple Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI) policies insure against yield loss for either a whole farm or a specific unit basis. To establish an MPCI policy, the producer selects a yield coverage level for the acres insured, usually 50 to 85 percent of the APH yield and the price election



percentage from 60 to 100 percent. MPCI policies do not pay indemnities if prices change, only where a yield loss occurs.

Where MPCI policies protect against specific yield losses, revenue insurance insures against changes in price as well as yield fluctuations. These policies tend to carry higher premiums than MPCI contracts due to their more extensive coverage. Crop Revenue Coverage (CRC) policies utilize APH yields. Yield elections range from 50 to 85 percent of APH. A minimum revenue guarantee is established by multiplying the yield level by a price election. Indemnities are paid if either yield or price causes total revenue to drop below the minimum revenue guarantee. Revenue Assurance policies are similar to CRC policies, but they allow producers the option to take advantage of price increases at harvest time.

Income Protection policies are similar but are less specific in their coverage and are only available for basic units.

Group insurance policies operate on a different premise than other policies. Group Risk Protection (GRP) is insurance that provides protection against yield loss by insuring a percentage of a county average yield. GRP and Rangeland GRP policies pay indemnities for yield losses, whereas Group Risk Income Protection (GRIP) pays indemnities for revenue losses. As with APH policies, the producer selects the percentage level of coverage of the county yield (usually from 66 to 90 percent). Rangeland GRP policies are relatively new and available only in certain areas but can be a welcome risk-management tool for livestock producers.

Livestock Risk Protection Insurance is a price insurance policy available for producers of feeder or fat cattle and market swine. Livestock are insured for a certain price determined daily by the USDA's Risk Management Agency and a coverage level from 70 to 95 percent of expected value. An indemnity is paid if the actual

sale price drops below the target price level.

Where federal crop insurance products are unavailable, the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) may provide insurance coverage. This program is administered through the USDA's Farm Service Agency and may cover yield losses on otherwise non-insurable crops and forages.

A wide array of federally subsidized insurance options are available for both crop and livestock producers. They may help producers manage yield, price, and/or income risks associated with production agriculture as part of a total risk-management strategy. For more information on insurance products discussed in this article, visit the Western Risk Management Library at <http://agecon.uwyo.edu/RiskMgt>

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Training puts ATV riders on road to safety

Don't let an ATV ride turn into a dead end.

Riding all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) on the ranch or recreating in the countryside can be a mishap waiting to happen. Many people are killed or injured because of unsafe riding practices. Safety training greatly decreases the potential for crashes.

With more than seven million people riding ATVs, the machines serve the needs of agriculture, business, government, and people in various recreational pursuits and other activities.

ATVs are **not** toys! They can be hazardous when operated in an unsafe manner, such as driving too fast on sharp turns, negotiating steep side hills, or riding through ditches in conditions that could cause the machine to tip onto its operator.

The number of ATV accidents is difficult to determine. The Wyoming Department of Transportation states that ATV crashes on Bureau of Land Management property,

national forests, state or national parks and on private property are often not reported. According to WYDOT, there were only seven crashes reported in 2000 and 18 in 2005. There were 10 injuries in 2000 and 19 in 2005. One person was reported killed in 2005.

Potential and existing ATV owners should complete safety training (ask any dealer who sells ATVs when they are going to have their next training) to help prevent accidents and injuries. Training should include, but not be limited to, starting and stopping, making turns, negotiating up, down, and across hills, making emergency stops, and swerving around and riding over obstacles.

In addition, anyone who already owns an ATV should:

- Always wear a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)-approved helmet (identified by a DOT sticker). Helmet hair can always be fixed, but your head and body may not.

- Wear eye protection at all times. There are impact-resistant glasses, goggles, and face shields available. Wrap-around sunglasses are also useful as long as they provide protection from flying debris.
- Wear over-the-ankle boots, gloves, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and a jacket for protection.
- Never ride ATVs on pavement – they steer erratically.
- Never ride ATVs under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. According to RacewayATV.com (<http://www.racewayatv.com/atv-blog/2006/01/things-not-to-do-with-your-atv.html>), more than half of all ATV crashes involved drugs or alcohol.
- Never ride above posted speeds or at full throttle.
- Never ride beyond an ability to safely operate the ATV.
- Never ride in a private area without the landowner's permission.

Parents can help prevent accidents and injuries to their children by:

- Providing safety training to all children before allowing them to ride any ATV.
- Never allowing children to ride an ATV unsupervised.

Choose an age-appropriate ATV. Guidelines from the ATV Safety Institute are: children 6 and older – under 70cc engine size; age 12 and older – 90cc engine size; age 16 and older – 90cc or over engine size.

About 92 percent of all ATV crashes and injuries involve one



The ATV Safety Institute's Golden Rules

1. Take an approved training course. Call toll-free (800) 887-2887 to enroll.
2. Ride an ATV that's right for your age. The engine size guidelines are:
 - Age 6 and older – Under 70cc
 - Age 12 and older – 70cc to 90cc
 - Age 16 and older – Over 90cc
3. Supervise riders younger than 16 years of age.
4. Always wear the right safety gear, especially a helmet, when you ride.
5. Never carry a passenger.
6. Always avoid paved surfaces. Never ride on public roads.
7. Ride only on designated trails and ride responsibly!

From <http://www.atvsafety.org/asi.cfm>

or more behaviors that are visibly warned against by the manufacturer. Everyone's goal should be to ride ATVs safely to enjoy them today and tomorrow.

Information about hands-on training is available through the Wyoming State Parks and Cultural Resources (http://wyotrails.state.wy.us/safety_education.htm). The half-day ATV Safety Institute's ATV RiderCourse provides training that includes pre-ride inspections, starting and stopping, quick turns, hill riding, emergency stopping and swerving, and riding over obstacles. Information is also provided about protective gear, local regulations,

places to ride, and environmental concerns. Interested persons can call the ATV Enrollment Express at 1-800-887-2887 to find and enroll in the nearest ATV RiderCourse.

Additional safety information can be obtained on the ATV Safety Institute Web site at www.atvsafety.org.

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Resilient ranch families cope with economic stress

Coping with economic hardship is as common as coping with natural disasters for many ranch and rural families

A major study during the 1980s' farm crisis tells much about the effects of economic stress on rural families. Iowa State University researchers Rand Conger and Glen Elder followed Iowa families over a six-year period. Their book, *Families in Troubled Times: Adapting to Change in Rural America*, documented the impact of economic stress in agriculture on family relations and youth development.

Perhaps the most telling finding is that economic stress causes problems for children because it disrupts parenting. In other words, income loss itself does not necessarily have negative effects on youth – it is the degree to which income loss affects parents' relationships with each other and their parenting skills that matters for children.

How does this economic strain on families work?

According to Conger and Elder, financial stress increases depression for both husbands and wives. This depression can lead to deteriorating marital relationships

often due to conflicts between parents or between parents and children about money.

When conflict increases and marital relationships suffer, parenting quality dramatically drops. Parents may become less involved, less nurturing, and less consistent in discipline. This family climate puts adolescents at risk for a variety of negative outcomes including irritability, academic difficulty, and delinquency.

While not all children experience negative outcomes when their families face economic stress, many do.

One of the most important things members of rural families facing economic stress can do is remember the importance of maintaining strong, supportive relationships with spouses because marital happiness has such a strong effect on parenting and child well-being.

Particularly during times of economic stress, it's important to:

- maintain strong lines of communication between parents,
- stay conscious of quality parenting practices, and
- use community resources to deal with depression, marital tension, and parenting should family relationships suffer.



In addition, when financial pressures threaten family ranching, it is often family attitudes and coping skills that can make or break the business. A study at the University of Wisconsin found that families that survived the financial pressures and continual demands of involvement in agriculture shared positive attitudes. These families were more likely to have confidence in agriculture as an industry, have confidence in their family's ability to endure, and solve problems and cope and respond as a family unit.

A University of Nebraska study of 3,000 rural families identified the qualities that contributed to family resilience.

Commitment:

Family members are dedicated to each other's well-being and happiness. Their support is steady through good times and bad. Resilient ranch families face problems head-on and look for solutions together. They pull together as a family to make financial sacrifices, such as seeking off-ranch jobs or postponing purchases if necessary.

Appreciation:

Strong families frequently let each other know that each person in the family is appreciated. They don't spend time blaming each other, financial advisers, or the government for the family situation.

Communication:

Resilient families spend a lot of time in conversation and exchanging information and ideas. They discuss trivial topics as well as deeper issues. To successfully deal with financial pressures, families should cooperate and practice problem-solving skills.

Time together:

Quality and quantity time go hand-in-hand in developing strong relationships. Resilient families find a balance between togetherness and individual time. They do not isolate themselves from their community

but rather use their community for support.

Spiritual wellness:

Resilient families have a sense of a greater good or power in life, and belief gives them strength and purpose.

Acceptance:

When resilient families suffer serious crisis and stress, members may cry, get angry, and become depressed, but they are not broken. They adopt the attitude "If we can survive this, we can survive anything." They are able to see some good or opportunity for growth in crisis and accept that hardship may sometimes be a way of life on the family ranch.

Ranching as a way of life offers many challenges for ranch families – hard work, financial risks, long hours, and continual demands. How individuals within a ranch family and a family as a unit approach these challenges determines the degree to which the family survives and thrives.

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