

Quality Counts Verification Required for all 2012 Texas Major Livestock Shows

Starting in 2012, Quality Counts verification will be required for all youth exhibiting livestock (market and/or breeding) at major livestock shows in Texas (including the Ft. Worth Livestock Show, San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Star of Texas Fair in Austin, San Angelo Livestock Show, Sandhills Stock Show in Odessa, State Fair of Texas in Dallas, and Heart O' Texas Fair in Waco). The verification process will require junior exhibitors to pass an online test that measures their knowledge on quality assurance and character education content items.

The Quality Counts Program has now been in existence statewide for six years. Over this time, it has reached an average of 30,000 youth per year through the 4-H and FFA Programs. The program outcomes clearly demonstrate youth being more knowledgeable of best management practices associated with livestock projects. More importantly, the program's impact has demonstrated positive changes in personal character attributes as well as adoption of livestock best management practices.

Over these six years, Quality Counts has been supported and endorsed by every major livestock show in Texas. These livestock shows have been instrumental in helping market the program statewide and have also been a strong partner regarding the educational content developed for the Quality Counts Program. In addition, these livestock shows have fully endorsed this verification process.

Starting in May, youth are able to go online to take the test and become verified. A verification number will need to be provided at the time of making an official entry into a Texas major livestock show. Thus, youth will need to have completed and passed the test before the major livestock show's entry deadline. A passing score has been determined to be 80%.

Youth educators and the major livestock shows in Texas believe strongly in Quality Counts. Collectively, they are confident that this significant step of requiring youth to be "Quality Counts Verified," starting in 2012, will strengthen and enhance the youth livestock program in Texas.

For more information, please contact your County Extension Agent or Agriculture Science Teacher. To learn more about Quality Counts including the verification process, please visit: <http://qualitycounts.tamu.edu/>.