

# ANIMAL EXHIBIT TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



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When something happens and a fair or exhibition shuts down or has to limit its offerings, where does one turn for options? Virtual shows have begun to emerge as a possible option. For years we have had virtual livestock and dairy judging contests in print media. Those have expanded to online virtual contests in some cases with a shift from still photos to video clips or a combination of the 2 media forms. Some of the organizations have begun to offer a platform for virtual shows yet these can come with a hefty price tag associated with them. Small fairs, exhibitions and/or livestock shows may not be able to afford the price of a commercially available virtual show if their fair/exhibition/livestock show is cancelled. The reality is, some fairs and exhibitions have already been cancelled due to the “Stay Home Stay Safe” order imposed by Washington State Government during the 2020 spring, summer and fall show season. Navigating “what to do” or “how to prepare for” an impending shutdown will help ease concerns for educators, volunteers, fairs, expositions, and livestock shows.

Regardless of the type of show, traditional fair exhibition or virtual, youth should present themselves and their animal appropriately. When the youth participates in virtual stock show, the same parameters for appropriate dress, sportsmanship, attitude, politeness, etc. should be met. The video and photo background and environment should be clean and presentable and free from distractions. With some practice, family members, friends, advisors, or a leader can serve as the media crew to successfully capture photos or videos to be submitted to a virtual show. Additionally, youth wouldn't go to a livestock show without a clean, properly groomed and appropriately show trained animal. They should approach the virtual show in the same manner, as it is paramount for success. The use of appropriate show equipment and tools will help an exhibitor present an animal in the best light. The same expectations for an in-person livestock event, should be embraced in a virtual event and this should be communicated with a clear understanding.

The following are guidelines to offering a livestock show allowing the distribution of ribbons and premiums based on standards for either the American or Danish Judging system for quality and showmanship virtually.



# Measuring Quality of Livestock

## *Still Photography, Video and Combination*

A high quality photo or video allows for a better and more accurate evaluation of the animal or showmanship effort. We are not nor do we expect everyone to be professional photographers. But a few simple pointers can make a difference when an amateur photographer and/or videographer utilizes a few recommended steps. Regardless of whether you are submitting a photo or video, lighting is critical. Exhibitors should plan for a block of time once their animal is ready for the virtual show ring to capture their still shots and video. Once the initial photos or videos are taken, downloading and viewing them on a computer may prompt some exhibitors to capture a second round of images and video footage. Lighting may be one of the biggest challenges. Photo and video shoots held indoors may be dark. Alternatively, light creeping in from an open door or window can significantly impact photos as well leaving them washed out or with a glare or halo effect. If you are outside on a sunny day, be sure the camera is facing with the direction of the sun rather than directly into it. There are plenty of examples online and in print media that can be targets of what a good photo should resemble. Quality of the photos can impact the evaluation of the animal and so it is important to be satisfied with your entry submission.

## Still Photography with Handler

This form of documentation of the animal is limiting, as you lose the ability to access functional structure as the animal moves. Having said that there is a significant amount of quality that can be determined from a properly taken photo. Still photography is designed to evaluate only the quality of the animal.

### Guidelines for Still Photos with Handler:

- Still photos should be taken at eye level with animal or below with a full view of the animal (Figure 1),
- Still photos should be captured with the camera/phone in landscape or horizontal position (Figure 1), and
- Still photos should be taken for each view (front, side, and rear view) within 10-14 feet of the animal as the handler/exhibitor stages or sets them up as they would in the show ring (Figure 2).



Figure 1 - Still Photo and Video: Angle and Elevation

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Turn your phone to the horizontal position when shooting a photo or video. Both photo and video should be taken from eye level or below eye level position with animal. Try not to take photo above the animal in a downward position. The downward angle offers a skewed perspective in the actual size of the animal. Assume that lighting is appropriate. Avoid taking photos in low light, or where shadows or intensely bright light (such as directly into sun) may impact the quality of the photo.



10 - 14 feet distance

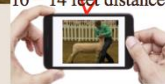


Figure 2 - Still Photo and Video: Handler in Full View with Front, Side and Rear Positioning

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10 - 14 feet distance



These are images with the exhibitor in full view and in control, through contact. Capture a front view, side view and a rear view. Judges can evaluate three dimensionally with the views provided.

**Note:** Hogs may need to be fed in an elevated feed pan or waterer in order to distract them long enough to capture good still shots.

## Still Photography without a Handler in View

This evaluation serves three purposes: 1) evaluation of the quality of the animal without the exhibitor altering the natural appearance animal; 2) anonymity to reduce face recognition and favoritism; 3) anonymity as a result of not offering descriptors (such as face, name, etc.) to protect the youth. The parameters listed above for still photography still exist with some minor alterations in display of the animal.

### Guidelines for Still Photos without a Handler in View:

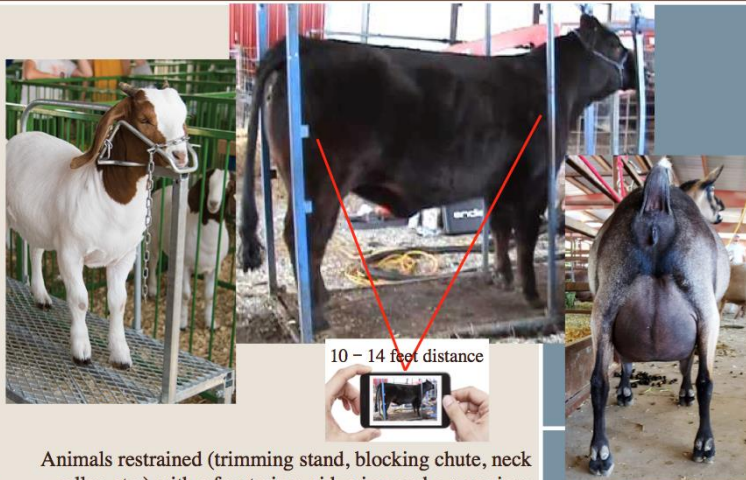
- Still photos should be taken at eye level with animal or below with a full view of the animal (Figure 1),
- Still photos should be captured with the camera/phone in landscape or horizontal position (Figure 1), and
- Still photos should be taken for each view (front, side, and rear view) within 10-14 feet of the animal loose (Figure 3), or restrained (stanchion, haltered, blocking chute, trimming stand, etc. - Figure 4) without the presence or control of a handler.





*Figure 4 - Still Photo and Video: Handler Not Present, Animals Restrained for True Quality*

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Animals restrained (trimming stand, blocking chute, neck collar, etc.) with a front view, side view and a rear view. Animals may be positioned (set-up) but handler is not in control or in photo. Judges can evaluate three dimensionally with the views provided.

## Video Presentation with No Handler

*30-45 seconds*

This form of assessment will allow for an evaluation of functional structure as the animal moves. A loose animal, on the move, is the truest way to evaluate structure/soundness, muscling and finish/fat, in a virtual platform. This is a short view for each animal but without the exhibitor in control as in the still photos. The video is designed for evaluation of quality of the animal only.

### The Videographer Should:

- Capture the video with the camera/phone in landscape or horizontal position just as we recommend with still photography (Figure 1),
- At eye level with animal or below with a full view of the animal,
- Capture the animal on the move in a pen within 10-14' of distance,
- The videographer should capture the animal walking toward them, away from them and on the side view similar to the views in the still shot evaluation (figure 3),
- Handlers can help to move animals but in this case should not be in video frame. Aids to help animals move must be appropriate tools (rattle paddle, hog boards, feed bucket, feed pan, etc.) approved for animal movement,

- Make sure that pens are large enough for the animal to move freely. But not so large to limit the exhibitors ability to control the animal,
- If using feed pan treats in different locations of pen, be sure feed is located at eye level for the animal so that the head is in the natural head carrying position. Small handfuls of grain or hay in pans hung on a panel can encourage an animal to move to new locations or between locations.

## Combining Video & Still Photography

### *As Mentioned Above for Quality Evaluation*

A combination of media types allows the judge to view a still shot which can be printed or uploaded in one file for direct comparisons and a rapid assessment. Videos then can be accessed for quality of the animal on the move for close placings, but a judge may not need to use all videos once an initial assessment has been placed. This will speed the judging process up. Using both medias also will allow a judge to provide a more accurate opinion on the placing within their skillset.

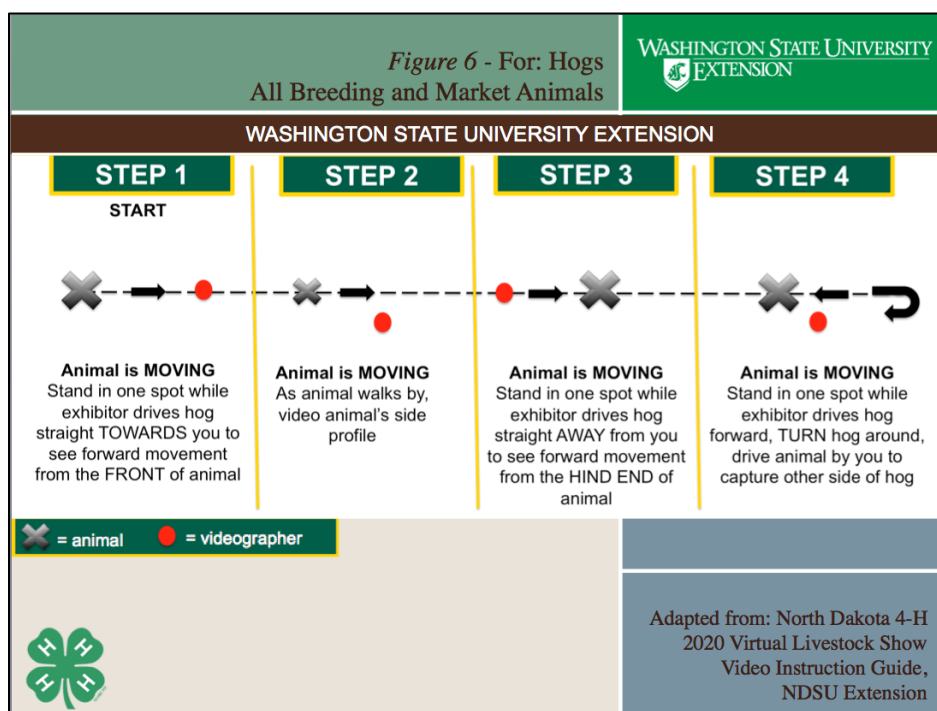
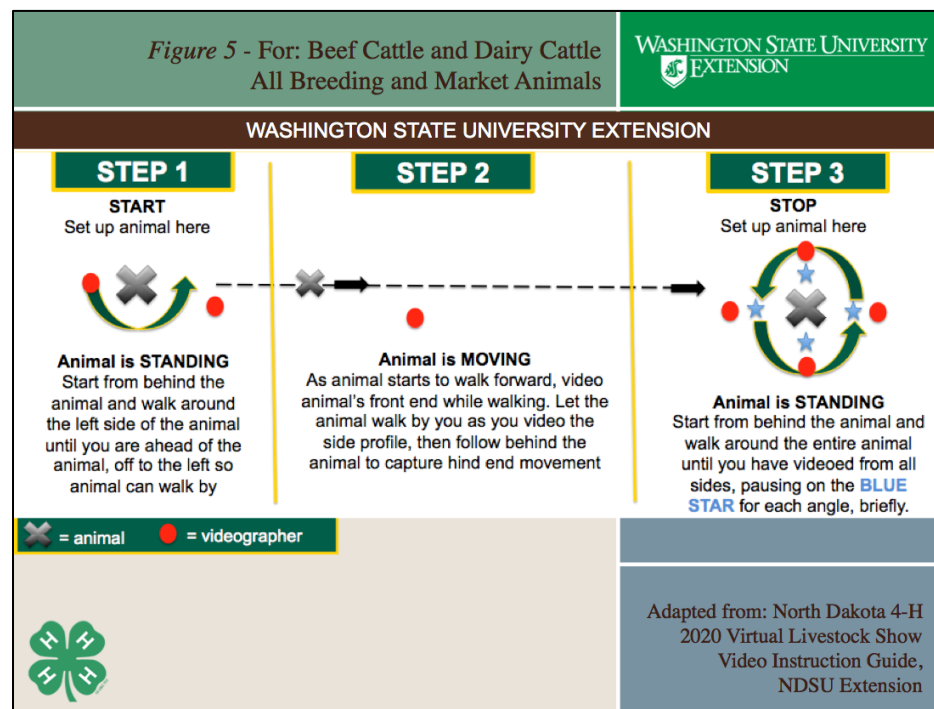
## Measuring Quality and Showmanship of Livestock

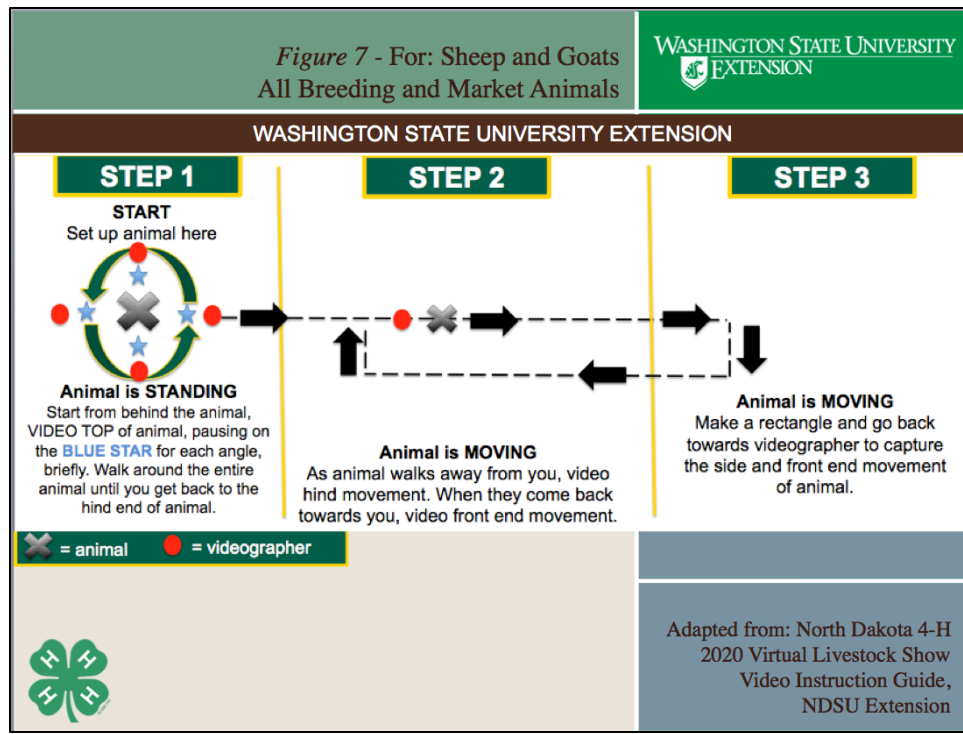
### *By Using Video with Handler*

An alternative to a video and photo shoot for quality evaluation is to look at options to evaluate both quality and showmanship with the handler present. Combining still photography with a longer (60-90 second) video clip (following video recommendations listed above), where the exhibitor is handling the animal as if they were in the show-ring offers the judge a glimpse into an exhibitor's ability to execute showmanship. In addition to animal quality evaluation, a judge can make an assessment on the exhibitors showmanship skill set. It may be a challenge with outstanding exhibitors to discern differences in their ability with a short video. But to capture the truest form of fair evaluation in the livestock barn, this would be an option. Offering a showmanship class in addition to quality gives you the opportunity to recognize youth exhibitors for the same class distinctions that we have during the fair.

**Note:** Showmanship may be a state or organizational requirement that in order for youth to sell their animal they have to complete. It is always important to verify requirements when altering your exhibition or livestock show event. If an exhibitor cannot sell an animal by doing a quality class alone it may be necessary for you to determine the best way to meet the requirements historically set in place.

Videoing the exhibitor as if they were in the show-ring, it is key to have them follow a structured pattern for movement, and in that pattern established points where exhibitors will stop for still evaluation are identified (Figures 5, 6, and 7 - Adapted from “A Guide to Livestock Patterns”, 2020 NDSU Extension).





## Ideas for Optional Showmanship Evaluation

Fair and exhibition closures may result in adjustments to what Washington offers to youth and how we evaluate the project areas and guidelines that are set in place. We realize in a normal showmanship class there maybe more time that a judge will see the animal and the exhibitor. It was mentioned that in the virtual format above that most showmanship skills can be assessed in the videos produced with a handler. However it may not be ideal. Some fairs and exhibitions may want to look at options for additional evaluation other than or in addition to the short showmanship evaluation that we receive from still photos and video. If showmanship is a desired or mandated class to judge virtually, realizing that the time youth are in the virtual ring is limited, adding an additional component to their entry may be necessary or desired.

### Suggested ideas that can be entered with a video and still photos include:

- A written essay detailing the steps that the exhibitor has gone through to prepare their animal for show, or
- A marketing campaign (2-3 minutes in video and/or print media) identifying key points that will and can be used to sell their animal or products from their animal, or
- An elevator speech (2-3 minute) about the industry that they are contributing to and represent,



- Or a podcast that highlights “The Project”, “The Animal” and “The Industry they Represent,” etc.

So many options can be afforded to the youth and we are sure the challenge will be met. Be creative as youth engagement thrives in creativity. This is a time where we have the opportunity to allow youth to design, create and lead by example. Not only may we develop future new classes or shows; these youth may help us discover better way to communicate with today's and tomorrow's youth and consumers.

## Entry Submission

Requested entry information needs to be clear and concise and ask for the pertinent information. Most fairs, shows and exhibitions have entry programs and procedure in place and there is no need to change the system. With the following exceptions:

- You will need to define the type of media presentations you want (as mentioned above) video with or without handler, photos with or without handler, or any combination of those two media sources for your evaluation,
- You will need to share how and when you would like to collect the photos and/or videos at the time of entry or uploaded after entries are received and confirmation is sent with instructions (Sample entry form: see figure 8 and 9),
- You will want to identify how many days before your virtual event that the pictures must be taken to ensure an accurate current evaluation of the animal or showmanship skill with the animal. Recommend that pictures be taken within 10 days of the show deadline,
- Each livestock show or exhibition will have to identify specific parameters for photo and video submission, file collection as well as management and sharing with superintendents as well as judges. Tracking methods will be necessary. Most video formats will have some time of time and date on them, still photos may not so determining a unified way of enforcement that works within your chosen system will be paramount, and
- You will have to share that ownership verification will be accomplished by an additional still photo(s) that are taken with a clear view of the ear tag or any other method of identification with the handler present and included in the entry packet (Figure 10). **Note:** This may require 2 photos in the case of tattoo identification, as a result of the close shot needed to read a clear tattoo.

## Electronic Evaluation Animal Submission Form

**SHOW INFORMATION:**

Show/Fair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBITOR INFORMATION:**

Name (first, mi, last): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, ST, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization Affiliation: **4-H FFA Youth Open**
**ANIMAL INFORMATION:**

Animal Official ID (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Breed: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Wt.: \_\_\_\_\_

**FAIR ENTRY INFORMATION: to be completed by fair/show personnel**

Exhibitor #: \_\_\_\_\_ Entry #: \_\_\_\_\_ Video ID: \_\_\_\_\_

**BOX 1 (Required)** - Insert picture/image (.jpg) of animal and exhibitor with clear view of tag or other identification. Resize and crop to fit.

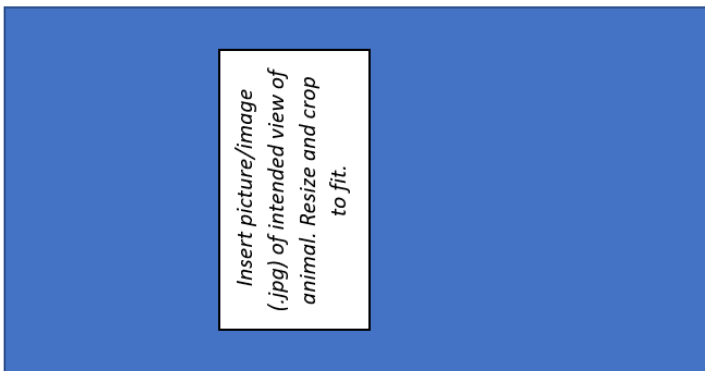
**BOX 2 (Optional)** Insert picture/image (.jpg) of alternate id of animal pictured in box 1 if it is not visible, such as an ear or web tattoo. A full side profile picture of color pattern. Resize and crop to fit into specified box.

Back

FAIR ENTRY INFORMATION: to be completed by fair/show personnel

Exhibitor #: \_\_\_\_\_ Entry #: \_\_\_\_\_ Video ID: \_\_\_\_\_

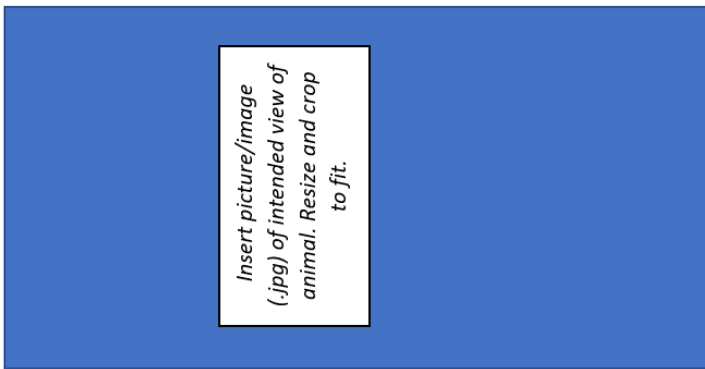
**Front View:**



**Side View:**



**Rear View:**



EVALUATION INFORMATION: to be completed by evaluator

Evaluator Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Ribbon Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Ranking: \_\_\_\_\_

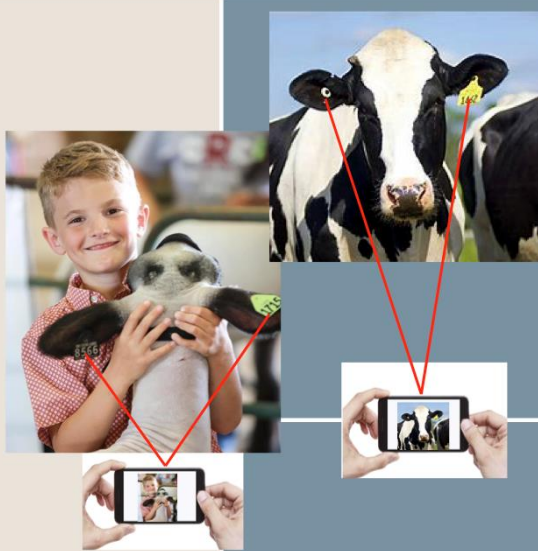
*Figure 10 - Still Photo and Video: Identification of Animal and Exhibitor for Show Management*

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Verify Ownership and ID:

Capture a clear photo of the animal's identification. If the animal has more than one form of identification, record both.

Pictures of tattoos as identification require a clean ear or web and a close-up shot for reading the numbers. You may have to request an additional photo with a tattooed animal that shows the animal with the exhibitor for verification of ownership.



## Capturing Your Video for Upload & Entry

Two of the platforms that seem to be fairly recognizable, assessable and useable are YouTube and Vimeo. Both have specific ways to upload and offer privacy settings.

### YouTube:

The following link will direct you to a general YouTube “How to upload your video to YouTube” tutorial – [How to load a Video on YouTube](#).

### YouTube information that is important to share with exhibitors and families:

- Record the video and save,
- Upload video using the create button,
- Provide them with a “title” format so you can track videos when you receive with entry,
- Instruct exhibitors and families to set their visibility setting to unlisted (so only people with the link will see)
- After uploading, choose to “Copy Video URL.” This is the link that you’ll use to enter.
- Videos MUST be submitted in the follow YouTube URL format:  
[https://youtu.be/nJu78GZ\\_VBk](https://youtu.be/nJu78GZ_VBk)

## Vimeo:

Another option and for ease of uploading is straightforward. The following link will direct you to an instructional YouTube video on “How to Upload a Video to Vimeo” tutorial – [How to Upload Video on Vimeo](#).

## After uploading:

- Click share and then copy the link,
- Advise the exhibitors to paste link into the entry,
- Videos MUST be submitted in the following Vimeo URL format <https://vimeo.com/403839309>, and
- Vimeo has no viewing restrictions in place, so uploaded videos may be seen by anyone. So if you prefer that videos are not seen by the general public, this may not be the program for you to use.

These are just a few platforms and other upload options exist. A simple option that may work for a smaller show might include offering a group data sharing option, such as Dropbox. Exhibitors who enter the virtual show can be invited to access and upload. They then can use the link you provide to access the file and upload from their phone or a personal computer. Fair and show management or anyone that is hosting a virtual show will have to determine what works within their resources. Again prior planning will be your trusted friend in this case for receiving the video clips, tracking, maintaining and distribution for evaluation.

Data management of videos may have issues as a result of file size, operating systems and viewing options. Using some of the tools provided for virtual uploads that are already in existence is helpful but should be thought through so there is no confusion prior to the entry deadline.

## Judges

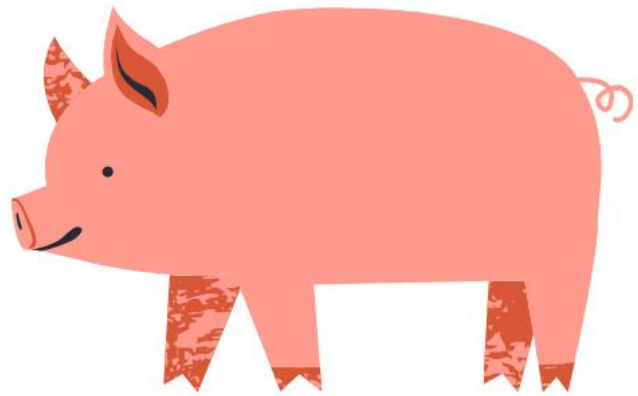
Evaluating a virtual show is a new learning experience for many judges, so be sure to contact them ahead of time your expectations. Judges that are asked to provide their expertise should be compensated. Depending on who is running or operating the show or exhibition funds may already be in place to cover these expenses. If funds do not exist, some options listed below may be a way to approach judging. Some options for Judges:

- In the traditional sense, individuals that you planned on for the event prior to cancelation can be asked if they are willing to engage in a new form of evaluation and proceed with the agreed contract price minus the travel expenses. This might be an opportunity to utilize a judge that you typically would not have been able to utilize because of travel and lodging cost.



- Ask local individuals that have expertise and will not play favorites with exhibitors (this may require a handler free option mentioned above) if funds do not exist or are reduced.
- Ask a group of individuals to judge and average the placing's across all of their results, etc. There are many excellent skilled livestock evaluators that may not feel comfortable speaking over a microphone or are physically unable to get through the rigors of judging a traditional two days of youth shows, but would be excellent candidates to evaluate a virtual livestock show platform.

Most importantly offer some different ways for judges to comment on the animals and their reasoning for placing the class the way they did. The insight that is shared from a thoughtful judge can result in a positive lifelong memory and experience. Encourage judges and provide with methods to share their placing's verbally (voice recording, video presentation or a podcast, etc.) or communicate them in writing in this virtual format. We may lose the person-to-person interaction but we don't have to lose the impact that those interactions have through education.



## Closing Remarks

As indicated early in this support material, these are uncharted times and there are unknowns. The one thing that we know is that we can create a positive youth development experience with whatever form of interaction we choose in the virtual show. Clearly it is not tradition, but it is a viable alternative that will engage youth and may surprise us.



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