

# Colorado State Fair and Industrial Exposition

## 2026 Drug Residue Avoidance Guidelines for Junior Market Animal Exhibitors, Parents, and 4-H Extension Agents

Colorado's agricultural youth programs are committed to encouraging positive youth development through honest and fair practices regarding junior livestock events. The Colorado State Fair Authority ("Authority") also continues its commitment to maintaining the integrity of all youth programs. The Authority will continue testing and screening for a broad spectrum of chemical/drug residues at the 2026 Colorado State Fair and Industrial Exposition ("State Fair").

Strict drug testing and screening protects the food chain and maintains the high standards of ethics and integrity that the Authority expects from all participants. Drug testing and penalties (including disqualification and forfeiture of awards) for positive drug tests will be strictly enforced.

### Why is it important to drug test junior livestock projects?

- To protect the safety of the food supply
- To foster fair competition

### What is my responsibility as an exhibitor or parent?

Know the competition requirements before you enter any livestock show. When you enter the State Fair Market shows, you agree to read and abide by the Authority's competition requirements, as set forth at <https://coloradostatefair.com/competition-requirements>.

### What are the Colorado State Fair Livestock Show residue avoidance requirements?

According to the Authority's Junior Livestock Competition Requirements, the carcass of an animal must "contain no trace or residue of any illegal drug or any other substance not approved for

administration to such animal under applicable laws or Colorado State Fair competition requirements and regulations.” If positive results are reported to the Authority from its lab, the Authority must investigate to determine what circumstances led to this result.

- Unapproved drugs are prohibited. Unapproved means not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for slaughter animals destined for human consumption. This includes using any products that are not FDA-approved, including, but not limited to, any diuretic, unapproved growth stimulant, or other unapproved medication meant for human usage.
- Non-label use of drugs is prohibited. The non-label use of approved drugs is not permitted and may result in an additional investigation around the circumstances and may result in disciplinary action.
- Products labeled “all-natural” that are not FDA-approved may contain ingredients that can result in a positive test. You must know what ingredients are included in products labeled as “all natural.” This includes feed and feed supplements. You are responsible for knowing what is in the feed and supplements you are giving your animals.

## **What are the best practices for a show animal that falls sick, ill, or injured leading up to the Show?**

- Consult with your veterinarian. First and foremost, consult your veterinarian. Do not administer any medications before visiting with your veterinarian. As a part of this conversation, ensure you and the veterinarian know the show’s competition requirements. Carefully consider the time before arrival at the show and assume the elimination period is longer than the labeled withdrawal period. From there, you, your family, and your veterinarian should discuss options before making the best decision.
- Make an informed and the best decision possible. The utmost priority should be the animal’s welfare. The welfare of the animal should always be a priority over competition. This could result in leaving the animal project at home.

- Document all treatment records. If the animal is treated with an approved drug and withdrawal times are observed, maintain an official record of treatment from the veterinarian, including the date of administration and dosage. That information must be listed on the Quality Assurance form submitted during check-in.

## **If my livestock project receives a positive test, what should I expect?**

- The Authority considers each case on an individual basis. Upon receiving a report that any show animal's blood or urine sample resulted in a positive test, the Authority considers various factors, including whether the substance identified in the testing is prohibited. Should the Authority conclude that discipline is appropriate, you will receive notice by mail, including any required follow-up steps or options you may exercise.

## **What are the common types of drugs that I may be penalized for?**

- Antibacterial Therapeutic Medications – These compounds are used to treat infection, but they don't create a competitive advantage. They can cause food safety concerns if not used according to label directions. Many are only FDA-approved for particular species, meaning that extensive research has been conducted regarding the proper dosage and type of administration to be efficacious in that species and the withdrawal time necessary for meat products to be safe for human consumption.
- Non-Antibiotic Therapeutic Medications – Inclusive of anti-inflammatories, antipyretics, diuretics, and anesthetics, these medications can result in a competitive advantage by altering the physical appearance of the animal or concerns with food safety. Some are available over the counter, and others can only be legally sourced and administered through prescription by a licensed veterinarian. Many are only FDA-approved for a particular species and use in any other species without a prescription by a veterinarian is illegal.
- Beta-agonists – Originally developed as bronchodilators in humans, large dosages have a growth-promoting effect in animals, resulting in increased muscle and decreased fat. The only beta-agonist that is currently FDA-approved and commercially available for use in livestock production is ractopamine, which is labeled for use in market cattle, market swine, and market

turkeys with a zero-day withdrawal (i.e., research indicates that meat products are safe for consumption at any time during the feeding period). Using beta-agonists in species that are not FDA-approved or commercially available creates concerns about food safety or competitive advantage.

The use of all drugs in junior market animals, both unapproved and FDA-approved, is governed by the Authority's Exhibitor Handbook and the competition requirements located at:

<https://coloradostatefair.com/competition-requirements>.

For the latest Colorado State Fair Show updates, visit [coloradostatefair.com](http://coloradostatefair.com) and LIKE us on Facebook or join the Colorado State Fair Livestock Updates page on Facebook.