



## EDUCATIONAL, PERFORMANCE & CARCASS CONTEST

# Frequently Asked Questions

## ABOUT THE CONTEST

### What is the value I gain from this contest?

The value you gain includes actual data of your calf's performance in a feedyard setting. You also get to see the whole industry in a small, controlled environment (meaning you get to see the calves in the feedyard, you get to see actual data of your calf's carcass traits and characteristics). This contest is great for beginners and "old-hats" alike. Who doesn't have room to learn?

### How do I know if I am eligible to compete?

If you are a current member with the Sandhills Cattle Association, you are eligible to compete.

### What if I am not a member, but would like to send my calves in?

Simply call the office to get signed up as a member. We have different levels of memberships available for those wanting to join! Contact the office at (402) 376-2310 for more info!

### How many calves typically enter the contest?

On average, we receive 45 heifers and 90 steers per year. We'd love to see this number grow—so tell your friends!

### When is the deadline?

Registrations are due to the office by Thursday, November 3, 2021.

## REGISTRATION QUESTIONS

### How do I register for the contest?

Simple. Visit <https://sandhillscattle.com/epc> and download the form to fill out and send back to the office. That's it. You can also enter your data online by following the instructions provided on the above link.

### Where do I get official SCA tags?

After you provide your registration forms to the office, we will send you the correct number of tags. Make sure that each calf gets one tag in each ear!

## ABOUT THE CALVES

### What kind of calves should I bring?

We take all breeds and kinds of calves. Some submit their top-end to see how they perform in a feedlot setting while others bring us their off-colored, misfits – may be those that would be sorted off in the sale barn.

Most important consideration is size and age. The calves entering the contest should be 2021 spring born calves weighing between 500-700 pounds.

### How long will the calves be at the feedyard?

Once in the feedyard, calves are under complete control of the feedyard manager. He decides what they eat and when they ship. Calves will be on feed an average of 180 to 200 days, though some may be retained longer or ship sooner.

## Should my calves be weaned?

Because our Association promotes best management practices, it is highly recommended that you wean and pre-condition your calves before they enter the feedyard to reduce stress to the calves.

## What is required of my calves?

Your calves will need to be brand inspected and tagged with official SCA tags before they get off the trailer at the feedyard. The brand inspection papers must accompany the calf to the feedyard and the calves MUST be tagged with SCA tags in BOTH ears before they get off the trailer! We also ask that they are weaned and pre-conditioned with no implants.

## Where can I get a brand inspection?

Brand inspections can be obtained through the State of Nebraska Brand Committee. Please visit [https://nbc.nebraska.gov/find\\_inspectors](https://nbc.nebraska.gov/find_inspectors) to find an inspector near you. We will also have one available at Valentine on November 10th at 10 am at the pickup location if you'd like to have your animals inspected there. There will be no brand inspector at the feedyard, so please plan accordingly.

## How can I get my calves to the feedyard?

We will help provide transportation for calves to the feedyard, but you must inform us before October 31st they need a ride. You can also deliver your calves yourself to the feedyard. Please try to my make sure that your calves arrive around 1 pm so that they can be penned out as a group.

## When do the calves go to the feedyard?

Calves will arrive at the Cottonwood Feeders LLC on November 10th, 2021, around 1 pm central time. We would like all calves to arrive at roughly the same time so that they can be penned out together. If you cannot make that deadline, please call the office at (402) 376-2310 to make arrangements.

## Why is there a two-week warm up period?

To ensure that calves are all treated fairly, and no one mistreats their animals before they enter the contest, the Board of Directors has implemented a two-week warm up period. Calves will be left in their pen to adjust to their surroundings and will not be handled unless necessary for health reasons. Again, we want to promote best management practices, and this helps to not stress the livestock and their immune systems.

## What if my calf dies while in the contest?

Unfortunately, death is a part of life. While the staff and Board of Directors with the SCA, the feedyard, transportation and packers will all do our best to ensure the health of your animal, sometimes animals die. This contest is meant to mimic real-life and real-risk. That means, if a calf dies, you won't get paid for that animal and might still owe some money for feed, yardage, etc. That being said, we all will do our best to ensure the health and wellness of your animal during its time in the contest.

# FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

## How much is the contest to enter?

This contest is FREE to members of the Sandhills Cattle Association! That's right – no entry fees!

## When do I get paid?

Down payments will be sent to contestants after their calf has shipped from the feedyard. Each calf will receive a \$150 down payment once it ships. Not all calves ship at the same time, meaning your neighbor might receive his payment before you—don't worry, it's coming when your cattle ship. The balance will be paid at the conclusion of the contest which is the annual banquet in August 2022.

## What are my expenses?

Each calf will incur expenses during the contest. Expenses may include and are not limited to: feed, veterinary care, and yardage. The Association also takes a small percentage of the gross value after harvest, to keep the contest alive.

## How do you figure the value of my calf?

The calves will be awarded a “start value” after a brief two-week warm up period. The calves will be weighed, and the price calculated according to that day’s markets. The packer will place a price on each calf at shipment and then expenses will be deducted along with a portion of the gross value at harvest of the calf retained by the Association.

## What does the Association do with the money they keep?

The Association places these funds into a Money Market fund where it waits patiently to be used for contest promotion and program expenses.

## AWARDS

### When do we know if we received an award?

Awards will be announced at the EP&C Banquet in August of 2022. Date needs to be set yet, but we will make sure you know!

### What are the Contest Awards?

Calves are placed into our database and then ranked based on certain criteria and formulas (each different according to the specific division. Division categories include Average Daily Gain (ADG), Carcass, Profitability and Overall.

Special awards will be presented to the Best Three Head in ADG, Carcass, Profitability, and Grand & Reserve Grand Champion will be awarded to the best performing heifer and steer.

Livestock Markets will be placed into their own division and will be ranked accordingly. They will receive an Overall award.

## NEW – ‘STEERS FOR STUDENTS’ PROGRAM

### What is this program?

The 'Steers for Students' program is a new educational piece geared for the youth of the Sandhills. The 'Steers for Students' program calves will be sent to Husker Meats LLC of Ainsworth, Nebraska instead of being shipped to the larger plants like the retained ownership calves. Jim Pinney of Husker Meats and a group of industry professionals will offer local FFA students and producers a chance to learn about carcass evaluation while experiencing how a packing plant operates. Schools that send the students will be provided the opportunity to receive the donated beef for their school lunch programs at little to no cost.

### What kind of calves are expected for this program?

Spots are limited for this donation opportunity to the first ten steers registered and limited to one per producer. The calves must be spring-born steers who are weaned and weighing 500-700 pounds in good health to qualify for the program.

### How do I donate a calf to the program?

Simple. Visit <https://sandhillscattle.com/epc> and download the form to fill out and send back to the office. That’s it. You can also enter your data online by following the instructions provided on the above link.

### What do producers get for their donated calf?

Producers donate a calf to the Association. At the conclusion of the contest, the producers get half of the premium cuts from their calf in lieu of payments they would have received from the retained ownership portion of the contest. The calf will still receive start values as well as end values for profitability scores, and carcass data. They will still be placed in the regular contest. Producers will receive recognition during the EP&C Contest as well as in press and social media releases for their contribution to the program. You may be able to deduct the donation of your calf. (Refer to your tax accountant.)

### What is the Sandhills Cattle Association's part in this program?

The Sandhills Cattle Association facilitates the contest. The Association will own the calf after donation. The Association pays expenses incurred by that calf during the contest, including but not limited to feed, veterinary care, yardage, and processing. The Association will accept cash donations to cover processing and if enough funds are collected, to cover feed expenses to keep the expenses low for the schools. At the conclusion of the contest, the Association will get half of the locally grown premium cuts from the donated calf to use for their upcoming programs.

### What do area FFA programs gain from this program?

They are invited to come learn to evaluate the carcasses and learn about packing plants from industry experts. Participating schools then will receive the balance of beef from the carcasses at little to no cost to the school (dependent on donations for processing and feed).

### I really like this program idea, but don't have a calf to donate. How can I contribute?

If you wish to donate to the 'Steers for Students' program but don't have a calf, the Association accepts cash donations to cover feed and processing to ensure the beef will be free to the participating schools. You can even choose which school you'd like to 'sponsor' in this program!