



2026 LLAMA & ALPACA PROJECT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



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IMPORTANT DATES		IMPORTANT INFO	
Registration	May 4, 2026	Record Book	Required Due: 9/7/2026

Participating 4-H youth must abide by all general rules and regulations listed in the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's Policies & Procedures books and the Premium Book of the Northwestern Michigan Fair. This includes, but is not limited to, Code of Conducts, registration deadlines, showmanship and market requirements, record book and thank you letter requirements, etc.

Registration Requirements

- To participate in a 4-H llama/alpaca project, youth must attain the age of five (5) or older by January 1st of that calendar year and be registered with 4-H Online 2.0
- Members that are 5-7 years of age will participate in the 4-H Cloverbud program and will have their own Cloverbud classes.
- All llama & alpaca participants, including Cloverbuds, MUST complete the online registration via the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's website NO LATER THAN midnight the first Monday of May.
- To participate in the 4-H livestock shows at the fair, youth must follow all registration requirements listed in the Northwestern Michigan Fair's Premium Book.

Program Goals

- Develop knowledge and responsibility of the care, grooming, feeding, management, expenses, health concerns, and maintenance requirements of llamas/alpacas
- Establish or enhance a sense of leadership, team building, self-esteem and sportsmanship while performing and showing



2026 LLAMA & ALPACA PROJECT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



Fair Week Requirements

- General Requirements
 - Handlers must be neatly and cleanly dressed at all times
 - Youth are responsible for keeping their pens clean all week.
 - Stalls, pens, and floors must be in neat and tidy condition by 9:00am daily
 - Tack must be kept out of the walkways

- Animal Care Requirements
 - **Animals shall be treated humanely at all times. Any reports of unethical, Inhumane, and/or abusive treatment or actions that cause distress and/or suffering to an animal will be evaluated by the Species Chair, Fair Superintendent, Fair Veterinarian, and/or other appropriate individuals and may lead to disqualification and removal from all 4-H and Open Livestock Shows held at the Fair.**
 - Youth are responsible for providing enough grain and hay to care for their llama or alpaca throughout the entire week.
 - Youth are responsible for feeding, watering, and caring for their animal the **entire** week.
 - Water buckets shall remain full and fresh at all times.

Showmanship

- About
 - Showmanship is about the handler
 - Demonstrates the 4-H youths' knowledge of their animal and general llama/alpaca facts, based on age categories, and the handler's ability to show his/her animal to its best advantage
 - Judged on basic skills in fitting, grooming, following directions, and style of presenting the llama/alpaca to the judge

- Handler
 - Should be neat, clean, properly dressed, prompt, alert, confident, and courteous
 - Proper clothing
 - Black or khaki pants or skirt
 - Collared solid colored shirt or blouse top, no logos or club names
 - Boots or solid shoes
 - No open-toes shoes or tennis shoes



2026 LLAMA & ALPACA PROJECT

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



- Tips
 - Be courteous of other showman
 - Listen and always keep your eyes and ears on the judge
 - Always know where the judge is in relation to you
 - Research the proper position of where you are supposed to be, relative to where the judge is in each quadrant
 - Never cross behind your animal
- Animal & Equipment
 - Animal should be clean, brushed out, and in good condition with the toenails trimmed
 - Worming needs to be done one month before fair with Ivomec or Dectomax (dosage according to animal's weight)
 - Halter and lead should be properly fit, not distract from the animal, be in good repair and safe
 - Tips
 - Color coordinate your halter and lead or use a non-distracting color such as black
 - Avoid looping or wrapping leads around your hand
- Showing the Animal
 - Following directions: Listen and follow what the Judge or ringmaster instruct the handler to do
 - Leading: Lead your animal from the left side, hold lead in right hand at least 8 inches from the halter.
 - Change of pace: Demonstrate change of pace from walking to trotting
 - Backing up: Back up then lead forward a requested number of steps
 - Posing: Stand or set your animal's legs squarely and position yourself at a 45-degree angle off your animal's left shoulder, using the quadrants to switch sides smoothly as the Judge moves
 - Re-positioning: If asked to move out of line, or to a new position, move in a straight line forward, turn and rotate to the right, go back through your space in line, go past the line, then turn and rotate to the right, walk to and enter your new place in line. Stand or set your animal's legs squarely and position yourself at a 45-degree angle off your animal's left shoulder
 - Showing to Advantage: Position or pose your animal in a way that increases its positive qualities and decreases its faults
 - Controlling the animal on the lead and in place: Allow a safe distance between animals when moving (for example one llama length) and do not crowd others
 - Pay attention to the line-up, which classes you are signed up for, when they are scheduled to start, and when you are called for them
 - Be able to answer questions on general llama/alpaca knowledge or confirmation: where they originated from, animal classifications, body parts, health risks to llamas and alpacas, how we use them, etc.



2026 LLAMA & ALPACA PROJECT

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



- Tips
 - PRACTICE!!!
 - Frequent practice will help the animal feel less nervous, and you can show it to the best of your ability
 - Practice backing and changing pace
 - Practice standing in one position with you by your animal's head, smoothly change sides in front of your animal
 - Be patient; Remember the animal may not like standing and waiting attached to the lead
- Develop a relationship with the animal you are working with so that it learns to trust you
- Handlers should encourage the animal to walk into the ring at a brisk pace and should never drag the animal into the ring
- Be natural; over-fussing with your animal or continually moving and repositioning may be counted against you
- Always allow the Judge to have a clear view of your animal
- Have fun! Your animal can sense if you are nervous and uptight
- Learn from your mistakes
- Do your best
- Ask questions If you don't know

Performance Classes

- Obstacle Class
 - Llama/alpaca Is required to follow and complete a trail or course, possibly Including bridges, ramps, jumps, stairs, walking In water or on other types of ground material, loading and unloading from a trailer, weaving, going under or over obstacles, change of pace, going through a gate or doorway, backing, flexibility and maneuvering, picking up animal's foot, showing teeth, meeting other people and/or animals, tolerating touching or having something touch the animal, unexpected noises or distractions, narrow passages, etc.
 - Handlers are judged on their ability to work with their animal as well as the animal completing the obstacle
 - Novice and Advanced classes
 - Novice consists of an animal shown in no more than 3 shows without taking 1st place. Advanced consists of animals that have placed first at any show.
 - Novice will have fewer obstacles (usually 6-8), and advanced more (usually 8-10)
 - Tips
 - Practice performing various obstacles, so the animal Is less likely to balk or refuse
 - Wear neat, clean clothes and sturdy shoes or boots
 - Not having appropriate footwear will be a disqualification



2026 LLAMA & ALPACA PROJECT

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



- Pay attention; the judge will do a walk-through of the obstacle requirements and the order of obstacles at the beginning of each class
 - Listen to the judge, always know where the judge is, and what the judge is saying
 - Your animal may attempt or refuse an obstacle 3 times (unless the judge indicates otherwise), then you are required to move on to the next obstacle
 - A llama/alpaca will not be allowed to be in both novice and advanced obstacle class
 - Do your best and have fun!
- Pack Class
 - Pack has all the same possibilities as Obstacle, but requires your animal to perform while wearing a pack which may or may not contain items
 - Course will usually vary slightly from Obstacle and will generally be obstacles that your animal might encounter in actual packing experiences
 - Consists of 2 classes, novice and advanced
 - Novice is for animals trying a pack course for the first time or shown in no more than 3 shows without taking 1st place.
 - Advanced consists of animals that have placed first at any show.
 - Novice will have fewer obstacles (usually 6-8), and advanced more (usually 8-10)
 - Tips
 - All the tips for Obstacle are equally true for Pack classes
 - Practice applying and removing a pack from your animal
 - This can be challenging if your animal has never felt anything on its back before
 - Start training by laying a towel across your animal's back and gradually move into laying a pack across their back before you actually strap it on
 - Costume Class
 - A performance class
 - Entertaining for the public and the handler
 - Involves dressing the handler and the animal in a costume, having a written story which you make up, and is judged first on coverage of the animal and how much it is asked to tolerate, how well it tolerates it, and originality
 - Halter Class
 - Llama Halter Class
 - Animal is judged on its conformation only; How well it is put together and moves
 - Divided according to wool coverage:
 - Light Wool: Minimum body wool, short neck wool with smooth head, ears, and legs



2026 LLAMA & ALPACA PROJECT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



- Medium Wool: Moderate to long body wool, minimum to moderate neck wool, smooth to moderate head and leg wool
- Heavy Wool: Abundant body and neck wool with minimal to abundant head and leg wool; Leg wool at least to knee and hock
- In a division of sexes (females, males, non-breeders), competition is against other animals in their age group
 - Juvenile: 5-12 months
 - Yearling: 13-23 months
 - Two-Year-Old: 24-36 months
 - Adults: 37 months and older
- NOTE: 24 month or older llama/alpaca males are not allowed in the program
- Alpaca Halter Class
 - Classes are Haucaya or Suri
 - May be judged on wool if enough animals are entered
 - Wool usually constitutes 50% of the score
- Tips
 - Groom your llama/alpaca to the best of your ability as these classes are judged on their conformation, movement, and possibly wool.
 - Condition and placement of the wool can enhance or detract from their overall presentation
 - Enter each llama/alpaca into the class for which they are most appropriate
 - Animals must be shown in the wool division in which they would have been shown prior to shearing

After Fair Requirements

- Youth are required to turn in one completed record book (showmanship or market). If youth are exhibiting in market or in multiple species, you are required to complete the record book for your market project.

Examples: Jane shows beef cattle in showmanship and market; Jane completes a record book in beef cattle. John shows swine, horses, and goats, and markets his hog; John completes a record book for hogs. Sally shows chickens, rabbits, and dogs all showmanship only, and decides to complete the record book for rabbits.

- Failure to submit a completed, hard copy record book at the September Livestock Council meeting WILL result in suspension from the 4-H Livestock classes held during the NWMI Fair the following year. Suspended youth who complete their record book and submit it to the 4-H Livestock Council by the November meeting that same year will again be eligible to register for 4-H Livestock classes held during the NWMI Fair the following year.