

2026 Show Rules and Regulations Guide



U.S. Ayrshire Breeders Association
PO Box 826
Brattleboro, VT 05302

Tel: 800.952.5200

Email: info@usayrshire.com

Ayrshire Breeders Association

Show Guide 2026

| | Page |
|--|------|
| 1. List of national Shows dates and locations for 2026 | 3 |
| 2. PDCA Code of Ethics | 4 |
| 3. General Show Rules and Regulations | 4 |
| 4. Breed Rules and Regulations | 5 |
| 5. National Approved Class List (New) | 8 |
| 6. Judges and Selection Process | 10 |
| 7. National Lease Program | 11 |
| 8. Junior Show Guidelines | 12 |
| 9. Areas of Responsibility | 13 |
| 10. Premier Exhibitor Form for Show Use | 16 |

This guide is prepared to standardize the Ayrshire National Shows. All national show requirements are clearly designated. These rules and regulations include recommendations for all large shows, as your show could be important to the All American contest. Please reach out to the national office with any questions.

These rules and regulations were approved by the National Board of Directors 3/2026 and are effective immediately.

National Ayrshire Shows 2026

National Summer Ayrshire Spectacular

New York State Fairgrounds, Syracuse, NY July

Midwest Summer National Ayrshire Show

Alliance Energy Center, Madison, WI August

Mid-Atlantic National Ayrshire Show

Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, PA Sept.

Eastern States National Ayrshire Show

Eastern States Exposition West Springfield, MA Sept

International Ayrshire Show

Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI Oct

Southern National Ayrshire Show

Kentucky State Fairground, Louisville, KY Nov

PDCA CODE OF ETHICS RULES * Required

[Purebred Dairy Cattle Association - Literature](#)

GENERAL RULES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Dress Code: All exhibitors are required to wear white trousers and an official harness when leading animals in the Showring . No hats or caps will be allowed . Shirts with farm names or agricultural logos are prohibited.

Junior Show Shirts at National Shows: All junior exhibitors may wear a provided Junior Show shirt and white pants while exhibiting in breed classes.

Showring Numbers: Each entry will be issued a minimum of 1 with 2 backtags per animal are recommended. Backtags must be displayed in the exhibitor's show harness while in the Showring so that the animal may be properly checked-in and placed. Show management may designate jr. exhibitor on back tags.

Showring Exhibitors: Any person leading an animal at a National Show must be at least **nine (9) years of age as of the breed show day**. No child under the age of nine (9) may accompany an adult in the Showring. Only one person is allowed at the halter of an animal.

Conflict of Interest Policy Regarding Official Judges: The animal in question will be allowed to circle the ring but must be placed by the Associate Judge. If both the Official and Associate Judge have a conflict of interest in placement of an animal, Show Management will designate an alternate judge for placement of the animal. Exhibitors will be notified of the conflict of interest during reasons for the class.

Cell Phones: The use of cell/smart phones or any personal electronic communication device in the Showring is strictly prohibited, with exception of providing evidence of certificate of animal registry for group classes .

Breed Rules and Regulations

US Ayrshire Registration is required and serves as proof of identity, legal percentage, parentage, birth date, ownership, and breeder of animal. Must be recorded as 87% or greater purebred Ayrshire to show. **The Premier Exhibitor and Breeder process is recommended.** If you are **not following** this process, your process **must clearly be stated prior** to your show for all exhibitors to read and understand.

1. Breeder/Exhibitor Description

- a. The owner of the dam at the time of service shall be considered the breeder of the animal. Where a herd is registered in the names of different members of a family, and where the herd is one unit, all entries may be considered as exhibits of one breeder. Please Note: To qualify for Bred & Owned Awards, one of the original owners must be listed as one of the current owners.
- b. Family Unit members of a family that house animals in the same location can be one breeder and one exhibitor
- c. Breeder on the registration paper is the official breeder
- d. Jr Owner can be breeder in partnership with an adult as listed on the registration

2. Premier Exhibitor – awarded to the exhibitor of 6 or less animals who accumulated the highest total points shown below. Ties will be broken using the points on next (7th) animal.

- a. Exhibitor (description above) credited with the most points on animals including those in multiple ownership, which he/she owns and exhibits in the open single class.
- b. Partnership animals may be used for premier exhibitor for any listed owner or as their own exhibitor for calculations.

Example: A and B own animal #1 as partners. Here are the choices.

- A or B may list animal #1 for their premier exhibitor points
 - or
 - Partnership AB may list animal #1 for premier exhibitor points
 - Animal may only be used once for premier exhibitor points
- c. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to notify the show management which person in a multiple ownership will receive exhibitor points. This must be done before the day of the show. If not completed the partnership is a separate exhibitor.
 - d. A Premier Exhibitor form is at the end of this document for all shows to print and use at their events.

- e. Lease animals may count for breeder/exhibitor awards **ONLY** if the open show is separate from the Jr. Show **AND** the owner exhibits the animal in the open show.

3. Premier Breeder

- a. Awarded to the breeder of animals credited with the most points, regardless of ownership, for the top 6 placing animals. Ties will be broken using the points on next (7th) animal.
- b. Rules defining a breeder above apply. It is the exhibitor’s responsibility to notify the show management which person of a multiple ownership breeders will receive breeder points. This must be done before the day of the show.
- c. Exhibitors are to complete the form and designate breeder.
- d. Breeders not exhibiting are also eligible for this award and scores will be calculated by the show committee

POINTS FOR PLACINGS:

| | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th | 6 th | 7 th | 8 th | 9 th | 10 th |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Milking Classes: | 20 | 18 | 16 | 14 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Junior Females | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

- 4. **Total performance:** A score is calculated for each animal, three years and over as follows:
 - a. 50 points on class placing 1st – 50, 2nd – 47, 3rd – 44, etc.
 - b. 50 points on overall production 1st – 50, 2nd – 47, 3rd – 44, etc.
 - c. All total performance entries, regardless of age, will be considered as one class and points awarded accordingly.
 - d. Points for production will be based on the animal's best actual 305-day (2x or 2x converted) Energy Corrected Milk (ECM) record. Records must be made available by the exhibitor to the National Show representative
 - e. If total points are tied, then actual pounds of fat will be used as the tie breaker. If still tied, the judge will be asked to break the tie. The class winners would be paraded in the total performance class scheduled just before the championship classes.

- 5. **Ultra sounding** is required for all National Milking Shows.
 - a. Animals will be examined before milk out. Each class will have **first place and second place** selected at minimum for ultrasound. Others may be selected by randomizing number of entries in class.

- b. Each Exhibitor will receive a card in the ring stating ultrasound required and a receipt of the examination with the show keeping a copy for records
- c. Any abnormalities will be given immediately to the ethics committee and will be shared with the exhibitor. Ethics committee will review all evidence, with the exhibitor offering any evidence or explanation.
- d. A decision will be made as to whether it is a major show violation per the Show Ring Code of Ethics. The committee must vote with a 2/3s majority for a guilty verdict. The exhibitor will be notified. A guilty verdict can result in expulsion from the show and additional repercussions from the Association. Each National show must inform the association of any abnormalities.

NATIONAL APPROVED CLASS LIST

Spring Heifer Calf born March – May 2026 (must be 4 months old by show date)

Winter Heifer Calf born December 2025 – February 2026

Fall Heifer Calf born September – November 2025

Summer Yearling Heifer born June – August 2025

Spring Yearling Heifer born March – May 2025

Winter Yearling Heifer born December 2024 – February 2025

Fall Yearling Heifer born September – November 2024

Junior Champion Reserve Junior Champion

Junior Best Three *Best Bred & Owned Heifer

*Premier Breeder of the Heifer Show *Premier Exhibitor of the Heifer Show

Milking Yearling born after August 2024

Summer Junior Two-Year-Old Cow born June – August 2024

Spring Junior Two-Year-Old Cow old born March – May 2024

Winter Senior Two-Year-Old Cow born December 2023 – February 2024 * NEW**

Fall Senior Two-Year-Old Cow born September – November 2023

Junior Three-Year-Old Cow born March – August 2023

Senior Three-Year-Old Cow born September 2022 – February 2023

Intermediate Champion Reserve Intermediate Champion

Four-Year-Old Cow born September 2021 – August 2022

Five-Year-Old Cow born September 2020 – August 2021

Six-Year-Old and Older Cow Prior to September 2020

Lifetime Component Merit- Lifetime Production Over 100000 lbs. Milk or Produced 7500 Combined Pounds of Fat and Protein- *Official Milk Production Records Must be produced at the show*

Senior Champion Female Reserve Senior Champion Female

Grand Champion Female Reserve Grand Champion Female

*Champion Bred & Owned Total Performance Cow

Senior Best Three Females

Overall Premier Breeder Overall Premier Exhibitor

*Optional class- not an All American Class

***New class for 2026 National Shows and All American Contest

Judges and Selection Process

In the spirit of competition and adhering to all ethical rules, we **recommend** that ALL National Shows and encourage all regional and state shows to use the following process for judge selection.

1. Approved List

- a. Ayrshire Breeders' Association has an approved judges list for show management and exhibitor reference. All shows of any size are welcome to use this list to obtain a quality judge for their show.
- b. It is recommended that all National Show judges are selected from this list. If a judge is not on the list and has been selected by the exhibitors for a national show, they are expected to complete an application form to be reviewed and approved for the list.
- c. Anyone wishing to be on the approved judges list is welcome to submit an application that will be reviewed at the next show committee judging session.
- d. The approved judges list is a living document that will be reviewed annually.

2. National Show Judge Selection Process

- a. Exhibitors will nominate prospective judges online so there is time to review current approved list- each exhibitor gets an opportunity to be a part of the nomination process in this process. This may be done at time of entry or after the show has been completed.
- b. Top 3-5 nominees will be then up for voting. Exhibitors will vote on the selected nominees. There are two recommended processes for voting.
 - i. Each exhibitor gets one vote for their judge choice
 - ii. Each animal shown gets one vote so the exhibitor may have multiple votes

Junior Show Guidelines

*****All Jr exhibitors must be National Jr Members in good standing to receive National Show Jr Recognition and Awards**

Jr exhibitors

- Eligibility: Junior members may participate after they reach 9 years of age and until December 31 of the year when they turn 21 years old.
- Jr owners must be listed on registration papers or have a lease agreement on file with the national office by Aug 1st of the current year
- Jr exhibitors may own in partnership with an adult and exhibit as a Jr.
- Jr exhibitors must have a paid membership with US Ayrshire to be considered a National Jr show exhibitor and be eligible for awards and recognition
- Alternate leadsperson forms must be completed and returned to the show committee evening prior to show
- In lieu of ownership, a lease agreement will be accepted. (Lease process below)

Lease Program

The Junior leasing program is designed to encourage young people to become members and to get involved in a dairy project and learn about animal care and responsibility.

Rules:

1. All Jr exhibitors exhibiting a leased animal at National Shows **must** have an Ayrshire Breeders Association lease on file by August 1st of the year they are exhibiting the animal.
2. The leasing program is **not available** to youth who concurrently own any registered Ayrshires either as an individual or in partnership.
3. If the Jr. becomes the owner of the leased animal anytime during the year exhibiting, all lease agreements will be terminated. The Junior member must notify the national office and the registration transfer terminates all leases.
4. A **maximum of two** registered Ayrshires may be leased by any youth at one time. Animals may be leased by individuals only.
5. The lease may be terminated by either the owner (lessor) or the youth (lessee) by providing written notice to the other party and then notifying the National Office.

6. The leasing Junior is the only person allowed to exhibit the animal as a Jr. at National Junior Shows, no alternate leadspersons may be used. The owner may exhibit the animal in a separate open show.
7. All leases expire on Dec. 31st of the year when the lease originated, if not terminated prior to that date. **A new lease is required each year.**
8. The leased animal remains in the original ownership. If the leased animal is bred, any offspring are named using the owner's prefix. All offspring are also the owners.

Lease Process:

- Complete lease form found [here](#) on the Ayrshire Breeders' Association webpage.
- Form must be received by August 1st, either mailed or emailed (preferred) by member and is valid until Dec 31st of that year.
- It is the responsibility of the Lessee (Jr. member) to have a signed copy of the lease agreement for each show.

Junior Shows

May be separate from open show or have a step up during open show.

All Junior Show Champion classes will be completed before the open show.

Alternate leadsperson [here](#) must be completed by 5pm day before the show and turned into show management.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY NEW

All **National Show Management teams** have responsibility to ensure the information from their show is appropriately recorded and shared. We appreciate the same from **all State and Regional shows**. This is a critical process to ensure our All American Contest is fully inclusive of ALL results for ALL exhibitors. This section describes the show management and ABA responsibilities.

1. Overall Show Activity

SHOW MANAGEMENT:

- General administration including all event promotion, pre-show entries, check-in, rule enforcement, fundraising, award selection, judge selection, and judge expenses

AYRSHIRE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION:

- Supporting role as needed

2. Premium Book

SHOW MANAGEMENT: Must include rules according to Ayrshire Breeders' Association along with site and state specific rules.

AYRSHIRE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION: Will provide support and approval as needed

3. Entries National, Regional & State Shows

SHOW MANAGEMENT:

- Accept entries
- As soon as entries close provide the Ayrshire Breeders' Association a list of junior exhibitors, including their full name, city, state for Junior membership and National Junior Show eligibility.
- Verification must be completed for Jr. Members to compete and be eligible for All American contest.

AYRSHIRE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION:

- Verify eligibility of Jr animals and exhibitors and notify the show of any ineligibilities or concerns

4. Check-in at Show

SHOW MANAGEMENT:

- Coordinate check-in staff, inform them of proper procedures and provide them with copies of the materials and lists
- Review health papers and registration certificate for animal identification verification.
- All exhibitors must have a registration paper in hand or an online copy
- Address inconsistencies or concerns with the exhibitor (Example: Membership, ownership date, alternate leadsperson requests)

AYRSHIRE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION:

- Provide list of ineligible exhibitors to show management if applicable.

5. Show Day

SHOW MANAGEMENT:

- Effectively record all results
- Provide safe environment for exhibitors and visitors
- Manage all ethics, communication, and any other issues

AYRSHIRE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION:

- Provide support as needed

6. Post Show Follow-Up

SHOW MANAGEMENT:

- **Provide show results** to Ayrshire Breeders' Association-via file that clearly notes the placing, animal full name, and exhibitor **as soon as possible within 14 days.**
- Have full results readily available after show, preferably online.
- Notify association if there were any ethics violations

AYRSHIRE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION:

- Keep show results in electronic form
- Provide access to results for AA contest

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



National Show Premier Breeder and Exhibitor Recommended Process

PREMIER BREEDER:

- a. The breeder winning the most points (not to exceed six animals) in the open single classes exhibited by themselves and/or other exhibitors, shall be designated the Premier Breeder.
- b. The owner of the dam at the time of service for breeding shall be considered the breeder of the animal. Where a herd is registered in the names of different members of a family, and where herd is ONE unit where animals are housed in the same location, all entries may be considered as exhibits of one breeder.
 - Note: to qualify for **Bred & Owned Awards**, a minimum of **ONE of the ORIGINAL** owners must be listed as one of the **CURRENT** owners.

PREMIER EXHIBITOR

- a. The exhibitor winning the most points (not to exceed six animals) which he/she owns and exhibits in the open single classes, shall be designated the **Premier Exhibitor**.
- b. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to notify show management which person in a multiple ownership partnership will receive exhibitor points. This must be completed by **5PM on the day PRIOR to the show**. This form is to be used and must be completed to include all animals that the exhibitor is intending to include in premier exhibitor points.
- c. Leased animals will be considered a separate exhibitor when exhibited in the National Jr. Show. The owner may include if shown separately by the owner in the Open Show.

POINTS FOR PLACINGS:

| | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th | 6 th | 7 th | 8 th | 9 th | 10 th |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Milking Classes: | 20 | 18 | 16 | 14 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Junior Females: | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |



Premier Exhibitor Points Form

Name of exhibitor that the points should be credited

to: _____

| Animal Name | Registration # | Class Entered | Owners on current registration paper |
|-------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |