



December 30, 2020

Letter to Exhibitors, Parents, and Guardians
COVID-19 Changes to the 2021 Victoria Livestock Show

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a lot of uncertainty, which in return has made everyone re-evaluate and change up the way things are done. It is no different that the Victoria Livestock Show would be affected as well. Many decisions and alterations to the upcoming 2021 show have been made.

The Victoria Fair Association Board and Victoria Livestock Show Board met several times over the past few months to plan out the 2021 show so that COVID-19 guidelines could be met.

The Victoria Fair Association Board includes:

President, Gary Loest
Vice President, Stephen Diebel
Treasurer, Shelly Marbach
Corporate Treasurer, Herschel Vansickle
Secretary, Tanya Smejkal
Member, Bob Horton
Member, Teresa Moorman
Member, Farah Janak
Member, Gordon Harris
Member, Victor Eder

The Victoria Livestock Show Board includes:

General Chairman, John Pozzi
Assistant General Chairman, Gary Loest
Treasurer, Shelly Marbach
Business Chairman, Traci Shadle
Records Chairman, Kirby Garrett
Parliamentarian, Paige Melton
Market Chairman, Bob Horton
Secretary, Toni Stithem

The 2021 Victoria Livestock Show will not be open to the public. The focus is strictly on the exhibitors and their projects. Colored wristbands will be distributed to be worn during the show. Those details are still being worked out as we are waiting closer to the show to know what current guidelines, such as capacity, will be in place. Changes have been made to maintain social distancing, meet capacity levels and overall safety of our youth and their families.

The COVID-19 2021 Victoria Livestock Show schedule was recently released. You will see that the schedule reflects species specific days or time blocks to help maintain our capacity levels with each space of the stock show: Victoria Community Center Arena and VLS Pavilion (pole barn.) Exhibitors will check-in, show, then load-out animals following the completion of their show. Breeding animals will go home, and market animals go on the truck to the processing plant*.

Due to all the different check in times of the species and not knowing the sale slot percentages until market steers are checked in late Saturday afternoon, every animal will be placed in all classes and you will not know if you made the sale until Saturday night/Sunday morning.

For the most part, each show will load-out animals after the species is shown and completely done. However, the Breeding Gilt and Market Hog shows will be a little different. Here are the differences:

- All hogs will arrive and check in at the same time.
- Breeding Gilt will be released much later after they show.
- There will be no sift in the market hog classes and all hogs will be placed in each class. Once placed, exhibitors who have made the showmanship callback will be announced before the judge gives the reasons on placings. Exhibitors who have placed 1st or 2nd in the class or have been called to come back for showmanship will go back to their pen to be stalled until they need to come back for the champion and showmanship drives. All other hogs will be sent to the load-out pens and be loaded as processing trailers fill. Then, once the champion drives and showmanship are completed, those hogs will go to the load-out pens and be loaded out.

*So, what does it mean when we say all market animals are loaded on the processing truck after they show?

Once the animals leave, that is it. There will be no meat available to any buyer or non-sale exhibitor on any animals regardless of live or carcass. Floor buyers are being lined out to purchase the animals as we speak. Buyers will get a resale check and non-sale exhibitors will get a resale check. This decision was made because processing plants cannot hold the amount of animals needed in order for the meat to be available after the Monday night auction. Just like many industries, processing plants have COVID-19 restrictions and are operating on limited to no staff at all due to quarantining employees. Processing plants simply do not have enough room and/or do not feel comfortable committing to holding the number of animals for the time period needed. The uncertainty of their staff and future restrictions on top of what they already have booked is putting a strain on them.

Here are some statistics from last year that also helped in making this decision:

- Out of the 265 sale slots, 44 buyers retained the meat. That's 17% of total sale animals.
- Out of the 12 carcass steers available and brought back, only 4 buyers retained the meat.
- Out of the non-sale animals, only 4 exhibitors retained the meat.

We are in full support and agreement of having an in-person Monday night auction. However, we must all keep in mind a virtual option is a possibility if current guidelines do not permit an in-person auction. 2020 has been a difficult year for all of us, and there are still more obstacles we are going to face as 2021 begins. Through these tough times, how you handle and react to the changes and challenges will be the most significant. The Victoria Livestock Show is dedicated to making the 2021 show happen in the safest way possible with both city, county, and community center COVID-19 guidelines.

We hope that this clears up some questions, comments, and concerns that have come up for you to make your decisions when entering the 2021 Victoria Livestock Show. Remember, the deadline to enter the show is December 31st at 11:59 PM at www.victorialivestockshow.com. If you feel you do not want to enter the 2021 show after these changes, we completely understand, and you will have until January 31st to obtain a full refund on entry fees.

Respectfully,

John Pozzi
General Chairman

Gary K. Loest
Assistant General Chairman