



2026 IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity & Maturity Rules

Any rules created by the Iowa Quarter Horse Association (IQHA) Ranch Horse Futurity & Program are functions of the Iowa Quarter Horse Association.

Purpose

The purpose of the IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity is to provide an opportunity for AQHA stallion owners to showcase and promote their ranch-bred stallions and subsequent offspring in **Open** and **Non-Pro Divisions**

Ranch Horse Futurity Eligibility

- Only AQHA, APHA, and ApHC registered horses are eligible for the IQHA Ranch Horse Program and Futurity.
- Stallions must enroll each year for the following year's offspring to be eligible.
- Registered foals are eligible to be nominated beginning with 2021 enrolled stallions 2022 foal crop (nominated as yearlings),
 - 2022 enrolled stallions - 2023 foal crop (nominated in 2024 as yearlings)
 - 2023 enrolled stallions - 2024 foal crop (nominated in 2025 as yearlings)
 - 2024 enrolled stallions - 2025 foal crop (nominated in 2026 as yearlings)
 - 2025 enrolled stallions - 2026 foal crop (nominated in 2027 as yearlings)
 - 2026 enrolled stallions - 2027 foal crop (nominated in 2028 as yearlings)
- Properly nominated foals remain eligible through their four-year-old year, **provided annual** nomination fees and if applicable, penalties are paid.
- Prior to exhibiting all completed forms are to be submitted and fees must be paid.

Stallion Enrollments

- Stallions must be AQHA registered.

Enrollment Fees

- \$450 due on or before **July 31, 2026**.
- \$1,000 after July 31, 2026.
- Stallion enrollments are non-refundable

Back Enrollments

- Stallions not previously enrolled may **back enroll** for a fee of \$1,000 per year, plus \$450 for the current year.
 - For example, to back enroll for 2023 and 2024:
 - i. \$1000 each year back enrollment fees = \$2000
 - ii. Must also enroll in the current year = \$450 (if done by July 31 of the current year)
 - iii. For a total of \$2450 if paid by July 31, if after July 31 a total of \$3000

Enrollment Requirements

- Copy of AQHA registration papers with current owner(s) listed.
- Completed enrollment form and payment of all fees.
- IQHA membership is **not required** to enroll a stallion.

Enrollment Earnings Distribution

- Stallion owner or enroller receives **10%** of all properly nominated offspring's futurity earnings from each year.
- The owner of the stallion will be given the first right of refusal to enroll their stallion, and if the owner declines or is unresponsive, another person may enroll the stallion for a one year term that can be renewed annually. This does not imply any ownership rights to the stallion. The 10% stallion earnings will be paid to the enroller for the year enrolled.
 - For example, if the enroller, not the stallion owner, pays the stallion enrollment for 2025, then the 2026 offspring are eligible to be nominated for the futurity and any money earned by the 2026 foal crop, 10% will go to the enroller. If the following year, the stallion owner enrolls the stallion, then the 10% offspring earnings from the 2027 foal crop will go to the stallion owner.
- It is the responsibility of the stallion owner and/or enroller to notify the ranch horse committee if they have moved. The 10% earnings will be mailed out to the last known address and if returned or they are unable to be contacted the money will remain in the ranch horse futurity general account and used for expenses.

Special Cases (Enrollment):

If an enrolled stallion dies or becomes unfit to breed, the Owner/Enroller may substitute another stallion owned by the same Owner/Enroller, provided that

- Letter from Veterinarian stating reason why the stallion is not breeding sound or is deceased.
 - The letter must also state that the stallion has not bred any mares in the current year and that there is no frozen semen available.
 - A stallion is not eligible to be substituted if he has already bred mares in the current year and frozen semen available.
 - The letter must be provided within 10 days of death of stallion or the date found to be unfit to breed by veterinarian
- No substitutions after **July 31 of the current year**.
- Enrollment fee is non-refundable.

Offspring Nominations

- AQHA, APHA, and ApHC registered eligible offspring must be sired by an enrolled stallion.
- Nominations required annually from **yearling through four-year-old years**.
- Copy of registration papers required (pending accepted).
 - Offspring with pending papers with AQHA, APHA, ApHC may submit registration papers via email to the IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity once received.
- Current IQHA membership **required to nominate offspring**.
- **No refunds** due to the death or injury of a nominated horse.

Annual Nomination Fees

*Yearling: \$100 *Two-Year-Old: \$100 *Three-Year-Old: \$100 *Four-Year-Old: \$100

If you don't nominate your offspring prior to the current year	Yearling Year	2 Year Old Year	3 Year Old Year	4 Year Old Year	Total
Yearling	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$100.00	\$1,000.00
2 Year Old	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$100.00		\$700.00
3 Year Old	\$300.00	\$100.00			\$400.00
4 Year Old	\$100.00				\$100.00

If you nominate your offspring each year	Yearling Year	2 Year Old Year	3 Year Old Year	4 Year Old Year	Total
Yearling	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$400.00
2 Year Old	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00		\$300.00
3 Year Old	\$100.00	\$100.00			\$200.00
4 Year Old	\$100.00				\$100.00

Nomination Deadlines

- **July 31 of each year:**
 - Online Nomination form(s) and credit card payment are both required by July 31 of each year
 - Failure to complete the required nominations with payment by the deadline of July 31 of the current year will result in a \$200 penalty per nomination for each missed deadline in addition to the \$100 nomination fee.
 - Failure to submit required paperwork/forms will result in an ineligible entry.
 - Nominations can be paid in full for all 4 years

Nomination Fee Distribution

- **Yearling fees:** 10% held for office expenses, 50% annual nomination fees go towards payout, 40% allocated towards awards.
- **2–4 year-old fees:** 90% fees go towards payout, 10% held for office expenses.

Prize Money

Prize money will be mailed rather than paid out at the event. If prize money is won at the show the estimated purses won in each class will be announced. Prior to mailing all earnings will be audited for accuracy, within 90 days. Proof of AQHA/APHA/APHC papers required and current ownership. Verifications may be made through the same associations.

Distribution

- Annual payout consists of a percentage of stallion enrollment fees, nomination fees, penalties (if any), and entry fees.
- Up to **10 placings** paid for futurity classes unless there are more than 55 entries in the class then will pay out 15 placings
- As stated on entry form, if payee not named on entry form then sent to horse owner as listed on registration papers: **90%** of payback
- Person who enrolled stallion : **10%** of payback
- Paid membership required
- A completed W-9 Form is required if the exhibitor earnings exceed the current federal reporting limit.

Stallion Enrollment Allocation of \$450 Enrollment Fee

Minus a one-time \$25 per stallion deduction for expenses to make the total enrollment allocation of \$425

- Yearlings: 16%
- Two-Year-Olds: 23%
- Three-Year-Olds: 28%
- Four-Year-Olds: 33%

Class Payout Scales

15 placings: 16 – 13 – 11 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5.5 – 5 – 4.5 – 4 – 3.5 – 3 – 2.5 – 2
14 placings: 17 – 14 – 11 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5.5 – 5 – 4.5 – 4 – 3.5 – 3 – 2.5
13 placings: 17 – 14 – 12 – 10 – 8 – 7 – 6.5 – 5.5 – 5 – 4.5 – 4 – 3.5 – 3
12 placings: 18 – 15 – 12 – 10 – 8 – 7 – 6.5 – 6 – 5.5 – 5 – 4 – 3
11 placings: 19 – 15 – 13 – 10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 5 – 4%
10 placings: 20 – 15 – 13 – 11 – 10 – 8 – 6.5 – 6 – 5.5 – 5%
9 placings: 21 – 16 – 14 – 12 – 10.5 – 8.5 – 6.5 – 6 – 5.5%
8 placings: 22 – 16.5 – 15 – 12.5 – 11 – 9 – 7.5 – 6.5%
7 placings: 23 – 17 – 15.5 – 13.5 – 12.5 – 10 – 8.5%
6 placings: 24 – 18 – 17 – 15 – 14 – 12%
5 placings: 25 – 21 – 20 – 17.5 – 16.5%
4 placings: 30 – 25.5 – 23 – 21.5%
3 placings: 40 – 35 – 25%
2 placings: 60 – 40%
1 placing: 100%

Futurity Division Champion

- A high money earning champion will be named in each age division by **highest money earned**.
- **Tie-breakers:**
 - Highest point total (points = entries; e.g., 1st of 45 = 45 points).
 - Points under tie-breaker judge.
 - Combined/split money for tied placings.
 - Final decision by tie-breaker judge (announced before show).

Exhibition - General

- Location recommended by Ranch Horse Committee; approved by IQHA Board.
- Qualified AQHA/VRH-approved ranch judges officiate; all scores count towards final placings.
- Equipment regulations relevant to the futurity classes will be guided by AQHA / VRH Rules. All exhibitors must allow their equipment and/or horse to be examined by Judge(s) if requested.
- Proof of AQHA/APHA/APHC papers required with current ownership. Verifications may be made through the same **associations**.

Exhibition Rules- Horse

- Disqualified horses/exhibitors are **ineligible** for payout and prizes.
- Completed and paid nomination and entry form(s) per horse are required prior to showing.
- All horses entered are subject to drug and/or tail testing. Drug and/or tail testing of the horses entered will be conducted by a licensed veterinarian(s), approved by IQHA, at the request of show management.. Said veterinarian(s) may appoint a technician(s) to perform certain duties. The responsible individual as defined in this rule may be disciplined under the Association's general disciplinary procedure. Any awards and/or prizes and/or purses won where a violation occurred, will be forfeited in any case.

Exhibition Rules - Rider / Owner

- **NON PRO** - For Youth and Amateur exhibitors. Eligibility Proof of non-pro (amateur/youth) status from a breed association or a signed declaration stating the exhibitor (provided from the futurity) is a non-pro is required for exhibition in non-pro classes. Non-pro rider must be the owner of the horse or immediate family member of the owner of the horse.
 - Owner(s) and exhibitor(s) of the horse(s) at the time shown must be current IQHA members.
 - There shall be no substitutions of riders if there is more than one go-round or if there are go-rounds and finals.
 - If a violation occurs by any Rider and/or Owner, any awards, prizes, and/or purse money won in that class shall be forfeited.
 - Exhibitors, owners, agents or spectators are prohibited from contacting a judge directly.
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Futurity Class Listing

- **Yearling** Conformation
Yearling Ranch Prospect Trail at Halter
- **Two-Year-Old** Ideal Ranch Horse (Open & Non-Pro)
Two-Year-Old Prospect Fundamentals (Open & Non-Pro)
- **Three-Year-Old** Ideal Ranch Horse (Open & Non-Pro)
Three-Year-Old Ranch Trail (Open & Non-Pro)
Three-Year-Old Ranch Riding (Open & Non-Pro)
- **Four-Year- Old** Ideal Ranch Horse (Open & Non-Pro)
Four-Year- Old Ranch Riding (Open & Non-Pro)
Four-Year- Old Working Ranch Trail (Open & Non-Pro)
Four-Year- Old Working Ranch Horse (Open)
Four-Year- Old Ranch Cow Work (Boxing - Non-Pro)

Class Rules

All classes will follow AQHA/VRH Rules, where applicable, as found in the AQHA Rule Book, *unless stated otherwise*. The Committee reserves the right to interpret, clarify, or amend rules, and to make decisions deemed necessary for the management, fairness, and integrity of the event.

Yearling Conformation SHW567. - The purpose of ranch conformation is to preserve American Quarter Horse type selecting well-mannered individuals in the order of their resemblance to the breed ideal and that are the most positive combination of balance, structural correctness, and movement with appropriate breed and sex characteristics and adequate muscling. The ideal VRH Ranch conformation horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail.

Yearling Ranch Prospect Trail at Halter SHW797.3 - The objective of this class is to demonstrate proficiency and confidence in the uniquely required, age appropriate, skill set of a future ranch horse, while preserving the sensitivity, lightness and athleticism of the working horse and progressing towards physical and emotional fitness in preparation for the first ride. This class will be judged on the performance of the horse over obstacles, with emphasis on manners, response to the handler and quality of movement. Credit will be given to horses negotiating the obstacles with style, positive expression, and minimal visible or audible cueing, providing correctness is not sacrificed. Horses should receive credit for showing attentiveness to obstacles and picking their way through the course when obstacles warrant it, and willingly responding to the exhibitor's cues on more difficult obstacles. Horses shall be penalized for any unnecessary delay while approaching or negotiating the obstacles. Horses with artificial appearance over obstacles should be penalized.

Suggested Obstacles/Maneuvers:

1) Gate. 2) Natural logs to walk or trot over with consideration of the age of the horse. 3) Serpentine. 4) Carry a suitable ranch object. 5) Wooden bridge. 6) Slicker. 7) Mailbox. 8) Side pass. 9) Square, logs set to form a square. 10) Drag. 11) Back. 12) Trailer. 13) Pick up feet 14) Use of saddle pad 15) Longe, on line or free in pen walk at least a ½ round, trot and lope at least one round each, one direction. To be judged on manners, carriage and expression. 16) Cattle. 17) Hides.

Unacceptable obstacles:

1) Tires. 2) Tarps 3) PVC pipe. 4) Rocking or moving bridges. 5) Water box with floating or moving parts. 6) Flames, dry ice, fire. extinguisher, etc.. 7) Logs or poles elevated in a manner that permits such to roll or are unsafe for the age of the horse and/or exhibitor.

The judge(s) must walk the course and has the right to alter the course in any manner if an obstacle is deemed unsafe or non-negotiable. If at any time during a trail obstacle it is deemed to be unsafe by the judge, it shall be repaired or removed from the course. If it cannot be repaired and horses have completed the course, the score for that obstacle shall be deducted from all previous works for that class.

The course to be used must be posted at least one hour before scheduled starting time of the class.

Ideal Ranch Horse - The purpose of this class is to evaluate the horse's ability to be a pleasure to ride, reflecting the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working ranch horse, as well as possessing the correct conformation to perform such duties. Conformation and rail work will be judged and placed individually, with placings combined for the overall results.

- To begin the class, horses will start one at a time by tracking down the center of the arena at an extended trot past the judges, then proceed to the rail as directed by the ring steward.
- For the rail portion of the class, the horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft, and cadenced at all gaits. The movement of an ideal ranch horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances softly and efficiently. The overall manners, responsiveness, and quality of movement are the primary considerations. Maximum credit should be given to horses that exhibit a natural, flowing stride and consistent, ground-covering gaits.
- Transitions should be performed promptly when requested, with smoothness and responsiveness. The ideal ranch horse should maintain a natural head carriage at each gait. Horses should be ridden on a relatively loose rein with light contact, demonstrating responsiveness to the rider without requiring undue restraint. The horse should be soft in the bridle, yield to light contact, and not be shown on a full drape of rein. Riders are encouraged to use the available arena space to allow for proper gait extension.
- This class should demonstrate the horse's ability to work at a forward, working pace while remaining balanced, willing, and a pleasure to ride in a group setting. Judges will submit their placings for this portion of the class upon completion of the rail work.
- Once rail work has been completed and placed, horse and rider will be directed to line up in the center of the arena for the conformation portion of the class. At the announcer's direction, exhibitors will unsaddle and present their horses for inspection at the bridle.
- The horse should resemble the breed ideal of the ranch horse, exhibiting the most positive combination of balance, structural correctness, and movement, with appropriate breed and sex characteristics and adequate muscling. The ideal ranch conformation horse should display a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail.
- Judges will complete their evaluations and submit placings accordingly for this portion of the class.

Ranch Riding SHW560 - The purpose of the ranch riding class is to measure the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride while being used as a means of conveyance from performing one ranch task to another. The horse should reflect the versatility, attitude and movement of a working ranch horse riding outside the confines of an arena. The horse should be well-trained, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The ideal ranch horse will travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening of stride at extended gaits. The horse can be ridden with light contact or on a relatively loose rein without requiring undue restraint, but not shown on a full drape of reins. The overall manners and responsiveness of the ranch riding horse to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, as well as the quality of the movement are of primary considerations. The ideal ranch riding horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver

Ranch Trail SHW561. - The ranch trail class should test the horse's ability to cope with situations encountered while being ridden through a pattern of obstacles generally found during the course of everyday ranch work. The horse/rider team is judged on the correctness, efficiency and pattern accuracy

with which the obstacles are negotiated and the attitude and mannerisms exhibited by the horse. Judging emphasis is on identifying the well broke, responsive and well-mannered horse which can correctly navigate and negotiate the course. The ideal VRH ranch trail horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver. The ranch trail course will include no less than six and no more than nine obstacles.

Suggested Obstacles/Maneuvers

1) Gate. 2) Natural logs to walk, trot or lope over with consideration of the age of the horse. 3) Serpentine. 4) Carry a suitable ranch object. 5) Wooden bridge. 6) Slicker. 7) Mailbox. 8) Side pass. 9) Square, logs set to form a square, Step in and out of obstacle. 10) Ground Tie. 11) Drag. (Log, Small Feedbunk, calf on skids). 12) Back. 13) Swing rope. 14) Cowboy Curtain, made of materials found on a ranch. 15) Pick up feet. 16) Lead at the trot. 17) Board on barrel - Circle around barrel, holding one end of the board while the other end of the board remains touching the barrel.

Unacceptable obstacles:

1) Tire. 2) PVC pipe. 3) Rocking or moving bridges. 4) Water box with floating or moving parts. 5) Flames, dry ice, fire extinguisher, etc.. 6) Logs or poles elevated in a manner that permits such to roll. 7) Tarps. 8) Water obstacles with slick bottoms.

- The judge(s) must walk the course and has the right to alter the course in any manner if an obstacle is deemed unsafe or non-negotiable. If at any time during a trail obstacle it is deemed to be unsafe by the judge, it shall be repaired or removed from the course. If it cannot be repaired and horses have completed the course, the score for that obstacle shall be deducted from all previous works for that class.
- The course to be used must be posted at least one hour before scheduled starting time of the class.

Open 4 Year - Old Working Ranch Horse - Both the cow work portion of this event and the reined work portion are mandatory. Scoring emphasis on the cow work portion shall be based on the horse maintaining control of the cow at all times, exhibiting superior cow sense and natural cow working ability without excessive reining or spurring. The greater the difficulty of the run, the more credit should be given. The difficulty may be due to the extreme speed or stubbornness of the cow, or the cow's reluctance to move down the fence when sufficiently driven by the contestant. The most controlled cow work with the highest degree of difficulty should be marked the highest. Failure of an exhibitor to attempt to complete the cow work portion of the class, as well as the reined work, will result in the exhibitor not being considered an entry in the class. A horse that attempts to complete the cow work and has not been disqualified will be scored accordingly at the judge's discretion. A horse that attempts both the reined work and the cow work portion may be placed, even if disqualified in one portion of the class. (Example: If a horse is disqualified and receives a 0 score for the reined work, but scores a 70 for the cow work, its total score would be a 70 and the horse would be eligible for placing.) However, the fall of a horse and rider being judged shall be cause for disqualification and not eligible to be placed.

4 Year - Old Boxing Non-Pro SHW519. BOXING. - Boxing consists of an AQHA working cow horse reining pattern and single cow work (boxing) on the end of the arena. The goal of this class is to introduce the rider to the "boxing" phase of the cow work. Judging begins when the contestant enters the arena. There shall be no schooling between the completion of the rein work and the cow work, or between cows if a new cow is awarded. The penalty for this is -0-. Each contestant upon receiving a cow in the arena, shall hold that cow on the prescribed end of the arena for 50 seconds, demonstrating the ability of the horse and rider to control the cow. It is legal to hold the reins and romal in one hand (rein hand) while boxing the cow. Time shall begin when the gate closes behind the cow after being let into the arena. The announcer or judge will signal the completion of the 50 seconds with a whistle or horn.

OTHER

Get Of Sire Class

Three get, four years old and younger of either sex, per sire, may be shown. The sire need not be shown. It is unnecessary for the Get to be owned by the owner of the sire.

- **This is a jackpot pay out class from entry monies, not futurity monies.**

Class Splits and Finals

Classes

will be split at the discretion of the IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity Committee and/or Show Management. Splits will be determined based on the total number of entries and the arena's working capacity.

- The show management will be instructed to provide working cuts/splits for a go-round and/or finals when the number of entries exceeds the arena's working capacity.

Four Yr- Old Overall High Money Earner

- A High Money Earning 4 yr. Old Overall Champion will be awarded.
- A High Money Earning 4 yr. Old Reserve Champion will be awarded.
 - To be eligible must have shown all four years (yearling - 4 yr. old) including a cattle class.

Position On Animal Welfare

- The welfare of the horse is the primary consideration in all activities.
- No person shall treat any horse in a cruel or inhumane manner, including, but not limited to, the prohibited conduct specified in the AQHA Handbook.

Sportsmanship and Disciplinary Actions

Members, non members, exhibitors, trainers, owners, owners representatives, spectators and all other persons on the show grounds or facilities of an IQHA approved event must display good sportsmanship at all times.

- **If disciplinary action is to be taken, per IQHA By-Laws, the following may result in suspension or expulsion:**
 - Failure to pay any obligation due to this Association/Futurity.
 - Issuing a worthless (non-sufficient funds) check for any fees or charges connected with an approved quarter horse show, event, or competition (including entry fees, stall fees, office charges, stock charges, or any related fees).
 - Being disciplined, suspended, or expelled by the AQHA or APHA/APHC for unsportsmanlike conduct at a show or contest.
 - Knowingly or willfully violating any rule or by-law of this Association, or any rule or regulation of AQHA/APHA/APHC.
 - All grievances may be directed to the IQHA Grievance Committee.
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2026 IQHA Ranch Horse Maturity Rules

Eligibility

- Open to AQHA, APHA, ApHC horses ages **5 & Over**.
- Must be sired by an enrolled stallion (2019–2026).
- No nomination required.

Classes

- Ranch Trail (Open & Non-Pro)
- Ranch Riding (Open & Non-Pro)
- Working Western Rail (Open & Non-Pro)
- Ranch Reining (Open & Non-Pro)
- Ranch Cow Work (Open)
- Limited Amateur (Non-Pro)

Exhibition

- Qualified AQHA-approved ranch judges officiate; all scores count towards final placings.
- Equipment regulations relevant to the futurity classes will be guided by AQHA / VRH Rules.
- Owner(s) and exhibitor(s) of the horse(s) at the time shown must be current IQHA members.
- Proof of AQHA/APHA/ApHC papers required. Verifications may be made through the same.
- Completed and paid entry form(s) per horse are required prior to showing.
- Disqualified horses/exhibitors are **ineligible** for payout and prizes.

Non-Pro Classes

- NON PRO - For Youth and Amateur exhibitors. Eligibility Proof of non-pro (amateur/youth) status from a breed association or a signed declaration (provided from the futurity) stating the exhibitor is a non-pro is required for exhibition in non-pro classes. Non-pro rider must be the owner of the horse or immediate family member of the owner of the horse.
- Owner(s) and exhibitor(s) of the horse(s) at the time shown must be current IQHA members.

Payout

- Payee as stated on entry form, if payee not named on entry form then payout will be sent to horse owner as listed on registration papers: **90%** of payback.
- Person who enrolled stallion : **10%** of payback.
- Paid membership required.
- A completed W-9 Form is required if the exhibitor earnings exceed the current federal reporting limit.
- Up to 6 placings paid.

Jackpot Payout Scale

- 1–2 entries → 1 placing, 100%
- 3–4 entries → 2 placings, 60/40%
- 5–9 entries → 3 placings, 50/30/20%
- 10–14 entries → 4 placings, 40/30/20/10%
- 15–19 entries → 5 placings, 35/27/19/12/7%
- 20+ entries → 6 placings, 30/24/19/13/9/5%

Disclaimer: All rules are subject to change at the discretion of the IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity Committee to ensure fairness, integrity, and the continued success of the event.

11.09.2025