

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) in South Dakota 4-H: Youth Standards

Heidi Carroll | SDSU Extension Livestock Stewardship Associate
Peter Nielson | SDSU Extension Director of Youth Development Operations

About YQCA – the national program

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) is a national multi-species quality assurance program for youth ages 8 to 21 with a focus on three core pillars: food safety, animal well-being, and character development. The YQCA program is an annual certification created for youth producing and/or showing beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, meat goats, dairy goats, pigs, poultry, and rabbits. The program has been designed by extension specialists and national livestock program managers to ensure it is accurate, current and relevant to the needs of the animal industry and shows, and is appropriate for youth learning levels.

The registration fee for instructor led (only ages 8 to 18 may attend) YQCA trainings is \$3 per person and the registration fee for the online training (open to all ages) is \$12 per person. Certification is good for all food-producing animals (beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, meat goats, dairy goats, swine, poultry, and rabbits) a youth exhibits in a year; youth complete one certification each year.

About the YQCA Team

YQCA is a nonprofit organization with a volunteer board of directors. The purpose of YQCA is to continually provide a current, peer-reviewed, quality curriculum for youth quality assurance training and certification. Revenues collected from fees are used for ongoing program improvement and promotion.

South Dakota 4-H Standards for YQCA Certification – effective October 2017 through September 2018

Following review of the program and having discussions with YQCA, South Dakota 4-H believes that the YQCA program provides a great educational

opportunity to our youth participating in food-producing animal projects. For the first year of implementation (2018), South Dakota 4-H will require YQCA certification of youth participating in swine projects that wish to show at county-level fairs or State Fair. This program will allow youth to learn about producing safe, humanely-raised pork to ensure consumer confidence and develop character. The YQCA certification replaces the national Youth Pork Quality Assurance (YPQA+) certification.

The YOUTH standards for YQCA in South Dakota 4-H include:

- Youth ages 8 to 21 exhibiting swine projects at 2018 county and/or the State Fair will be expected to complete YQCA certification.
- Youth ages 8 to 18 (4-H age as of January 1st) should complete an instructor led YQCA training with a YQCA Trainer for the first year (2017-2018). Ages 19 to 21 should complete the online certification training per national YQCA guidelines. Please check with your county or surrounding counties for class dates.
- YQCA certification needs to be completed and uploaded to 4-H Online by June 1, 2018.
- Youth ages 8 to 21 exhibiting beef cattle, dairy cattle, dairy goats, meat goats, sheep, swine, poultry, and rabbits at county-level fairs or State Fair will be required to become YQCA certified for the 2018-19 4-H year.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Why should I become YQCA certified?* The YQCA certification program offers education to youth 8-21 years of age promoting food safety, animal well-being, and character development.

South Dakota 4-H believes the YQCA certification adds educational value to the livestock projects youth participate in and helps ensure a positive image of the livestock industries with our public consumers and fair attendees. We desire to positively impact the livestock caregivers and community members of the future.

2. ***When and where are YQCA certification trainings offered in South Dakota?*** YQCA certification trainings will be offered annually (November 1 - June 1). Dates and locations for all trainings will be compiled and made available via www.igrow.org. Talk with your county 4-H advisor for specific details for upcoming dates and locations if you don't see a listing for your local area.
3. ***When are YQCA certifications due for State Fair exhibits?*** YQCA certifications are due by June 1 of each year and must be uploaded into 4HOnline.
4. ***Do I need YQCA certification if I am only exhibiting in my county?*** Yes, YQCA certification is required for youth 8-21 years of age exhibiting swine at a county fair or State Fair in 2018. Participation in the YQCA program strengthens youth understanding of food safety, animal well-being, and character development through their animal project and maintains the positive image of the livestock industries with our public consumers.
5. ***Do I need YQCA certification if I am only showing horses, companion animals, dogs, or cats?*** No, YQCA certification is designed for food animals including: beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, meat goats, dairy goats, swine, poultry, and rabbits. In 2017-2018, South Dakota 4-H will require YQCA certification for only swine projects at county and state fairs. In 2018-2019, YQCA certification will be required for beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, meat goat, dairy goat, swine, poultry, and rabbit projects at county and state fairs.
6. ***Will all ages be in the same course for instructor led trainings?*** Some counties may host one training for all ages (8-18), but two separate age-level presentations (8-13 Junior only and 8-18 mixed ages) are available through YQCA for instructor led trainings. Contact your county's SDSU Extension 4-H Youth Program Advisor for clarification.
7. ***What do I need to bring to the training site?*** Discuss how payments will be collected with your county 4-H advisor prior to attending certification training. Please also bring note-taking materials and pre-registration confirmation if applicable.
8. ***What does YQCA cost?*** Instructor led YQCA trainings cost \$3 per person annually, regardless of age or number of animals being shown. Youth completing YQCA online costs \$12 per person annually. NOTE: Youth ages 8-18 should complete an instructor led YQCA certification training for 2018; ages 19-21 should complete certification online if desired.
9. ***How do I register and pay for a training?*** Registration is completed online via secure login through the www.yqca.org website. Payment will be collected at the time of registration. Please refer to "Registering my child for YQCA" for further details.
10. ***Is there a family discount for multiple children?*** No, family discounts are not available for multiple children. YQCA is a nationally managed program with set fees that go right back for the continued review and development of the curriculum.

Contact regarding YQCA implementation in South Dakota:

State 4-H Office
Berg Agricultural Hall 109, Box 2207E, Brookings, SD 57007
SDSU.4h@sdstate.edu; (605) 688-4167

If you would like to learn more about YQCA, please visit their website at www.yqca.org.